

Wearable tech challenges the smartphone scroll

Certain sectors will pioneer use of wearables

Building on trends today, a key driver of this growth will be the healthcare sector, as more consumers adopt wearables for health and wellbeing purposes. Wearables will feature advanced sensors for real-time monitoring of vital signs (e.g., heart rate, blood oxygen levels, glucose), while AI will enable predictive analytics, identifying potential health issues before they become critical. These devices will become integral in chronic disease management and early diagnosis, paving the way for more personalised, proactive healthcare.

Style counts

The rise of smart glasses will continue over the next decade, enabling the growth of hands-free, immersive experiences. Wearables like smartwatches and hearables, will offer enhanced applications for navigation, remote work, and education, while emerging categories such as smart clothing will provide new functions like health monitoring and fashion customisation. Wearable accessories, like rings and necklaces with built-in microphones, will further popularise voice interactions with virtual assistants, making wearables an integral part of daily life. Across all of this, the confluence of technology with style and design will become increasingly important.

New ways of shopping

AR and VR will transform retail media, becoming central to marketing strategies as retailers harness interactive ads, gamified promotions and immersive storytelling to deepen consumer connections. However, as technology enables more personalised experiences, challenges around data security and ethical use of customer information will need to be addressed.

Wearable technology will be deeply ingrained into people's daily lives in the UK by 2030 - putting us well on the way to life beyond the smartphone. Advancements in technology, consumer demand, the shift towards immersive experiences, better integration with other devices and new applications across various industries will all contribute to this. Wearables - such as smartwatches, smart glasses and smart clothing - will outpace the more mature smartphone market in growth as improvements in connectivity, battery life, and miniaturisation of sensors enable innovation.

In short, wearables paired with AI assistants have the potential to stop us smartphone scrolling by seeding technology into our lives in more intuitive ways. For marketers, they will enable highly personalised advertising and the creation of hyper-relevant experiences for consumers.

How to future-proof for 2030

- 1 Look beyond the smartphone. Media owners and content producers need to adapt to new platforms outside of smartphones, delivering immersive content like interactive sports or AR-enhanced concerts to meet growing consumer demand for unique experiences
- 2 Adopt a content-centric mindset. It will be crucial for media owners to focus on concise, visually engaging, and accessible content (e.g., podcasts, quick reads, interactive holograms) to reach audiences using new wearable tech
- 3 Embark on collaborative testing. Advertisers will need to collaborate with media partners to test and adapt to new formats, scaling strategies as wearable tech adoption grows
- 4 Optimise creative for best performance. Creatives will need to ensure content works for different wearable options, optimising for format and device to ensure best performance
- 5 Audio will continue to enhance functionality. For example, by integrating Google Maps with audio recommendations on route via a wearable device



We are already thinking about the future and looking beyond the smartphone. We are thinking about what that means for our business, content creation, formats and how wearables might be integrated within our business as a new route to readers.

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