

Jawbone "Up" fitness wristbands get in shape

November 13 2012, by Glenn Chapman



A girl jogs through a lavender field. Wireless earpiece maker Jawbone on Tuesday released redesigned UP wristbands that combine fashion with smartphone lifestyles to help people along paths to improved fitness.

Wireless earpiece maker Jawbone on Tuesday released redesigned UP wristbands that combine fashion with smartphone lifestyles to help people along paths to improved fitness.

New UP [wristbands](#) debuted in the United States with a \$129 price tag

nearly a year after original models were pulled from the market due to problems caused by moisture fouling up electronics in the "wearable computers."

UP presents data in bar graphs and timelines that show patterns and reveal how close people are to achieving fitness goals. The bands can signal people when they have been idle for more than 45 minutes.

"We launched to great fanfare, UP was our fastest selling product ever, and then we started hearing about the issues," Jawbone vice president Travis Bogard said while giving AFP a preview of the redesigned model.

"We learned a lot out of it," he continued. "The concept of wearable computing really is a totally new space and ultimately a lot of problems needed to be solved."

Challenges included making UP wristbands rugged and durable enough to survive everyday life rigors such as showers, dish water, children, and fitful sleep.

Meanwhile, the [innards](#) needed to be sensitive enough to tell how well people sleep or how active they are.

The bane of the first UP boiled down to miniscule amounts of water, sometimes abetted by oxidation by soap or [detergent](#), corrupting capacitors used in [charging systems](#), Bogard said.

"You just go through your day and the wristband is along for the ride," Bogard said of UP, which is to be worn during all waking and sleeping hours and can go for 10 days on a full charge.

"If I get splashed at Sea World or someone knocks my elbow at a party and I spill my scotch, the electronics have to survive that."

Jawbone did millions of hours of real world trials with UP and abused wristbands in labs with equipment including a "Big Shower 2000" to test the ability to endure relentless ablutions.

"It's basically a new product built from the ground up," Bogard said. "It was an opportunity to turn problems into innovations."

UP remains true to the original premise that most people want to improve their fitness and could benefit from encouragement along with detailed feedback about their own habits.

"Despite wanting to be better there is this big gap between intention and action," Bogard said.

"This is really about that personal journey; helping people understand themselves and the decisions they make."

UP applications for iPhones and iPod touch devices were redesigned to let people more easily get pictures of activity, sleep, eating, and even their moods on any given day or over time.

Software features include being able to get nutrition breakdowns of meals and converting steps taken into calories burned.

Jawbone crafted the power-efficient wristbands to look like jewelry to be style statements as well as a fitness tools.

UP wristbands track users' level of activity, whether they are exercising, pacing in an office, or snoozing in bed.

Sensors also record how long and how soundly UP users sleep.

The wristband can be set to wake someone by vibrating gently at an

appropriate point in a light phase of sleep, in order to make rising easier.

"Apps" are being worked on for other mobile devices, according to [Jawbone](#).

The launch of the new UP came shortly after the release of a Pew study showing that more than half of US smartphone owners use handsets to gather health-related information.

Meanwhile, 19 percent of the smartphone owners who took part in the study said they had at least one health "app," with exercise, diet and weight programs the most common.

(c) 2012 AFP

Citation: Jawbone "Up" fitness wristbands get in shape (2012, November 13) retrieved 23 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-11-jawbone-wristbands.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.