Internet technology becoming cyber chic

October 2 2013, by Glenn Chapman

Models wearing Google Glass eyewear, Pebble smartwatches and other hot gadgets strutted a catwalk as Internet technology merged with the world of fashion at the Glazed Conference in San Francisco, California on September 30, 2013

Models wearing Google Glass eyewear, Pebble smartwatches and other hot gadgets strutted a catwalk late Monday as Internet technology continued to merge with the world of fashion.

A Digital Fall [fashion](#) show here marked the close of the first Glazed Conference devoted to setting the stage for wearable computing startups to become billion-dollar businesses.

"It looks like technology for the sake of technology is dead," said Eliane Fiolet, co-founder of popular technology news website Ubergizmo.com and organizer of the fashion show.

"People want a great piece of technology that works well and looks great."

Companies are increasingly tuning into desires for sophisticated gadgets that also let people express personal styles, she noted.

Jawbone lets people customize colors of Jambox wireless speakers that synch wirelessly to smartphones, tablets, or laptop computers.

Nike allows people visiting its website to design their own athletic shoes, and matches some sports attire with wearable devices that track daily active for those chasing fitness goals.

"There will be more and more integration with fashion and technology," Fiolet said. "We are just at the very start of it."

She believed that Google has touched on a winning formula with Google Glass Internet-linked eyewear, which have become a fashion trend in the San Francisco and Silicon Valley areas.

A model struts down a runway wearing a dress made from plastic rings at the Glazed Conference in San Francisco, California on September 30, 2013

"We are in the next stage of human evolution," said Glazed Conference organizer Redg Snodgrass, co-founder of Stained Glass Labs startup accelerator devoted to revving up the wearable computing industry.

"Entrepreneurs aren't those nerds living in a closet anymore," Snodgrass said as the fashion show was about to commence in a club not far from Twitter's headquarters in San Francisco. "They are out there pushing the limit. Anything that is technologically fascinating is sexy, and fashion is tied to that."

While fitness has been a winning theme for early wearable computing devices, such as UP and Fitbit bracelets for providing feedback on whether people are hitting activity and sleep goals, Snodgrass thinks
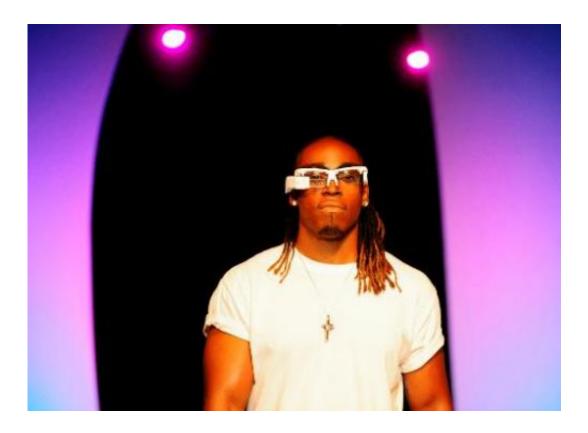
films and games will be the next areas to catch fire.

The one-day Glazed Conference was intended to bring together entrepreneurs, investors and others to explore ways to realize ideas and make money in the world of wearable computing.

"Not only did they show up, they brought the heat," Snodgrass said of the turnout. "They brought some great stuff."

Among the attendees was self-described 'cybertechnician' Tyler Freeman, who sported Drum Pants lined with sensors that let him play percussion beats by slapping various spots on his legs. The sensor strips are held in place with Velcro, meaning they can be swapped between pieces of a wardrobe, he explained.

"The goal is to get banned in public schools; then we know we are a success," said the San Francisco-based entrepreneur.

A model wears a pair of ORAS augmented reality digital eyewear at the Glazed Conference in San Francisco on September 30, 2013

Tapping on Drum Pants sends signals wirelessly to smartphones, which then direct thumps or synthesized sounds to come from speakers. The sensors could be used to control PowerPoint presentations or Google Glass cameras with casual touches of a leg, according to Freeman.

Fiolet already has her sights set on next year's show, with hopes of being able to showcase creations of London-based CuteCircuit, the cyber chic fashion house that wowed the world with a "Twitter Dress" worn by a celebrity to a 4G mobile network launch event in Britain in late 2012.

LED lights designed into the gown displayed posts from the globally-popular one-to-many messaging service.

Technology and fashion need to be combined tastefully to make for a winning creation, according to Fiolet.

"It has to be good looking; be a great piece of technology, and monitor something you care about," she contended. "If you don't care, you will never wear it. And, if it is ugly, you will never wear it."

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