

LG to launch new smartwatch this year

February 24 2014



LG will launch its first smartwatch in 2014, the head of its mobile unit says, tapping into the nascent market for wearable devices

LG will launch its first smartwatch in 2014, the head of its mobile unit said Monday, tapping into the nascent market for wearable devices seen as the mobile industry's new source of growth.

The announcement from the South Korean smartphone maker came after industry leader Samsung on Sunday launched the second generation of its own Internet-enabled [smartwatch](#), the Gear 2.

"We are working on the development of wearable device... more specifically in the form of a watch," Park Jong-Seok, the CEO of LG Electronics' [mobile](#) unit, told reporters.

"(It) will come out this year," he said, adding the watch would be remotely linked to smartphones.

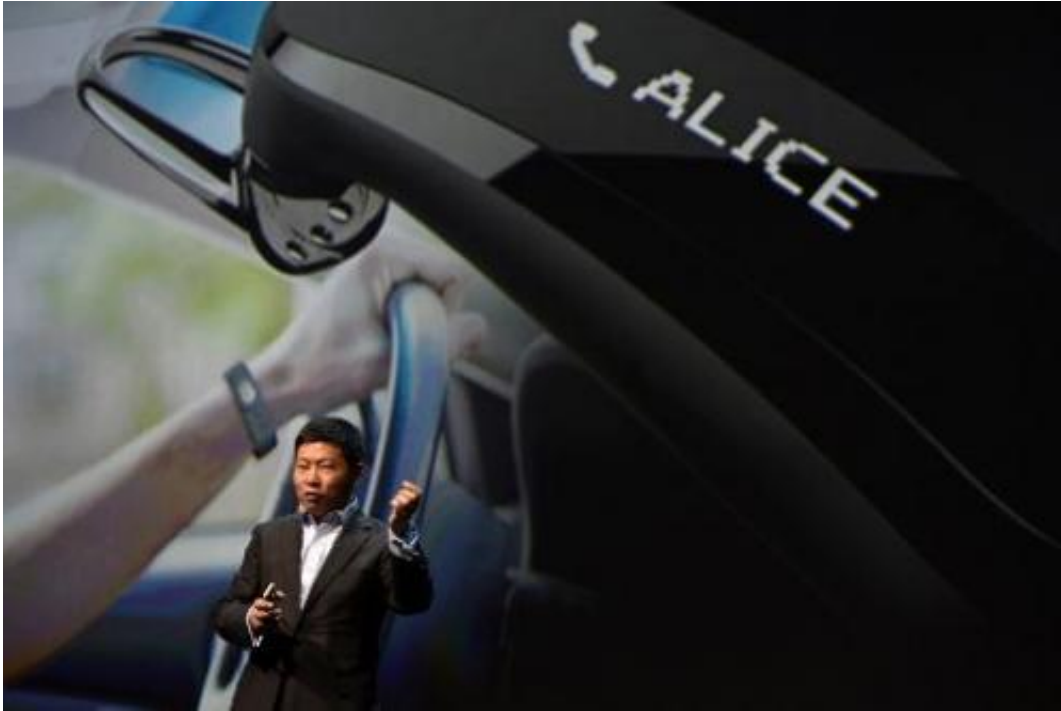
"We're working hard to put on the table something that other companies have not offered yet," Park said, without elaborating further.

LG—the world's fourth-largest smartphone maker—has not yet entered the market for [wearable devices](#) currently dominated by firms like Samsung, Sony and Pebble.

Rising Chinese smartphone maker Huawei also unveiled Sunday a connected watch called TalkBand to rival Gear 2, on the eve of the world's biggest mobile fair in Barcelona, Spain.

A typical smartwatch allows users to make calls, receive texts and emails, take photos and access apps.

So far, few companies have managed to generate large consumer excitement or sales in the market, also eyed by firms like Apple and Google.



Richard Yu, CEO of Huawei's Consumer Business Group, presents the Talkband B1 at the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona on February 23, 2014

Apple is believed to be set to launch its own smartwatch soon, while Google is moving towards a wider consumer launch of its Internet-enabled eyewear Glass later this year.

The much-anticipated "Galaxy Gear" smartwatch launched by Samsung last September, however, was received coldly by consumers, who viewed it unfashionable and unwieldy.

Now Samsung—the world's top maker of smartphones and mobile phones—seeks to lure more consumers with an array of new features on the Gear 2, including sport tracking software, a [heart rate monitor](#) and remote control for devices such as TVs.

Many handset makers are banking on smart devices to boost revenue as

sales of smartphones slow in the mature, and most profitable markets.

Though [smartphone](#) sales surged 42.4 percent to 968 million units last year, according to Gartner, the growth came from developing markets like Latin America, India and China, while mature markets such as western Europe and the United States hit the brakes.

Meanwhile, global smartwatch sales are expected to grow this year by more than 500 percent from 1.9 million units in 2013, and to expand further in coming years, according to the market researcher Strategy Analytics.

Advanced markets including the US and Western Europe will drive the market, it said.

© 2014 AFP

Citation: LG to launch new smartwatch this year (2014, February 24) retrieved 2 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-02-lg-smartwatch-year.html>

<p>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.</p>
--