

# Smart lifestyle takes centre stage at Asia tech show

June 1 2014, by Laura Mannering

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Asia's largest tech trade show will be a battleground for smart innovations when it kicks off in Taiwan Tuesday—from car systems which warn when you are driving badly to a toothbrush-style camera that films the user's teeth.

More than 1,500 exhibitors, including some of the world's leading technology brands, will set out their stalls at Computex, in the capital Taipei, with 130,000 visitors expected for the five-day event.

This year sees the launch of a new SmarTech area featuring smart wearables, 3D printing, intelligent vehicle systems and security—a move which organisers say reflects the increasing role of smart technology at all levels of everyday life.

"We're looking to interest everybody, from ordinary people to government level," said Li Chang, deputy secretary general of the Taipei Computer Association, co-organisers of the show.

Watches, rings and wristbands that connect to Internet cloud services which collect and analyse data is a dominant trend for the new generation of wearables being showcased, says Chang.

"Smart wearable is not a new technology, but combining it with cloud computing means the wearer's data is collected all day every day, is analysed and can predict your body's condition, giving warnings of potential health problems," he said.

Taiwan's leading personal computer maker Acer announced Friday the launch of its first wearable device, the Liquid Leap smartband, which will make its debut at Computex.

The one-inch touchscreen smartband has fitness tracking, phone and SMS notification and music control, and will be sold together with the Liquid Jade smartphone. The devices will also link to Acer's new [cloud services](#) as the struggling company tries to transition away from PCs to revive its fortunes.

## **Adapting to changing times**

"I think the introduction of the SmarTech area shows how dynamic Taiwanese companies are," Singapore-based tech blogger Alfred Siew told AFP.

"Computex has traditionally been a very PC-focused show because there are a lot of PC and component manufacturers there.

"But since last year there has been a prominent shift towards mobile devices—tablets and phones. Taiwan is a very dynamic economy when it comes to adapting to change," he said.

The show will also have a zone dedicated to convertible tablets as they try to elbow laptops out of the market, a "touch display" area and a section for mobile cloud computing.

Microsoft, Intel and Taiwan's Asus are among the major players attending Computex, but it is also a platform for lesser-known brands and start-ups.

Taiwanese company Abeltech won a pre-show Best Choice award for its Cloud Intraoral camera, which is shaped like a toothbrush and videos the

inside of the user's mouth, linking the high-definition footage to smartphones and tablets.

And the intelligent vehicle offerings will include a car system which gives a warning to drivers if they swerve out of lane, organisers said.

"There are a lot of small innovative start-ups in Asia which will want to use Computex as a place to show their technology," said Nicole Peng, Shanghai-based analyst for market research firm Canalys.

But, while the latest smart devices may deliver the biggest wow factor, the less glamorous aspects of computer technology, from motherboards to components, will also play their part at Computex—and are essential to the region's success in the tech world, Peng says.

"The region is not as outspoken or as loud as Silicon Valley, but I think a lot of mainly smaller-scale innovations happen here, on the components side and materials side.

"There's a need to keep on innovating because now, in the hardware area, the key is new materials and new components—for example sensors are very important these days for innovation," she added.

"Many Silicon Valley start-ups look for their components here, in Korea, Japan, Taiwan. That's still a very important area for them."

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