

# How Apple Watch can avoid some of Google Glass's pitfalls

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The unveiling of Apple Watch earlier this month was the moment the nascent wearable computing industry has been waiting for.

Apple's entrance legitimizes the category and ensures that wearables will receive a lot more attention from consumers, businesses and application developers.

But I was wondering what Apple has to get right with Apple Watch so

that it doesn't run into some of the backlash that the other notable wearables out there - like Google Glass - have experienced.

To its credit, Google Glass has tried to expand how people experience the Internet. The company's starting premise has been: Are there ways of being online other than looking away from people and down at screens? But Glass has been subject to a public pillorying. Comedians have poked fun at the early adopters, and there have been recurring concerns from some people about being secretly recorded by Glass wearers.

"In many ways Glass might be too futuristic for where the mass market is right now," said Barak Kassir, a partner at Rassak Experience, a digital branding consultancy firm. "Glass is a big leap for the wearer and those around him or her. That's great for an early adopter crowd but not the [mass market](#)."

Here is what Apple should do to avoid some of Glass's pitfalls:

- Tell us how Watch will make people's lives better.

In their Apple Watch unveiling, Apple executives described a myriad of things the device will be able to do, but it was difficult to come away with one clear idea of how a person's life would greatly improve with the gadget.

Glass likewise offers a lot of uses but no one clear use that makes it critical to own.

"Google hasn't found a way to make Glass a product that turns you into a better version of yourself," said Todd Balsley, marketing director at Forest Giant.

So what does Apple have to do? "Obsess over simplicity," he said.

"Adding bells and whistles won't separate them; simplicity will. They have to tell us as consumers what Apple Watch is meant to do, and tell us a story of how it will make our lives better."

-Make Apple Watch more than a smartphone on the wrist.

When Apple CEO Tim Cook talked about Watch, he said it would be a mistake to try to put all the features of the iPhone on the smaller screen and into a smaller device.

Even though one will need to use Watch with an iPhone, Watch will need to be its own stand-alone device, said Redg Snodgrass, founder and chief executive of Wearable World, an incubator, events and media firm focused on the wearable and the "Internet of Things" sectors.

"If they took the features that make the iPhone the most convenient mobile device ever and found a way where a watch can deliver and enhance those specific feature sets, then they'll win big," he said.

In fact, if Apple Watch succeeds, he said, Apple could disrupt the smartphone market again by making phones obsolete.

-Take great advantage of being on the body.

Apple has described how Apple Watch will connect with users through something called "haptic feedback," which refers to physical sensations delivered by gadgets (a simple example is a phone that vibrates when a new message arrives).

Rather than simply beeping when an important text message arrives on the iPhone, with an Apple Watch, a user may feel different kinds of vibrations. This will enhance the personal feel of Apple Watch.

"The most interesting thing is the haptic stuff," said Bob O'Donnell, the founder and chief analyst at TECHanalysis Research. "You can do more than make a wrist buzz."

-Think about how humans communicate offline and what freaks them out.

With Glass, Google aimed to make people look at each other and their surroundings while having access to a suspended computer screen. But some of those around Glass wearers have complained that they don't know if the wearer is paying attention to them or even recording them.

"Apple Watch should emit clear signs of recording, such as a combination sound like a beep and light," said Bryan Alexander, senior fellow for the National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education and a consultant.

Yes, Apple Watch will be yet another screen to look at. But it will live on the wrist, not the face.

That should mean that Watch owners will make more eye contact. That is, as long as the Watch interface isn't too engaging.

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