

Pebble smartwatch nears Kickstarter record

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The latest version of the Pebble smartwatch neared a record funding amount on Kickstarter on Friday amid growing interest in wearable tech and ahead of the highly anticipated Apple Watch launch.

As of 1630 GMT, some \$11.1 million had been pledged on the crowdfunding platform for the "Pebble Time" watch, a new version of

the original smartwatch that promises seven-day battery life.

The record on Kickstarter of \$13.3 million was set last year by the makers of the "Coolest Cooler," which includes a bluetooth speaker, USB charger and other features in addition to its beverage capacity.

Pebble raised more than \$10 million in 2012 with its original smartwatch.

One of the early smartwatch makers, Pebble is putting out its new device as Apple readies its connected watch, set for an April release.

The device, which has access to several thousand Pebble apps, is set to be priced around \$200.

Apple sent invitations Thursday for a mystery event due to take place on March 9, amid speculation about the Apple Watch.

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