

Apple Watch to boost 'glance journalism'

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An Apple Watch with stainless steel link bracelet

With the Apple Watch expected to sell in the millions, news organizations refocusing their efforts to become part of that tiny screen.

In the [news](#) business, this is now called "glance journalism."

The Apple Watch, expected to catapult to the leading item in wearable technology, opens up new possibilities to a news industry seeking to

connect with audiences in the digital era.

The New York Times says its app for the Apple Watch will be "a new form of storytelling" and that "editors on three continents" will update notifications. Readers will be able to "hand off" an article to view on an iPhone or iPad.

Yahoo will have four apps for the Apple device, including a news digest updated hourly with "microsummaries" of major stories, as well as apps for fantasy sports, weather and one specifically for Hong Kong news.

CNN and National Public Radio also have apps for the Apple Watch, and others are expected to follow.

The new technology means more bite-size news being directed at consumers, say media analysts.

"We are about to enter the era of 'at a glance journalism'," says Mario Garcia, a consultant with Garcia Media and faculty member at the Poynter Institute for Media Studies, in a blog post.

Garcia, who is also participating in a research project on news for smartphones with Arhus University of Denmark, said he is "fascinated" with the possibilities.

"It is more difficult to pull an iPhone out of one's pocket or a purse in a crowded New York City subway than it would be to glance at one's watch," he said.

"So, I predict that we will be doing a lot of glancing, as in reading seductive headlines and deciding if we read or not."



News providers are keen to use the Apple Watch platform to expand their readership

New formula needed

The emergence of wearables offers a new platform for the news media—one that is fast, personal and always on, says Robert Hernandez, who teaches mobile journalism at the University of Southern California.

"The ability to access knowledge will be quicker with the watch," Hernandez told AFP.

For newsrooms, it is "a new opportunity to be part of this person's body," Hernandez said.

And journalism will find a way to use the smartwatch, he said: "When

Twitter came out people were saying 'you can't do journalism in 140 characters,' but it has now become an essential tool."

Gilles Raymond, founder and chief executive of the News Republic application, says he believes the smartwatch will be an important source for news and that the Apple Watch will be an important test.

"When there is breaking news you want access to it immediately, so the watch is the ideal tool to do that," said Raymond, who is based in San Francisco for the French-based firm which offers smartphone and tablet news apps.

He said smartphone users now glance at their handsets more than 100 times a day, and with the smartwatch that could become 300 or 500 times: "It will be very addictive," he said.

Raymond said there is only limited experience with news on smartwatches now but that news organizations and apps are prepared for the possible widespread adoption of Apple Watch.

"The question is will you read only the first line and then take your phone out or will you read the full article on the watch?" he said.

"Both scenarios are credible but I think people will want to read the article on their watch. They can adapt."

News organizations will need to adapt as well, Raymond said, by developing content easily viewed on the small screen but could be rewarded with "a new way to build a relationship" with readers.



Looking at an Apple Watch for news is touted as being easier than pulling out your phone

Understanding mobile

But media organizations need to find the right formula for delivering short news alerts and notifications without being obtrusive or annoying. Wears of the watch are likely to fine-tune these systems to their liking.

Alan Mutter, a former Chicago newspaper editor who is now a digital media consultant, says news organizations need to think creatively about how to use new devices like the smartwatch.

"The insanely small screen cannot be just an extension of what's on the mobile phone," Mutter said.

"You have to think about how consumer uses the device and how can

you do something that's valuable."

Mutter said smartwatch users may not want to feel "pecked to death" by vibrating alerts and that news publishers must strike the right balance on these notifications.



Experts warn that Apple Watch users do not want to be constantly bothered with alerts

"Maybe it will be news at the top of the hour, in a spurt of headlines, or maybe it will be a summary you can listen to," he said.

"You have to create the content that works for the medium."

Mutter said most traditional news organizations failed to successfully

navigate to the Web, but now have an opportunity with mobile and smartwatches.

"They need to develop their mobile presence, they need to understand it's not just a passive device," Mutter said.

"If they do mobile right, they will be able to do Apple Watch."

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