

# How Intel is approaching wearable tech

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The fast-growing field of "wearables" - apparel and accessories that contain some sort of connected technology - is forcing chipmakers to find common ground with the fashion world.

It's a learning process, according to Ayse Ildeniz, who is [vice president](#) and general manager for [business development](#) and strategy with Intel's New Devices Group. Engineers have had to learn about fashion and clothes, and accessory designers have had to learn about technology.

But the collaboration already has produced the button-sized Curie module, based on an energy-efficient Intel chip called the Quark, which can be programmed to take on a multitude of tasks for the burgeoning Internet of Things.

Ildeniz spoke with the San Jose Mercury News recently. The interview has been edited for clarity and length.

**Q:** You have spoken a lot about the role of technology in women's lives. What are the main issues that you see as a woman in technology?

**A:** I think we need to make sure, when we're providing technology, that we cater to the needs of different segments of the market. Women are very, very important as far as wearables are concerned. Women do care hugely about what they wear and what they put on themselves. We need to make sure as technologists we provide cool usage models. Aesthetics is important.

Q: How would you go about it?

A: The way we decided to go about it is through partnerships. Instead of ourselves sitting in a lab insularly, to go out and talk to people who have been making these things for years. Two years ago, when we kicked off the New Devices Group, we went after Luxottica, Fossil - 15 brands in all. We went out and partnered with (the Council of) Fashion Designers of America. We got together with these people and we picked their brains as to what do they think women would wear.

Q: An example?

A: We came out with a smart bracelet, MICA - an Opening Ceremony brand - which is sold at Barneys instead of at a tech store. The bracelet has been overwhelmingly loved by women because of its aesthetics.

Q: This must have been a learning experience.

A: A huge one. First, it was working with a fashion house, then working with Oakley, part of the Luxottica Group, and then a product with TAG Heuer.

Q: What went into designing the smart bracelet?

A: The way we approached it is this: We got together with fashion designers, creatives and innovators, and we asked them about our first design, which was what we imagined a bracelet might be like. It was a rectangle, and it was huge. The Opening Ceremony folks said: "You got to be kidding me, it needs to be rounder and much thinner." The first design they faxed us from New York City was all metal and thin. Our engineers said: "It's not possible. How can you embed a radio in something that's fully metal? It's not going work." So there was an amazing back and forth between New York City and Silicon Valley

about what's possible, what do they want, how could we do it as engineers.

Q: Since then you have done a dress and a sports bra with a cutting-edge fashion house, Chromat. How did that go?

A: They (Chromat) understand tech very well. They've done 3-D printing and LED light stuff. They understand material. This dress, or the carbon fiber in back of the dress, takes a shape like an hourglass when the wearer's adrenaline gets high.

Q: What about the [sports bra](#)?

A: I can't tell you the why. I can tell you the what and how. Our Curie module, which is so small, came out of our partnership with the fashion world which told us, "Everything you guys are doing is great, it's just too big." So we went back and did this little button-like thing with sensors for perspiration and body temperature. If it gets too warm and you're perspiring, it opens little vents (to) help the body breathe a little better.

Q: What else is coming?

A: By 2020 and 2025 there are going to be 50 billion connected things which we call the Internet of Things, and we are trying to make that a reality. Everything in the world, from the lamp to the desktop you're using to the shirt you're wearing will have some kind of intelligence. Only then can the Internet of Things dream become a reality. Intel is invested in making this happen. You're going to see many more things.

Q: So engineers and fashion have finally merged?

A: It's a journey. There (are) a lot of mechanical issues, mechanical design problems to be fixed. These are questions we never have to worry

about in technology. We're all for function in technology and the fashion world is all about aesthetics and beauty.

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## AYSE ILDENIZ

Born: 1969

Education: Bachelor's degree, Bosphorus University, Istanbul, Turkey, 1982; master's in communication arts, San Francisco State, 1996

Career: At Intel since 1988; vice president and general manager for business development and strategy, New Devices Group at Intel 2013-present; regional director for Middle East, Turkey and Africa, 2004-2013; general manager for Turkey, 2001-2004; marketing director for the Mediterranean, Middle East and Africa region, 1998-2001

Home: San Francisco

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## FIVE THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT AYSE ILDENIZ

1. She is an avid traveler and has visited more than 80 countries.
2. She motorbikes, sails, hikes and adventure travels.
3. Her hobbies are history and archaeology, and she spends time off working archeological digs.
4. She likes to learn the local languages at these digs.

5. She likes to spend time in the summer with friends on the Aegean coast.

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