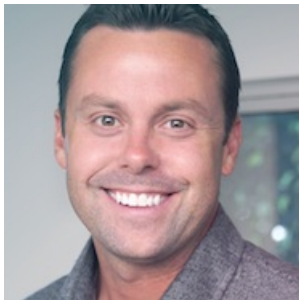


COLUMNS

One year on, Apple Watch and wearables are increasing BLE usage on smartphones

May 4, 2016



Kevin Hunter is president of inMarket

By **Kevin Hunter**

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

Last year, the wearables industry saw unprecedented growth. Major players such as Apple and Samsung released smartwatches, and fitness wearables including the Fitbit continued to fly off shelves.

While this growth is good news for the likes of Apple and Fitbit, it is also very important for the proximity and mobile marketing industries.

Kind of Bluetooth

The growth and adoption of wearables are having a tangible effect on Bluetooth usage on smartphones, increasing BLE usage and engagements.

Since Bluetooth beacons are the most accurate way to gauge a smartphone's location, BLE usage is directly related to gathering accurate location data at scale.

Due in large part to wearables adoption, we have seen a 4x increase in BLE usage in 2016 versus 2015.

More importantly, major releases such as the Apple Watch had a direct effect on BLE engagements.

We saw a 105 percent increase in BLE engagements in the four months after the release of the Apple Watch, versus the four months prior to its release.

This increase in BLE usage is great news for the proximity industry.

With access to more smartphones, we will see an increase the scale and accuracy of proximity programs.

The best news? It is just getting started.

Watch out

This year has quite the lineup for upcoming wearables, which means adoption and BLE usage will continue to grow.

The Apple Watch 2 is expected to be announced midyear, and the Samsung Triathlon and a HTC smartwatch are also expected to hit the market sometime this year. Those devices are just the big ones.

Brands such as New Balance, Casio and Michael Kors have also announced plans to join the wearables revolution, with the side effect of driving up BLE usage and accurate proximity engagements.

Beyond wearables, we are predicting more good news for the proximity industry.

The growth of the Internet of Things (IoT) as a whole will lead to an increase in BLE usage.

With the rise of home automation and the smart devices that go in them, more consumers will be introduced to devices that require BLE to be constantly on.

This smarter world will rely on tech such as Bluetooth to set the foundation for ambient intelligence and cooler IoT experiences.

ANOTHER INDICATION that enabling BLE will become a distant memory is the most recent Android update.

In this update, Google has added a Bluetooth-scanning feature within Android Marshmallow. This means that even if you have Wi-Fi and Bluetooth turned off, your Android device will still use both Wi-Fi and Bluetooth to scan for networks and improve location accuracy.

This is extremely important for the proximity industry because it will help improve location accuracy and the quality of engagements.

For a platform that leverages beacons to generate hyper-accurate first-party data, increasing Bluetooth usage will help expand reach even further, generating better quality engagements and better experiences for consumers.

Kevin Hunter is president of [inMarket](#), Venice, CA. Reach him at kevin@inmarket.com.

© 2020 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.