

## ABI: Smartwatches as Next Big Thing

Written by Marco Attard  
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ABI Research believes in the "strong potential" of the smartwatch-- according to the analyst changing consumer perceptions will lead to smartwatch shipments of over 1.2 million units for 2013 alone.



"The strong potential emergence of smartwatches can be attributed to several reasons," ABI says. "Contributing factors include the high penetration of smartphones in many world markets, the wide availability and low cost of MEMS sensors, energy efficient connectivity technologies such as Bluetooth 4.0, and a flourishing app ecosystem."

One can divide wearables in 4 categories-- notification types, voice operational smartwatches, hybrid smart watches and completely independent smartwatches.

Notification type devices include the MetaWatch and Cookoo smartwatches, providing alerts of the incoming call and message variety.

Voice operational smartwatches are exactly what the name suggests-- Dick Tracy-style wrist-mounted devices allowing one to conduct calls and speak some commands.

Standalone smartwatches carry an own OS, and have potential as a standalone products (rather than smartphone accessories) through high functionality and connectivity with other

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consumer devices. The I'm Watch is a good example, as do the other possible future devices from the likes of Apple, Microsoft, LG, Google and Samsung.

"Smart watches that replicate the functionality of a mobile handset or smartphone are not yet commercially feasible," ABI concludes. "Though the technologies are certainly being prepared."

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