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Is IT in Vogue?

The influence of IT is ever more so impervious ... No wait, or is that Fashion?

Contributed By: Freda Yuin, 2nd October 2013

It invaded our offices, our schools, our homes, our social lives and now, it invades a territory many would never have thought of – our wardrobe.

Remember the days of the “dai gor dai”, or “大哥大” as the first generation mobile phones were affectionately called in the 1980s? That monstrous brick our wealthier granddads used to parade around with? It boasted an incredible talk-time of 30 minutes, and measured in at a whopping 13 x 1.75 x 3.5 inches in dimension, took 10 hours to recharge, featured an LED display and a generous memory to store thirty "dialing locations"i.



Dr Martin Cooper posing with his invention

Those days, we were enthralled by the ground-breaking technology and the future that it alluded to. Much less could be said about its aesthetics though. We could hardly fit the mobile phones into our pockets; much less tout them as a feature of our wardrobe. Over the span of 20 years, the mobile phone industry made tremendous progress as mobile phones grew into their namesake and got smaller, quicker and smarter. These days, however, with the advent of wearable tech, our electronic gadgets are no longer designed to fit into our pockets and be hidden away. With its pervasive presence, the IT industry can no longer distance itself from the aesthetic rigor of the fashion industry.

Take the example from headlines in international papers, magazines and gadget websites late last month when gold-plated mobile phones launched a tsunami of adoring reviews among consumers.

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Then there was the collaboration between Isabelle Olsson, the lead industrial designer for Google Glassⁱⁱ, and Diane von Furstenberg, a Belgian-born American fashion designerⁱⁱⁱ, at New York Fashion Week. Specially designed for the Diane Von Furstenberg Runway, the Glasses came in carrot orange, white, and turquoise^{iv} to appeal to the astute tastes of fashionistas.



Left: A model wearing specially designed Carrot Orange Google Glasses at a Diane Von Furstenberg Runway at Fashion Week

Right: Diane Von Furstenberg and Google co-founder Sergey Brin at Fashion Week wearing the specially designed Google Glasses.

Keeping up with the times, Samsung Mobile teams up with Dana Lorenz, a fast-rising jewellery designer, to add a dash of glamour and edge to the Galaxy Gear Smartwatch^v and sent it down the runways of Moschino and Fallon at Milan Fashion Week as well as New York Fashion Week respectively^{vi}.

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Dana Lorenz designed jewellery and carrying cases for the Samsung Galaxy Gear smartwatch and Note 3.

Just as technology companies are realising where their differentiator is and are quickly paving their way into the fashion industry, the same could be said about forward-thinking fashion designers. The lack of a “digital vision” threatens the livelihood of fashion houses, warns former Topshop’s Marketing Chief, Justin Cooke^{vii}.

Remember Katy Perry’s LED Dress?



Katy Perry in her one of a kind LED Dress at the MET Gala

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That was cool, but wait. Let's kick it up a notch and check out the two 3D-printed dresses featured at Iris van Herpen's show at Paris Fashion Week 2013. ^{viii}



It is evident that as technology grows more pervasive, IT has taken on a whole other level of significance for consumers. The stress on tech-companies is no longer only about the practicalities and functions of devices, but about how these devices can assimilate into our wardrobe.

Hey techies! It's high time for you to ditch your sweats and slick back your out-of-bed locks and pick up your next issue of Vogue!

Now tell me again, just how in vogue is IT?

References:

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ⁱⁱⁱ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diane_von_F%C3%BCrstenberg

^{iv} <http://www.businessinsider.com/google-glasses-diane-von-furstenberg-2012-9?op=1#ixzz2gXHJ0ldG>

^v <http://www.sammobile.com/2013/09/12/samsung-galaxy-gear-to-get-jewelry-encrusted-accessories-from-designer-dana-lorenz/>

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^{vii} <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2013/sep/16/london-fashion-week-technology-justin-cooke>

^{viii} <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2013/sep/16/london-fashion-week-technology-justin-cooke>