



Smartwatches

Is the wearable tech a boon for business leaders on the go or just another fiddly distraction for the info-overloaded? IoD staff and members put three of the latest models to the test

1 Jon Waters
Director, Roadcrest

What Fossil Q Founder, £279



This is the first time I have used a smartwatch. While walking around London, I found it useful being able to check who was trying to communicate with me, without having to get my phone out. The Fossil Q Founder is really easy to use – with a good display for a 52-year-old to read

– and its functions are useful without being cluttered. For my tastes, it didn't have too many unnecessary functions that look good but are never used, though I'm not sure I would have the courage to start talking to the Google function in public!

It satisfies the need to know who has just contacted you without appearing rude and reaching for your phone while in a meeting. And I like the diary reminders that help you keep track of your time. The messages are really easy to look at without the need for a lot of face tapping. So a lot of pluses. The only negatives are that the watch is a bit bulky and the recharging system seems a bit cumbersome. It can also be a bit sensitive, but you do get used to it.

fossil.co.uk
IoD Jon Waters is a member of IoD Surrey

2 Alex Mitchell
Director, Young Brits Network, and founder of Causarma

What Apple Watch, from £300



I like wearable tech so I bought the Apple Watch shortly after it was released, as I was interested to see how it worked and operated. It's essentially a drone of your phone – you can use it for mail, for messaging, for calls and for making payments. When I first saw it, I wasn't too

certain about the display as it comes up with loads of different thumbnails – but it's quite easy to press the one you want, so it's really straightforward to use.

You can take phone calls from it so long as it's within Bluetooth range of your phone. The map function is really good and you can even send texts by speaking into the watch while it writes the message for you. And the voice recognition was much better than I was expecting. The only problem is the battery life – it only lasts about a day and you have to charge it every night. There's also the temptation to check emails, so there could be an issue of work/life balance and less chance that you will switch off outside work. Overall I'm really pleased with it.

apple.com/uk
IoD Alex Mitchell is chair of IoD 99

3 Tom Christie-Miller
Marketing director, IoD

What Tag Heuer Connected, £1,100



On first impressions the box surprised me, as it lacked the prestigious look I was expecting. The watch itself, though, was beautiful and the craftsmanship and weight felt really high quality. There were very few instructions, so you need to guide yourself through

the set-up: you need Android Wear and Tag apps, and your phone needs up-to-date software, as well. However, once you have set it up it's pretty intuitive to use.

The best feature was the automatic alert for phone calls. Cycling to work, I would have missed a call with a senior non-exec had I not had it on, so that was really useful. The messages and agenda were also great and the display is really clear. It looks like a robust sports watch and I am told it was splash proof – but I didn't risk it by having a bath with it on!

The downside was having to charge it every day. Sometimes, if used a lot, it didn't last the whole day, so I had to carry the charger with me. Overall, it's a really brilliant idea and well executed with chunky, robust design.

tagheuerconnected.com

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