Wearable technology is fast becoming a part of our technological life that is commonplace and expected. Development of wearable tech can go back to the calculator watch in the 1980's and has now developed to a wide range of devices, from dresses that let you know when you have a phone call to glasses that can record your day-to-day life.

For UAL wearable technology is becoming something that can be incorporated into its curriculum. In 2009 the BA Fashion Design and Development course launched its collaboration with Sony Ericsson (now Sony Xperia) to look at incorporating technology into fashion. The first year's winner, Georgie Davies, produced a dress that lit up when you received a call, using Bluetooth technology.

‘Her concept was an outfit which could alert a girl if her mobile rang in a noisy bar or club. She designed a cocktail dress, inspired by butterfly wings and made up of interactive scales; when the wearers mobile rang, the dress lit up’ (Alexander, Hilary ‘ Maria Sharapova Models Hi-Tech Student Fashion’ telegraph.co.uk 22nd June 2009 Web 4, 4th July 2014)

The latest project between LCF and Sony Xperia has seen students designing a garment or accessories to compliment the sony smartwatch, as well as initiate new uses for it. The winner, Claire Monique Scanlon, designed a changeable strap and app, to allow bloggers to blog on the go, and keep an update on their online identity.

"My collection is influenced by the inspirational look of fashion bloggers. I have created a fabric strap which can be attached to a stylish jacket, worn around the wrist or adapted in any way the wearer desires. The strap will also come in a range of unique styles
and patterns. I also intend to create an app for the LiveView™ which will allow fashion bloggers to quickly update their blogs from shows and events, helping make LiveView™ the latest fashion accessory.” (‘Sony Xperia: Wearable Tech’, UAL London college of Fashion, 6th March 2014, n.p, n.d Web 4, 7th July 2014)

Earlier this year google released its google glass, a new device that allows you to access a computer in your general eye line, whilst still getting on with your daily activities. Features on the google glass include:

- Navigation – google glass allows you to see you navigational path, with directs on where to go to get to your destination.

- Take picture and video – by say ‘ok glass, take a picture’ you can take photos or video, hands-free.

- Search – you can search anything online, you just say ‘ok glass, google…’ and the glass will google anything you want it to in an instance.
• Fieldtrip – this app gives you a guide to local history, insider knowledge, design, architecture and more as you travel. The app will refresh when something interesting is nearby and let you know information about it.

• Allthecook – gives you step-by-step recipe guides whilst you cook.

• Social – allows you to share instantly onto a number of social media sites such as google+, facebook, youtube, tumblr, path and twitter.
- Evernote – lets you take notes on the go, by dictating them to your google glass. It also allows you to share notes from other devices.

- Google play music – by saying 'ok glass, listen to...' you can load your music and listen to it on the go.

- Sending messages – you don’t need to touch the screen to send a message on google glass. You just say 'ok glass, send a message to...' and then dictate the message. Google glass with give you a preview of the message before it is sent.
• Word Len- with word lends you can translate anything you see into your own language. Word lens lets you translate printed word in real time.

So, why did google develop google glass?

The underlining reason for the development of google glass seems to be in the need to create a smart devise that still allows for shared social interaction. In a recent Ted talk, 'Why google glass?' Sergey Brin, one of the founders of google, explained that the motivation had been to stop people looking down at their phones, his reasoning behind this was that 'in addition to socially isolating yourself when you are out and about on your phone, its also down to 'is this what you are meant to do with your body...your standing around there and your essentially rubbing this featureless piece of glass'. He states that at google 'when we developed glass we thought about can we delevop something that frees your hands...and also if you want something that frees your eyes...and we wanted something that frees your ears. Google glass meets these criteria by be voice activated in order to free the hands, for most applications you say the words 'ok glass..followed by what you want to do. Any displace in glass in presented outside of the main eye line, freeing you to see what is going on as well as interacting with glass, this frees the eyes. Also any sound, such as music or phone call work by sending sound vibrations through the cranium, therefore freeing up the ears'.

Steve Lee, product director at google glass stated the following in regards to the development of glass in relation to social interaction.

'human being have developed a new problem since the advent of the i-phone and the following mobile revolution; no one is paying attention to anything they are actually doing...we wondered, what if we brought technology closer to your senses? would that allow you to more quickly get information and connect with other people, but do so in a way - with a design - that gets out of your way when you’re not interacting with technology' (Topolsky, Joshua 'I used google glass: the future, but with monthly updates', The Verge, 22nd Feburary 2013 Web 4)

What are the future prospects for google glass?

Google Glass has already been picked up by the medical profession. The potential usage of glass within this profession is wide reaching, including enabling tele-medicine and other functions that would enable
easier access to medical care for remote locations, use in surgery and use in medical teaching, whereby the students would be able to see through the eyes of the professional exactly what to do. further to this glass has the potential to infiltrate every subject in a teaching capacity, with the ability to not only give students a first and view of how to perform certain skills, but also the ability to record their work and develop through interactive learning.

References and further reading:

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