APPLE WATCH AND YOU
THE EVENT PLANNER’S GUIDE TO THE NEW AND HYPER-PERSONAL ATTENDEE EXPERIENCE
INTRODUCTION

Despite being the company’s newest product, the Apple Watch has already broken category sales records and is on pace to be Apple’s most rapidly adopted product yet. Pre-orders began on April 10, 2015, and sold out in a matter of minutes. When it finally hit the shelves on April 24, it sold more on its first day than Android smart watches sold in a whole year. Just over two months later, it is already selling more quickly than the iPhone did when it first hit the market.

But what does that mean to you, the event planner?

Reality check: attendees yearn for more personalized experiences at events, and planners constantly seek new ways to deliver; The Apple Watch is an intensely personal – hyper-personal, as the saying is emerging – device. It therefore makes sense to marry the two.

If sales projections are right – 15 to 20 million units in the first year, and we’re still months away from the holiday selling season – it won’t be long before you start seeing a lot more people glancing at their wrists during your event.

This guide will help you figure out how to take full advantage.
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WHAT IS THE APPLE WATCH?

According to Apple.com, Apple Watch “…lets you do familiar things more quickly and conveniently. As well as some things that simply weren’t possible before.”

Apple Watch is a timepiece (shocking), a fitness monitor, and a home for several standard apps that come preloaded on other Apple devices, such as weather, maps, passbook, calendar, music, and more. It’s also a communications device, featuring versions of the mail and message apps you’ll find on iPhones and iPads, and a wireless microphone that works with your iPhone so you can talk into your wrist (hello Dick Tracy). A few functions are stand-alone, but most require a nearby, Bluetooth-enabled iPhone (version 5 or later running iOS 8.2 or later). iPads are not yet supported.

WHAT CAN AN APPLE WATCH APP DO THAT A MOBILE PHONE APP CAN’T?

The best way to answer this question is to think about the user, not the device: What can an attendee do with Apple Watch that can’t be done with the regular app?

The real value of a smart watch is its more subtle, more ‘glanceable’ form factor. It’s far easier to flick your wrist than it is to pull your phone out of your pocket, purse, backpack or wherever you keep it. Mentally, it’s all in the glance – consuming information quickly, discreetly and on the go. This hyper-personal experience is what makes Apple Watch so appealing.
CAN MY EVENT APP WORK ON APPLE WATCH?

The short answer is ‘yes, but not out of the box’. It will take some customization. While there are third-party apps running on Apple Watch, such as a shopping app for Target, a loyalty app for the Starwood Preferred Guest program, some airline apps, and the Nike+ Running app, these early apps are first-generation iterations, much like the watch itself. Until Apple releases the complete Apple Watch software development kit in the fall of 2015, Watch apps won’t be able to tap into the Apple Watch’s motion sensor or any other technology built into the watch, nor will they work if not tethered to your iPhone.

There are many use cases for Apple Watch during a day in the life of an event attendee: checking into a session, taking a poll, checking the schedule, even reading brief documents. But in how many of these does the watch offer a better experience than the phone-based app?

Here at QuickMobile, we approach every new event technology with the same question: how does it make the experience better for the stakeholder? If the answer isn’t clear, then we give it some time to evolve. We took the same view of Apple Watch, recognizing that out of the gate its capabilities are limited, but still useful. We saw a very specific opportunity that truly makes the attendee experience better: delivering personalized, relevant content.
THE INDUSTRY’S FIRST
APPLE WATCH EVENT APP INTEGRATION

QuickMobile is the first event app company to offer integration with Apple Watch, blazing the trail at the Corporate Event Marketing Association’s Annual Summit in La Jolla, California in July 2015. The integration is built around a simple yet highly valuable proposition: leverage the watch and its most natural use cases to help attendees make better use of their time at the event. To this end, the CEMA integration includes push notifications, glance view, and schedule view. Thanks to the Apple Watch integration, attendees simply need to roll their wrists to see where they’re supposed to go next.

“QuickMobile is a recognized leader in mobile event technology, and a valued partner at the CEMA Summit. We’re excited that they chose our event to introduce their Apple Watch integration. Our attendees expect to see new technologies at work at CEMA Summit, and smart watches rank near the top of the list.”
- Kimberley Gishler, Executive Director, CEMA

PUSH NOTIFICATIONS

Push notifications are powerful communication tools for conveying timely information such as the start of a keynote session or a reminder to complete a survey. They work well because the attendee does not need to have the app open to see them – they get displayed as a banner or pop-up, and can even be seen when the device is locked (depending on device settings).
Any time an event organizer sends a push notification to attendees using the CEMA mobile app on an iPhone or iPad, the message will appear on the Apple Watch, accompanied by a light tap on the wrist from the device’s haptic touch technology. Since the attendee won’t need to have the phone in hand or even in sight, the message is far more likely to be viewed in a timely manner. In fact, there’s no faster way to send messages and get them noticed.

**MY SCHEDULE GLANCE VIEW**

Glance views on Apple Watch are like flash cards for apps; they reveal pertinent, timely information at a, well, glance. The user swipes the glances to the side to scroll through them.

Since events are very much about being in the desired place at the desired time, a glance view of the schedule can come in very handy. CEMA’s glance view connects to the attendee’s personalized schedule, showing what’s coming up next. With a quick flick of the wrist, they’re off to the next session or activity without fishing through their bag to find their phone. It’s almost like having a personal assistant ushering them to their next meeting.

**MY SCHEDULE DETAILED VIEW**

Tapping on the Apple Watch face while in glance view mode will ‘open up’ the underlying app, revealing further detail and actionable information. For the CEMA integration, this will give full access to the attendee’s complete personalized schedule, which they can scroll through at their leisure. As they manage their schedules in the phone app, their Apple Watch updates in real-time.
NOW WHAT DO I DO?

The Apple Watch offers a long list of exciting new capabilities and experiences for your attendees, which will only get better once full integration is available. It’s easy to get excited about the Watch’s haptic touch (tap on the wrist) notification capabilities, but like push notifications, it’s also easy to go too far. It’s not about the bells and whistles (remember Google Glass?) – it’s about user-centric design.

We suggest you start off small, keep the effort to a minimum, and focus intensely on real attendee impact. That’s what the folks at CEMA did, and they were able to show real value, not just sizzle.

The beautiful thing is if you have a QuickMobile app, you don’t have to do very much. We’ll sit down with you and explore the possibilities, and help you decide what works best for your event, and your attendees.

Given its early success, we believe the impact of Apple Watch on the meetings & events industry will be just as significant as that of the smartphone, only it will happen a lot quicker. We’re planning big things for the deeper integrations that will come in the fall of 2015, and we’re excited to share them with you.

It’s time to think ahead. We’re ready when you are.
QuickMobile is the global leader in event apps

Contact us today to begin your journey toward a better attendee experience.

Request a free demo

Learn more

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