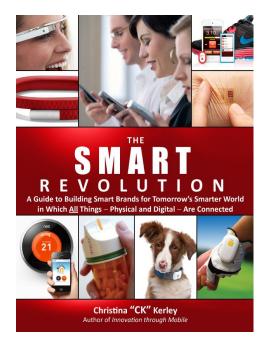


## From Smartphones to Smart Everything: Welcome to the 'Smart' Revolution (Part 1 of 2)

by Christina "CK" Kerley | December 3, 2013 |



I've spent the past 20 years passionately—relentlessly—chasing innovation. From the dawn of a magnificent digital universe born of the Internet, through the thrill of global conversations set ablaze by social media, to the magic of mobile's anytime-anywhere technology connecting an entire planet, I've reveled in the shock and awe of innovation.

And through each disruptive technology, I've watched executives make a *critical* choice: whether to transform their companies so as to build competitive advantage, or maintain their current course... and risk being among the fallen brands that fill the news headlines.

Now, as we shortly embark on 2014, we are at the threshold of yet *another* stunning revolution—and a unique turning point in history. Soon, for the first time, there will be more

things than people connected to the Internet. From a forecast of 19 billion connected things in 2016 skyrocketing to an estimated 50 billion to 75 billion connected things by 2020.

In this coming era, the physical and digital worlds—realms that have always been separate and distinct—will collide, converge, and collaborate. Technology will breathe life into lifeless objects. Sensors will turn inanimate things into intelligent devices. And in our lifetime, over the course of but a handful of years, we will witness the static things that fill our environment spring to life all around us.

Computers will continue to be integrated into the devices we carry (like our smartphones, tablets, and phablets). Woven into the items we wear (as with Google Glass eyewear, smartwatches, and NFC-enabled rings). And embedded into the everyday objects we live alongside—the appliances in our homes, the shoes on our feet, the collars on our dogs, the pills from our pharmacies, the cars that we drive, the buildings where we work and the products in our supply chains.



Even the very notion of computers as separate things will become nonsensical... for they will very much live in *all* things.

But, wholly unlike the cautionary tales threaded throughout scores of sci-fi thrillers, these smart objects will not rise up and turn us into their indentured servants. On the contrary, they will give rise to *systems that serve* us by making our lives better, our bodies healthier, our work easier, and our brands superior.

## From Smartphones... to Smart Everything

Earlier this year, I published an article series on mobile innovation. I detailed how, by wielding mobile media, marketers can innovate every facet of their marketing due to a host of sophisticated mobile tools and the ubiquity of smartphones.

But now we move from an age of smartphones... to an era of smart *everything*. And in this era, technology will not only change how we market our brands but also transform the core brands themselves.

I refer to this massive progression as The "Smart" Revolution: for *smart* is this revolution's dramatic benefit and its new best-practice. Because the goal is not a connected world—connections are but the conduit—the goal is a smarter world punctuated by smart products, smart places, smart networks, smart services, and smart solutions.

Said another way, connections make this revolution possible; but transforming static objects into smart things make this new era powerful.

To be sure, these smart capabilities are born from technological advancements—spanning machine-to-machine communications (M2M), digital sensors, and the Internet of Things (IoT). But while "The Internet of Things" refers to the connecting of things, the benefit that results from those connections is *smart* products and services. And where "machine-to-machine communications" refers to machines that speak to one another, the advantage that arises from that communication is *smart* devices.

"Smart," then, rings most true and is most apt for the coming revolution.

## 'The Next Big Thing' Is Going to Be Really, Really BIG

While mobile lays claim to the largest technology platform in human history—currently clocking an unstoppable, unbelievable 6.8 billion mobile connections worldwide—loT is poised to become the biggest system that mankind has ever built, connecting 10 times as many devices to the Internet as has the mobile revolution.



Wearable technology—just *one* sector of smart objects, mind you—is set to surge tenfold, from \$3-5 billion to \$30-50 billion, over the next three years. A seemingly staggering figure, until one looks at the total anticipated economic impact of these smart technologies: IDC forecasts IoT to generate \$8.9 trillion dollars in global spending by 2020 while Cisco predicts that what it's branded "The Internet of Everything" will be worth \$14.4 trillion in value at stake by 2022.

And this next big thing isn't only set to be really big... it will be here sooner than you think.

Whereas the Internet attained critical mass in 10 years, mobile did so in half the time. Moreover, this smart revolution need not wait for technological adoption from the masses, because they are *already* carrying the key technology that will trigger the coming tidal wave of smart objects.

Because everywhere they go, their smartphones go with them.

And because smartphones are already ubiquitous, the smart revolution will likely follow the breakneck pace of adoption set by predecessor innovations. Or, perhaps, as the above titanic-sized forecasts indicate, the smart revolution will set entirely new records.

Now, does all of this talk of a smarter world teeming with billions of smart objects and trillions of dollars in economic impact seem too promising or simply preposterous? That's understandable, but consider this: Right now, only our phones are smart—and yet, that one smart device has swiftly and entirely transformed the way our planet communicates, lives, works, and purchases.

More to the point, we didn't have smartphones a mere seven years ago, and now we cannot fathom living without them... for even one day. (We even suffer from nomophobia.)

Soon enough, all the things that make up the world all around us will be smart. And, just as we now stand in awe at how we ever survived without our smartphones, all too shortly we will be positively mystified at how smart humans ever lived in a world once filled with so many dumb things.

## **Building Smart Brands: A Presentation and Companion Guide for Marketers**

In readying for 2014, the Web is abuzz over wearable technologies, smart gadgets, and intelligent machines—yet it's currently devoid of guidance for the brand builders themselves. It's ironic, considering that the role of marketers will be among the most affected by tomorrow's smarter world.

For it is our brands that will face the biggest battles in the coming race for smart market share. And it is our target audiences who will demand better, faster and easier solutions in a 21st century smarter marketplace.



Moreover, it is our companies that will be competing against the likes of both David and Goliath, as smart technologies will bolster the already formidable Fortune 500s as well as catalyze a cadre of new entrants. (Many of them are moving at warp speed—from idea to market in 30 days—due to crowdfunding platforms like Kickstarter).

Which brings me to Part 2 of this series. Next week, I'll feature a special on-demand presentation and e-book download. Tailored for marketers, the special segment will cover why marketers need to begin focusing on these emerging technologies, present a five-point framework of best-practices, and provide an e-book companion.

Without question, the path to a smarter world will consist of many steps for marketers. As we look ahead to 2014, let us



take the first leap—today—by building the smart brands that will capture the customers of tomorrow.



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