∞ (stream) – these are the wanderings of my camera (fuji-san) and me. – naveen

Wearables versus there-ables.

What if we've got it all wrong?

What if we're not actually supposed to wear all sorts of technology on our bodies and on our clothes? What if we didn't have to / weren't meant to carry our technology with us as we moved around town?

What if the technology was actually already in the room when we got there? Maybe that's the kind of Internet-of-things that will be more sustainable and will win long-term.

We already have early indications that this is a product category that is succeeding and sees more engagement long-term than the types we carry around. I can't tell you the number of times I've personally experienced or heard anecdotes about the typical wearable drop-off: you stop using a device or service after four to six weeks of breaking-in. On the other hand, the most successful types of hardware I've seen recently are Nest Thermostat and Withings Wi-Fi

Scale, both of which you plug in and use, perhaps not multiple times a day, but every once in a while for many days and years to come.

It's true that both tap into something that we were doing for years as opposed to having us learn about and track something new. (The Nest tracks temperature; the Withings, weight). But there are other smart devices that are around the corner that fit my proposal too: a bed that tracks you and vibrates to wake you up gently; a smart toilet or shower that tracks your body's physiology, diet and illnesses; a smart kitchen that…well, you get the picture.

That's not to say that wearables have no place in our future – perhaps the way they should evolve is to become really cheap, incredibly dumb single-feature sensors that actually need another layer like our phone or like a pairing with a there-able device.

Wearables know it's us because we exclusively wear them and sync them with our phones. That's the authentication: our phones and the identity handoff that resides in that exchange.

There-ables infer identity based on how you interact with them. There-ables know it's us because, well, they are smarter: Nest knows our heat signature. Withings knows our body composition.

There-ables have fewer power restrictions; they're often just plugged right into the power grid and, therefore, don't need to have batteries charged everyday.

Meanwhile, by being battery powered, wearables can be smaller, cheaper and more abundant all over your body. Perhaps wearables can become like the zippers in our clothing: cheap enough and standardized enough to be in basically every piece of clothing we have on. Or perhaps wearables will take the form of the "smart pill" we keep hearing about: you take it and the results are later calculated by your futuristic toilet and zoomed to the cloud for review.

Here's a final thought in this argument: that we may not want to carry more than one device with us when we move around. Currently, that is our phone. Yes, it's a whole bunch of other things too (wallet, keys, …) but, more than likely, these things will all just continue to collapse into one thing: our phone.

And then maybe, besides our phones, the best technology is one that's already present where we are going.