

Fitness Technology: Its Not Just Entertainment | CEA Digital Dialogue

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For me, the highlight of Day 1 at CES was the “[It’s Not Just Tech, It’s About Aspiration](#)” panel at the [Sports and Fitness Tech Summit](#). Panelists included [Valencell](#) CEO Steven LeBoeuf, Justin McCarthy of [Garmin International](#), Jim Minarik of [Polk Audio](#), James Park of [Fitbit](#), Dave Wang of [Striiv](#) and Rich Schmelzer [GeoPalz Technology](#) consultant, fitness fan and avid blogger Denise Lee Yohn served as the moderator.

It was an interesting collection of fitness related technologies targeting everything from kids, families, elite athletes, mainstream fitness fans and everything in between. As a matter of fact, that was one of the challenges panelists discussed – developing and delivering a technology or product that has broad market appeal while also focusing on what you know best. For these companies, partnering is a good way to make the most of their products.

The fitness technology panel experts explained not only the importance of getting feedback from your customers and prospects, but integrating those comments your products. However, there is a balancing act between giving consumers what you can give them and what they actually need and want. Many of the panelists focus on delivering their fitness technology in a way that leverage’s a consumer’s current behavior through something they already do or use. In the end, the goal is to improve the consumer’s lifestyle without too much disruption.

For a hands-on experience, Denise had the unique opportunity to “try” each of the panelists’ technologies and products prior to the event to reflect on her personal experience with the audience. She seemed particularly interested in access to and accuracy of her fitness data both during and post-workout, including the ability to learn from that data to improve her fitness going forward. And like many consumers, wearability, convenience and appearance were important factors.

While the panel was fun and the technologies were interesting, the appeal went well beyond that. For me, the panel and all of the technologies demonstrated what I think is an important shift in the consumer electronics industry – one from “technology just for entertainment’s sake” to “technology that is really helping people live better (and hopefully healthier) lives.” With all the bright lights, loud noise and buzz about the latest and greatest consumer gadget, that message can get lost at a show like CES. Hopefully with more emphasis, such as events like the Sports and Fitness Tech Summit and Fitness and Digital Health Tech Zones, the message will be heard a little more in the consumer electronics industry.