Mobile World Congress 2014 Recap
March 10, 2014

Source: DigitalTrends.com

IPG MEDIA LAB

What is Mobile World Congress?

Held in Barcelona, Mobile World Congress is the largest mobile technology event in the world. It's roughly 60% the size of CES, and attracts a much more international community. It is increasingly the venue of choice for major mobile manufacturers to unveil new flagship products.

Exhibitors are a mix of device makers, mobile network operators, B2B hardware and software providers, and B2C applications and services.

MWC 2014: Three Key Trends

This year's conference features three key trends:

Beacons – Enabling mobile devices to detect close-range proximity to specific in-store or out of home locations.

Connected Car – Many car companies are focusing on mobile phones as the "brain" of the connected car.

Wearable Computing – A variety of companies are pushing smart watches, smart glasses, wearable GPS trackers, and other quantified self devices.

Beacons

Apple's influence was barely felt at MWC 2013, but 2014 was a different story. After the launch of iOS 7 and Apple's support of "iBeacons," a host of vendors are looking to create beacon solutions– often displaying them alongside NFC products.

Beacons use Bluetooth Low-Energy (BLE) to create tailored retail or out-of-home experiences. As you navigate within an environment, an app installed on your mobile device detects a beacon and launches a relevant experience.

Connected Car

The Car Connectivity Consortium continued its focus on "MirrorLink" at MWC, which turns your car's touchscreen into a mirror of your phone– allowing you to make calls and access apps. Apple's recently announced CarPlay takes a similar approach.

The takeaway is that many car manufacturers are making it easy for mobile app developers to create experiences for the car by turning your mobile device into the car's "brain." The big implication for the ad industry: mobile ads are the future of in-car advertising.

Wearable Computing

Wearable computing is having a mainstream moment, thanks in part to high profile products like Google Glass. Companies like Docomo, Fujitsu, and SAP displayed compelling AR experiences for smart glasses-- using overlays showing you how to fix appliances, translate menus, get directions, and more.

Smartwatches and bands from Samsung and Sony were among the most talked about products at the conference.

Interesting Technologies

Besides these trends, a few other technologies caught our eye:

- SAP's Connected Vending Machine
- RealVNC
- DNP
- Citibrain
- LG's Board
- Accenture's Connected Fitting Room
- Sony's SmartBand and Lifelog App
- BeMap
- iDSpot
- Queexo

SAP's Connected Vending Machine

SAP's futuristic vending machine implements pretty much every innovative technology you could ask for including an iBeacon, NFC reader, facial detection, and social media integration.

Its personalization-minded loyalty program even addresses you by name on its touch screen, saves your favorites, and lets you send gifts to friends.
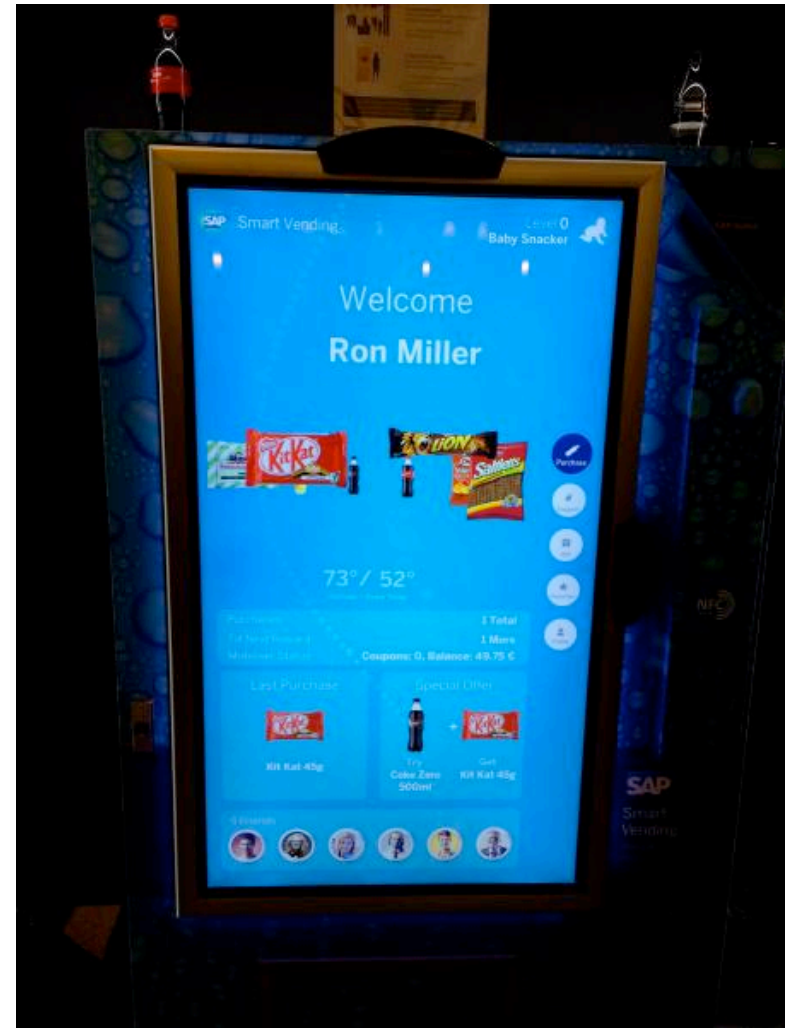
Source: CiteWorld

RealVNC

Its technology powers "MirrorLink," which mirrors your phone on your car's touch screen via a USB connection.

The technology is being endorsed by Car Connectivity Consortium members like Honda, Toyota, Mazda, Samsung, LG, Sony, HTC, VW, Hyundai, Fiat, and Renault.
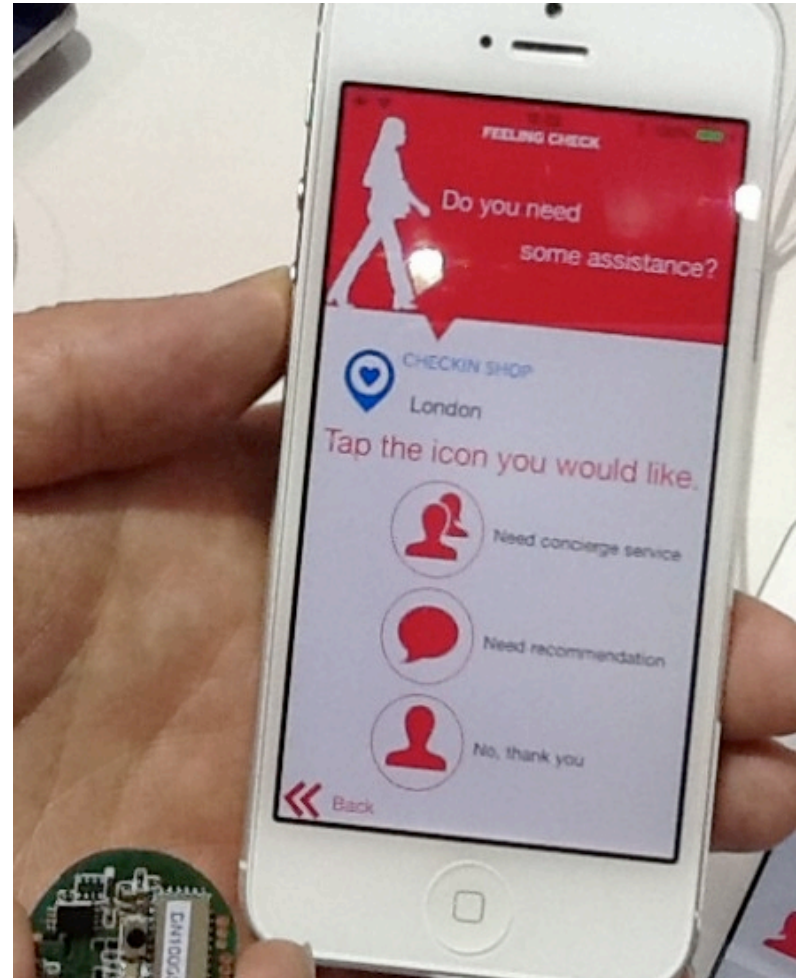
Source: RealVNC

DNP

Japan's DNP (Dai Nippon Printing Co) offers a plug-and-play white label app solution for retailers looking to integrate iBeacons into the in-store experience.

Coming into proximity with beacons can trigger coupon offers and the ability to request assistance from a sales associate.
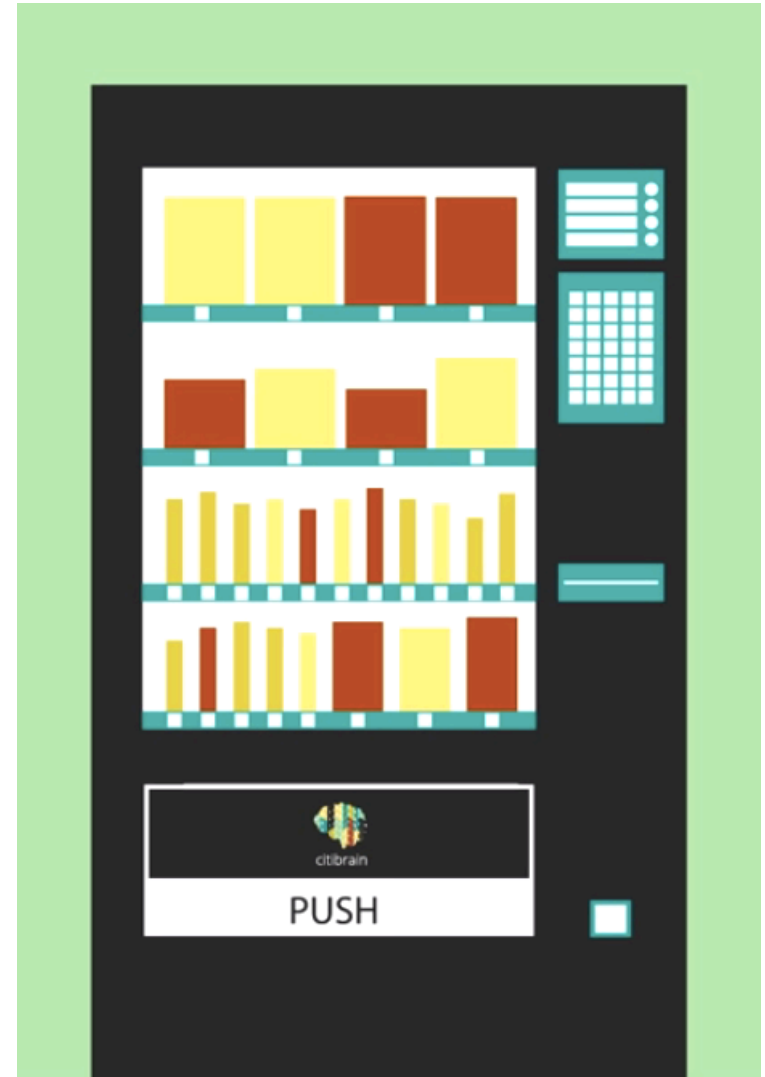

Source: IPG Media Lab

Citibrain

Lisbon based startup using RFID to power an integrated city-wide initiative that includes vending, parking, bike sharing, building access, and more.

Already used by 300,000 students in the city, it allows you to make payments through your personal account and also uses the technology to help find available parking spots.
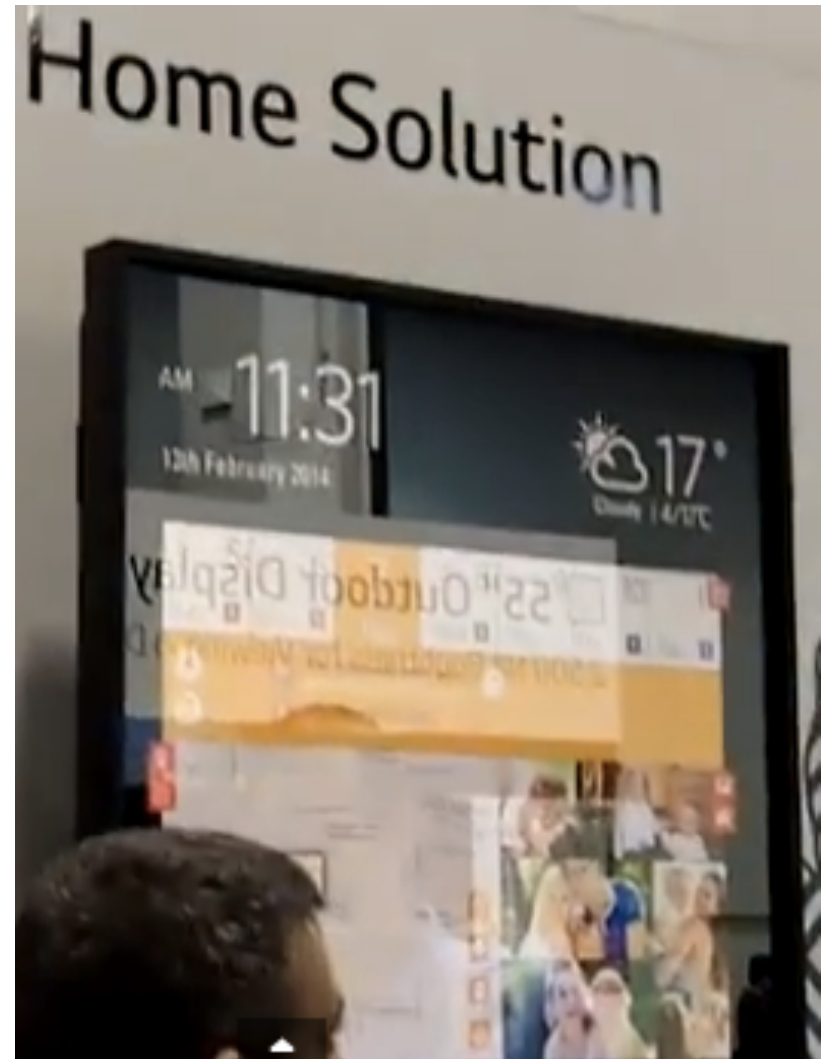

Source: Citibrain

LG's Board

Slated to be available for homes in Korea this year, this home mirror with 55" touch screen features augmented reality clothing try-ons, ability to talk to doctors or sales associates and more.

Retail partnerships are in the works, with ability to deliver coupons and other offers.

Source: rAVE Publication

Accenture's Connected Fitting Room

Clothes are outfitted with RFID tags and when you enter the fitting room, a touch screen automatically displays the items you brought inside. If a size is too small, simply request an alternate on the screen and a sales associate brings the new garment. Swipe through related clothing options you're likely to want.
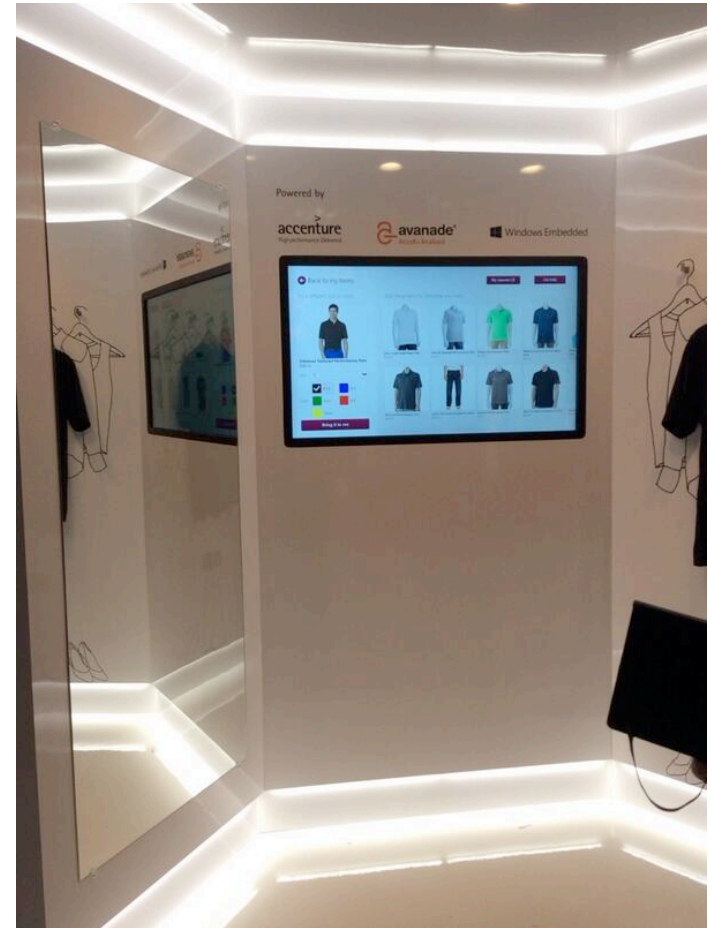
Source: Rumsey

Sony's SmartBand and Lifelog App

Sony's new SmartBand and Lifelog companion app, which comes pre-installed on the Xperia Z2, are part of an all-encompassing approach to quantified self. The goal is to capture not only your fitness and sleep activity, but also location and time spent on mobile phone platforms like chat apps, web browsing, Facebook, Twitter, and listening to music.

Source: Rappler.com

BeMap

Japanese company providing end-to-end solution connecting broadcast TV to retail beacon push notifications.

In a pilot with broadcaster Nippon TV, viewers downloaded an app to play an interactive mobile game tied to a live baseball game. Rewards and coupons are sent via the app and beacons alert you when you're near a retail outlet where you can redeem prizes.
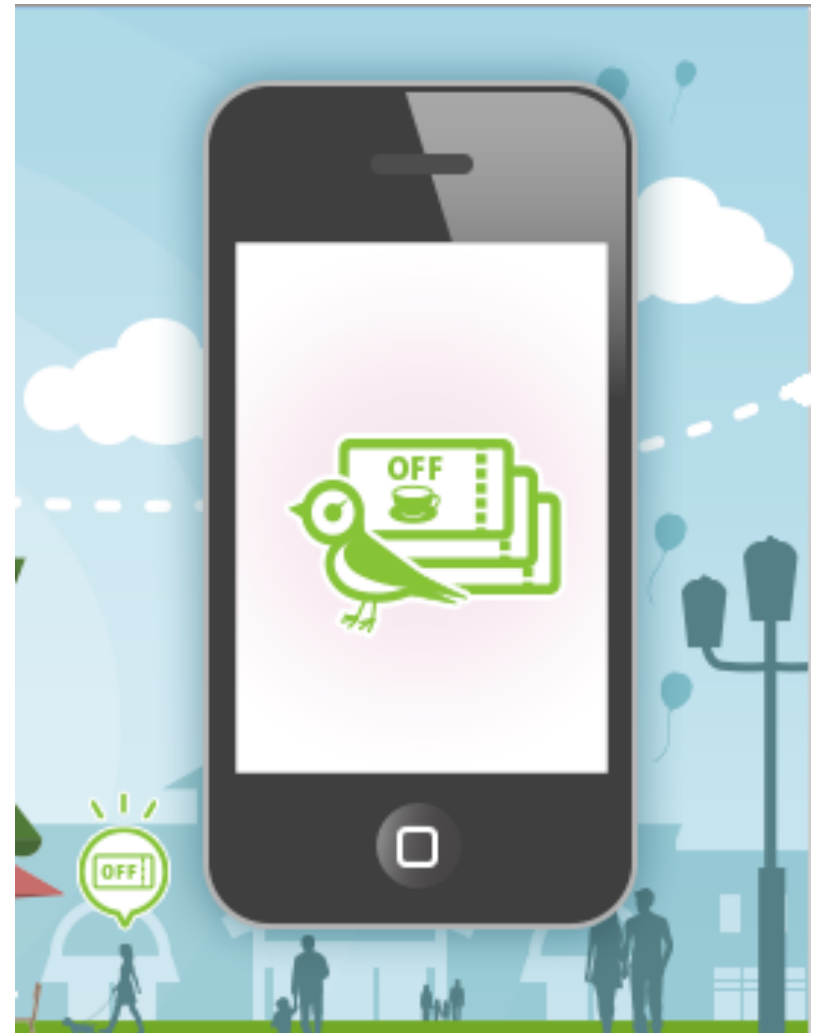

Source: BeMap

iDSpot

Tracks TV spots as the air across multiple networks, and compares TV airing schedule to online performance minute by minute.

Also syncs mobile campaigns with TV spots as they air to increase conversion rates and decrease chance of second screen tune-out.

Video recognition SDK lets viewers point their smartphone at TV to trigger special offers, coupons or rewards.
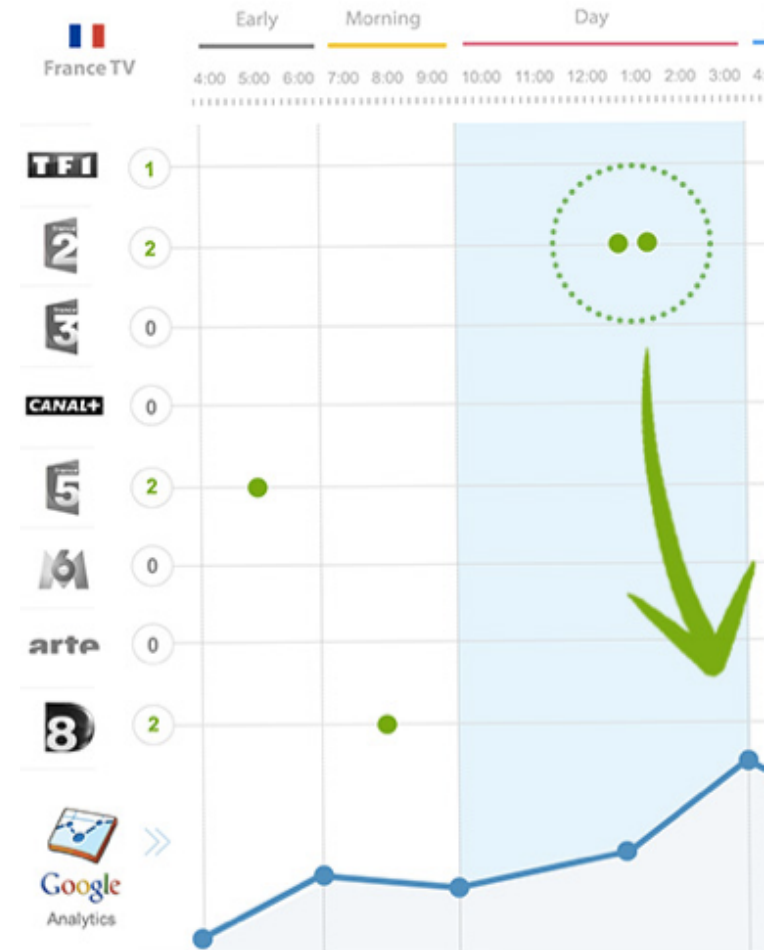
Source: iDSpot

Queexo

Makes software that improves the mobile touchscreen experience by utilizing the human hand's multiple dimension. For example it replaces uncomfortable actions like long-press to copy / paste with a knuckle tap.

FingerSense software can run on existing mobile devices and leverages the unique acoustic signature of physical objects to identify what touched the screen.

Source: Andro4All.com

MWC 2014: Three Key Takeaways

- The industry is moving towards equal emphasis on NFC and beacon technology, with a host of exciting new retail opportunities around location-based push notifications.

- Many car manufacturers are turning the mobile phone into the "brain" of the connected car, which means mobile ads may play a key role in reaching drivers in the future.

- Wearable computing is gaining steam with smart watches, bands, and glasses leading the charge.

Thanks.

For any questions or more MWC information, please visit http://ipglab.com or get in touch:

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