

Wearable Technology - Canada - 2021

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This report looks at the following areas:

- The impact of COVID-19 on wearable technology. This includes wired headphones, wired earbuds, wireless headphones, wireless earbuds, smart jewellery, augmented reality headsets, virtual reality headsets, smartwatches and activity trackers.
- How the market for wearable technology will fare post-COVID-19.
- Ownership of wearable tech, wearable tech purchase intent, desired features for wireless listening devices, reasons for owning/buying a smartwatch, desired smartwatch features, as well as attitudes toward wearable technology.
- The challenges the market faces, market factors impacting the category, marketing and advertising campaigns, as well as innovations and trends in the market.

Wearable technology has been gaining momentum over the years, however the COVID-19 pandemic has made consumers re-evaluate many things in their lives including how and where they spend their money. In terms of ownership, the most popular type of devices are hearables (ie wired/wireless earbuds and headphones) closely followed by the smartwatch. Purchase intent is strongest for smartwatches (15% plan on buying) trailed by 13% who intend to buy wireless earbuds.

Smartwatches and fitness trackers have likely gained additional interest during the current pandemic as concerns over health have been paramount. Adding to this, consumers have had more time and/or savings to take advantage of such devices. With mass gym and recreational facility closures across the country due to the pandemic, fitness-oriented consumers sought new tools to help them stay active and healthy.

The style of wearables is important to consumers, as nearly half agree that wearable tech has to look good in order for them to consider it. Similarly, 41% cite that they are more of a statement piece than they are about functionality.



“The COVID-19 pandemic has spurred health consciousness among consumers, renewing interest in wearables like smartwatches and other devices that can monitor activity and health.

Stylistically, consumers will be drawn to visually appealing wearables with many viewing them as a statement piece.”

– Andrew Zmijak, Research Analyst, Consumer Behaviour

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Most are concerned, though, about safety and privacy when it comes to wearable devices, such as the potential to be tracked or hacked when wearing.

Long battery life dominates other features when it comes to desired attributes for wireless listening devices. However, noise cancellation, convenience and volume control are other features that resonate with many who own or plan on buying wireless listening devices.

Looking ahead, the possibilities for wearable technology in everyday consumer lives are endless and the challenge will be for brands to come up with ways to make the technology as accessible and relevant as possible to the entire consumer market.



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