Plantronics Unveils New Enterprise Wearable Technology at Cisco Live

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Long time audio communications champion Plantronics (News [3] - Alert [4]) - we kid you not, it has doing this for 50 years - has pioneered numerous trends in audio technology over those years. From unified communication solutions to Bluetooth headsets, the company delivers products that are not only used by millions of consumers, but also by every company in the Fortune 100, New York Stock Exchange and in specialized markets such as 911 dispatch and air traffic control. Plantronics has been around the proverbial block more than a few times and we've been following it for many years.

For us, the true ubiquitous Plantronics product of choice is the company's Voyager Legend – a sensor-based wearable tech device that for us has provided great service when paired to our Ultrabook, our iPhone (News [5] - Alert [6]) (and our Android devices as well), but most importantly, both simultaneously. The Voyager Legend provides truly seamless and simple integration and moves effortlessly -- and smartly -- between laptop and mobile device. The built-in sensors know when the headset is in use, when it isn't and where we are relative to our proximity with the Voyager and the devices we've paired to it.

Depending on whatever a business requires, business applications can be built to work directly with the headset (or really, in the case of the Voyager, the "ear-set"). The apps tap into the device directly through Plantronics' supplied APIs, allowing businesses to build all sorts of security features into the apps. For example, a user can log into and out of a laptop (or perhaps a desktop in, say, call center environments), simply by walking away from the PC. For all of Plantronics' success in the consumer markets, we've always found the business capabilities as being the true defining nature of the company and its products.

In fact, Plantronics has such a rich history in wearable technology (WT) that we have partnered with the company to bring its insights to our upcoming Wearable Tech Expo and Conference [7]. Plantronics is the event's Platinum sponsor and will provide a major keynote address at the event, as well as participate in the conference's enterprise-focused wearable tech session.

Meanwhile, in keeping with its enterprise heritage, today the company announced that it has taken its Voyager technology one step further – and farther. The company has partnered with Cisco (News [8] - Alert [9]) to ensure that the Voyager Legend UC is now able to fully integrate with and deliver true, seamless call transfer from mobile devices directly to Cisco's new Android (News [10] - Alert [11])-based Desktop Collaboration Experience DX650 phone.

Secure, Seamless and Aware

Plantronics worked very closely with Cisco to create a solution that provides unique benefits for those using the new smart desk phone in conjunction with the Voyager Legend UC. Key features include:

- **Seamless Call Transfer**: The ability for a user to easily transfer a call from a mobile device to the Cisco DX650 based on a user's proximity to the phone.
- **Smart Lock**: The contextual data about a user's location allows the Cisco DX650 to lock itself when the user walks away. Users do not need to overtly think about this – it is a key part of what wearable tech in today's world is all about.

In the case of Smart Lock, customers gain an additional and important layer of security on top of the many security capabilities that Cisco has already built in to the DX650. The Voyager Legend UC is also easily able to access the phone book and provide users with audible caller ID for incoming calls on the Cisco DX650.

We caught up with Joe Burton, Plantronics' CTO and senior vice president of Technology, Development and Strategy, and after (unsurprisingly) approving of our own fondness for the Voyager, noted that, "For us, wearable tech is so much more than simply sending and receiving audio – that is the easy part. We've built these devices – and the sensors in them – to specifically collect and deliver information about the user's world. In the grander scheme of things this is what WT is about."

Burton notes that this notion of wearable tech specifically includes bringing the context of a user's situation and environment into the processes people do every day. This is what makes life easier according to Joe – having the WT devices be able to anticipate user needs. It is also hard to understate the value to both users and businesses of the ability to automatically lock the Cisco DX650 when users walk away, and to enable them to quickly accept their passwords the moment they return.

About the newly integrated device announced today, Joe goes on to say, "Cisco's DX650 phones in combination with our wearable technology deliver the very real ability for people to move a call from their mobile devices to their Cisco DX650s when they get in the office and want to launch a richer experience like a video conference."

Plantronics delivers an extensive line of unified communications devices – the Voyager is only one of them (though clearly our personal favorite). Plantronics offers a range of "endpoints," each of which specifically addresses different environments and different needs (and different price points).

- **Voyager Legend UC headset**: As already noted, the Plantronics Bluetooth devices include the Plantronics Voyager Legend UC, which connects to a laptop, mobile phone or tablet via direct Bluetooth or using the included USB adapter.
- **Savi Series**: This series of DECT (<u>News</u> [12] - <u>Alert</u> [13]) headsets, including the Savi 740, delivers maximum range and a variety of communication options by connecting to desk phones, PCs and mobile devices.
- **Blackwire Series**: The Blackwire delivers a corded USB headset, and includes the new Blackwire 720. This headset also allows connections to a Bluetooth enabled phone or tablet.
- **Calisto Series**: The Calisto goes beyond headsets entirely, and delivers USB speakerphones and handsets, including the new Calisto 620, the first wireless speakerphone designed for use with laptops or smartphones.

Wireless/Bluetooth connectivity, APIs to build on either existing applications or to create entirely new ones, new integration with the large population of Cisco UC devices…and sensors that are able to discern the sate of a headset – what's not to like here? It is wearable tech being used in exactly the ways that assure WT will in fact become the next major generation of emerging technology.

Check out <u>Joe speaking at TMC's WebRTC Conference</u> [14], where he spends some time elaborating on how wearable tech interacts with the world around you.

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