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Interesting Apple Bits

Apple has dominated the computer business news of late. The release of the Apple Smartwatch was marred only by the fact it sold out in less than a day. Nice problem to have: your product is so wanted, you sell out the day it becomes available. You also get lots of free TV news airtime about it... We'll get back to that in a moment. But let's shift gears and talk about something that got little or no press notice, but may be an even more important Apple development: it's partnership with IBM to produce business-specific mobile apps.

WHAT? Apple and IBM working together again? These two companies have had an up-and-down relationship. They began as rivals when personal computers first arrived. Who can forget that Apple once took a not-so-subtle shot at IBM with [the famous 1984 "Big Brother" Super Bowl ad?](#) Then they were buddies starting in 1991 when IBM made processors for Apple. They became enemies again when Apple dumped IBM and used Intel processors in 2005. Well, yeah, all true. And to borrow a political phrase, the computer industry makes for strange bedfellows: this case being that Apple has stellar hardware but little business software. IBM no longer makes any personal computer hardware, but has plenty of business software know-how. That imbalance has brought Apple and IBM back together as pals once again starting in late 2014.

The new partnership pays almost-immediate dividends: the mobile apps produced to date are basically a turnkey operation for businesses. **Ever had to sign for a UPS delivery** on the little electronic device? UPS spent gazillions on their customized system over the years. Apple/IBM have taken that type of a system and made it a commodity item any business big or small can buy off the shelf... relatively cheaply, as these things go.

Case in point: healthcare apps – there are specific versions for hospital-based nurses, hospital techs, hospital lead RN, and home healthcare nurses. This type of narrowband focus is just what the doctor ordered. (Whoops, sorry for the tired cliché.) The day of the giant monolithic do-it-all healthcare software packages are numbered: targeted, mobile and fast are then new marching orders. Big EMR vendors, your lunch is about to get eaten, as will any other giant monolithic software package... IBM / Apple has promised 100-targeted apps for many industries: retail, transportation, public safety, insurance, energy, and utilities are just a few.

Check it out: <http://www.ibm.com/mobilefirst/us/en/mobilefirst-for-ios/industry/healthcare.html>

Prediction: other technology companies that don't get on the same bandwagon will be hurting pretty soon. One software giant, Oracle, has made the jump, but there are some who still plod forward with the same old stuff... Hello Microsoft, SAP, and others: **the future is calling: pick up the phone!**

Back to the Smartwatch: Apple looks like it has another big winner. I had my doubts, but the plethora of things the smartwatch can do is impressive, and the list will only get longer. An example is the "Apple Research Kit" – the iPhone and Smartwatch will soon be able to monitor a good portion of your personal health going well beyond just counting steps, stairs, calories, and heartrate. Lots more to come... [Read all about it at Computerworld.com](#)

-John Becker