BodyMedia Selects IBM Software to Personalize Weight Loss Advice

IBM

LAS VEGAS, NV - 11 Jan 2012: IBM (NYSE:IBM) announced today that BodyMedia, Inc., a leader in wearable body monitors designed for health and wellness, is using IBM software to help consumers more easily achieve their weight-loss goals. Powered by IBM software, the new personalized feedback capabilities in the BodyMedia FIT body monitoring system now provide users with their own fitness coach.

The new FIT coach component of the BodyMedia FIT Activity Manager software is the first solution of its kind that can calculate and deliver information on:

- Whether users are missing, meeting or beating their targets for burning calories daily
- Multiple activity options for making up shortfalls in daily goals for burning calories (e.g. “Hop on the treadmill and walk for about one hour at a speed of four mph and you should hit your goal for burning calories today”)
- Nutritional analysis of each day’s eating patterns, along with relevant recommendations for correcting problems such as excess fat intake
- Overall progress towards the users’ weight loss goals, along with advice to stay on course

Historically, fitness devices have tracked data, but not offered advice on what to do next. However, personalized feedback can help improve the success of consumers' weight loss plans. The use of technology for fitness is a business that is growing rapidly. In fact, 37 percent of those surveyed had planned to purchase a fitness technology device in the next 12 months, while almost half of all people that work out use technology to enhance their efforts already.*

“Our BodyMedia FIT Armbands have tracked calorie burn for hundreds of thousands of people trying to lose weight, but we wanted to also help consumers understand how all of this data could effect their fitness goals,” said Christine Robins, CEO, BodyMedia. “By using IBM’s software, the new system now provides daily advice tailored to each user’s specific activities, food consumption and weight loss goals to keep them on track.”

Using both historical and current BodyMedia data, as well as user input, the feedback engine tracks each user’s daily calorie burn, food intake and sleep patterns, and then compares the results to their weight loss goals. By being able to analyze this fitness data, the new technology helps users make sense of this information and provides personalized feedback to help them stay on top of their fitness objectives.

For instance, if a user slept too little, was not active enough, and ate several meals that are high in fat, the device will offer tips and advice on what types of activities must be done to still meet their weight loss target.

BodyMedia teamed up with Pittsburgh, Pa.-based IBM Business Partner Summa to develop the new FIT Coach component. By applying IBM WebSphere Operational Decision Management (WODM) software to the millions of data points collected by BodyMedia on-body Armbands, Summa was able to create the business rules required to run the system.

The IBM Decision Management platform powers the armband's feedback engine. It is then able to make all the necessary calculations to assess the users' current status and compare it to their long-term goals. The rules defined in the system then determine all of the possible feedback that can be provided, while analyzing, selecting and filtering the most relevant feedback and suggestions to display in the BodyMedia FIT Activity Manager.

The Activity Manager application works in tandem with the BodyMedia FIT Armband, which uses a proprietary four-sensor system to track calories burned, steps taken, level of physical activity and sleep patterns that affect health and weight at a rate of 5,000 data points per minute. The Activity Manager software analyzes and stores that data and allows users to set individualized activity goals and document daily food intake. Now, it also provides IBM-powered personalized feedback based on user activity.

“As the marriage of fitness and technology becomes more and more pervasive, we continue to see companies rely on software to distinguish their products in a crowded marketplace,” said Bruce Anderson, general manager, Global Electronics Industry, IBM. “With the help of IBM analytics, BodyMedia has been able to provide users with the insight to make sense of all the information they’ve been tracking and turn it into actionable progress towards their weight loss objectives. This is providing their clients with a fitness experience that no other company can offer.”

The new FIT coach will become a standard feature with all BodyMedia FIT Activity Manager subscriptions later this year. The feedback engine can also be customized for partners and has already been incorporated into the Activity Manager portion of the Jillian Michaels 360° Weight Loss Navigator, a weight loss support program by the celebrity fitness trainer that incorporated the entire BodyMedia system.

Originally developed to help businesses and organizations streamline their day to day operations, IBM Decision Management provides personalized services for clients across a wide range of industries, including fitness (Athletes Performance), airlines (British Airways), finance (VISA Europe), manufacturing (Caterpillar) and retail (Yves Rocher).

For more information on how IBM is helping clients and partners make smarter, faster decisions and increase their business, visit:
http://www.ibm.com/smarterplanet [1] or

http://www-01.ibm.com/software/info/bpm/ [2]

About BodyMedia, Inc.

When your body talks, BodyMedia listens. BodyMedia has been unlocking and deciphering secrets of the body since 1999. Headquartered in Pittsburgh, PA, BodyMedia is the pioneer in developing and marketing wearable body monitors that equip consumers with information they can use to make sweeping changes to their own health and wellness beginning with weight management and soon to include management of other conditions affected by lifestyle choices. The BodyMedia platform is the only system of its kind that is registered with the FDA as a Class II medical device and that has been clinically proven to enhance users' weight loss by up to three times (data on file). For more information, visit www.bodymedia.com [3].

*Consumer Electronics Association, "Getting Fit with Consumer Electronics" (2010).

SOURCE [4]

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