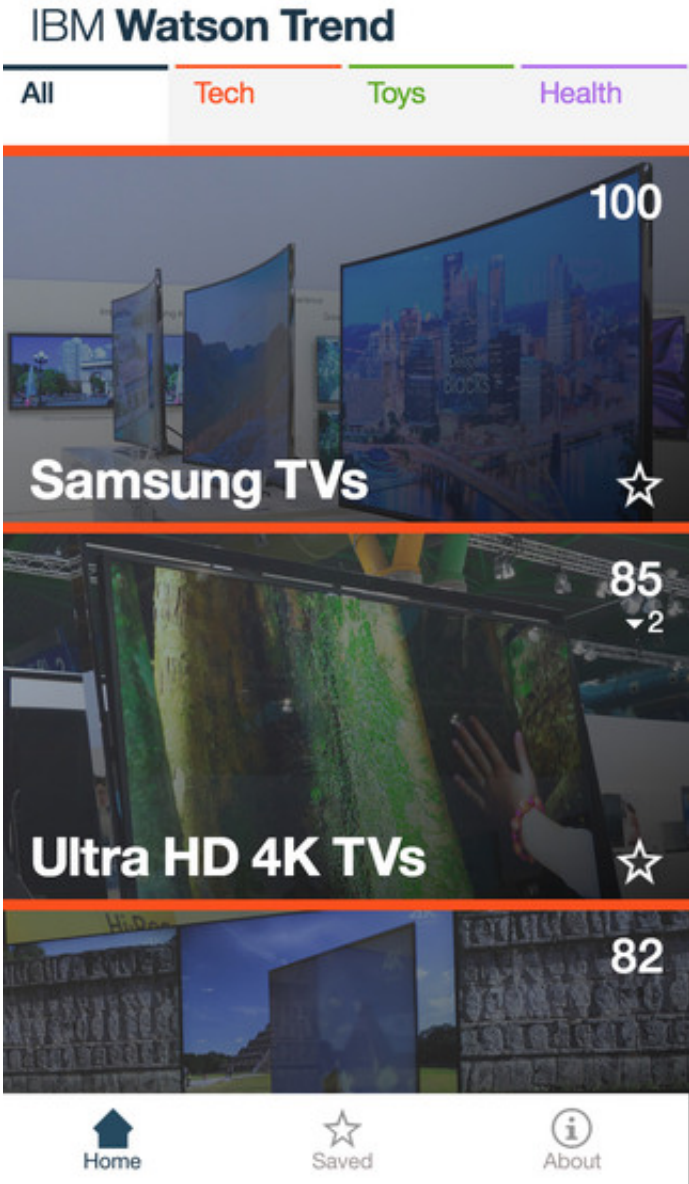


Toy, shoe, camera analytics: Watson app for holiday gift buying

November 19 2015, by Nancy Owano



Cognitive technologies unleashed for health and industry applications took another turn this week, beyond advising doctors and showing business trends. IBM with its powerful Watson is turning its focus on the retail sector, this time crossing into the consumer side.

IBM has launched Watson Trend as a service that will appeal to those holiday buy, buy, buy consumers who want to go on record as having chosen among the hottest and most desirable products to impress and delight their gift recipients.

This is being promoted as a service that harnesses Watson's deep learning smarts in the form of a rollout of the new [app](#) called Watson Trend. "Be a holiday hero with IBM Watson Trend," according to the video.

The anxious mall and online shopper will, in theory, be able to reduce holiday stress of choosing the wrong gift or getting to the right gift too late.

This holiday hero, in using the Watson app, could have an advantage over conventional bestseller gift guides, with its daily feeds on which products are trending and why.

IBM Watson Trend is for the iPhone and the iPad.

Watson provides its brain power to tell the app user about "the gifts they will go crazy for," running figures through forecasting models. A perk according to promotions is that one can beat the frenzy of other consumers catching word that an item is in high demand, avoiding the sudden rush that leaves shelves emptied. Headlines about shoppers coming to blows over low-in-stock items during the days before

Christmas have become common.

The world's most advanced supercomputer fundamentally becomes a personal shopper, letting the app's user get ahead of the crowds over an item in demand.

Watson reads and interprets reviews, blogs and social media conversations all at once and shares collective intelligence with users; there are daily updates; natural language and [predictive analytics](#) are in full play.

The user can view top trends overall or get into gift categories such as toys, electronics and health and fitness.

The app IBM Watson Trend is available for free, for download at the Apple App Store. This is version 1.1.0 and requires iOS 7.0 or later.

Among *Engadget's* reader reactions was a comment reflecting on people listening to a computer to tell them what gifts they should buy.

"George Orwell's [rolling](#) over in his grave," said the reader.

Interestingly, Watson's capabilities have been highlighted to tell retailers they can be heroes in understanding customer wants. According to IBM, with IBM Watson Analytics, they can discover who their customers are, how they behave, and what keeps them coming back. "Automated data visualization and analytics on the cloud enable you to find answers in internal, social and local data without having to ask for help or download software. Watson analytics guides you through advanced analytics in minutes for a better understanding of consumers, smarter merchandising and more successful [purchasing](#)."

This [new app](#) now unleashes Watson for consumers and allows them to

be gift-giving heroes.

More information: itunes.apple.com/app/id1055413681

[www-01.ibm.com/software/market ... uctions/watson-trend/](http://www-01.ibm.com/software/market...utions/watson-trend/)

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