

Scale to serve fuller reality check on your body

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(Tech Xplore)—Ages ago, it seems, people who wanted to lose weight or stay fit thought raw numbers via a bathroom scale were adequate. Times and expectations have changed. People trying to look good, better, or

feel great, seek a lot more than weight numbers about their bodies.

Weight management is only part of the picture. People who want to look like the best versions of themselves are into finding out more about muscles, tone, and weight distribution.

Personal trainers are one expensive avenue for such information; so are athletic clubs; and of course a slew of wearable bands and workout apps.

A new system, though, is to debut next year, and the company is taking pre-orders. The \$499 ShapeScale offers an information-rich scale that captures your body in three dimensions.

"The level of detail this portable scale captures isn't great for my ego, but it's a big [help](#) when you're trying to get in shape," *Engadget* writer Kris Naudus said.

ShapeScale judges the body from every angle. It is a 3-D body scanner. You step on a scale and you can have a scan of the entire body—the scan can sync with a smartphone app, this is how you see how your body is changing over time—where are you gaining muscle, for example, and where you are losing body fat.

Jeff Bakalar on CNET on Wednesday found the manner in which it scans your body interesting. "ShapeScale ships with an app that tracks your weight, but it also does something I've never seen before. It uses a robotic telescoping arm that circles your body and spits out a 360-degree image. The camera array can measure the tiny differences in your body's size and plot the change for you to analyze over time."

If you want to see it in action a video was posted on Wednesday which showed Dean Takahashi of *VentureBeat* being scanned by the ShapeScale 3-D body scanner.

The full body scan takes less than a minute and creates a point cloud of over 2 million points of your body shape. "Using our RGB data we then map your skin and clothing on top of your body model."

The company site said when Shape Scan is complete, the scale sends the information through WiFi to their server for post processing. (Jon Phillips in *TechHive* said that the camera captures the details and textures of face and skin. "All this data is then massaged by computer-vision algorithms and synced to the cloud. The final product—a photorealistic 3-D avatar—appears in an iOS or Android app.")

Beyond the scan process, interesting features involve the types of information available which are presented. You can for example access heat maps of your body so that you know where there is loss or gain at a glance. The heat map view makes use of the fat and lean mass measurements to visualize where you may be gaining fat, building muscles or shrinking.

The "machine can measure localized areas of [fat](#), such as the amount on your arms or legs. That's very useful for tracking the changes in your body over time," said Takahashi.

All in all ShapeScale will be able to measure girth, weight, volume, lean mass and [body fat percentage](#). With an image sent to your phone and accessed through their app you are able to browse your fitness data, compare body models and set or review shape goals.

Phillips, *TechHive*, elaborated:

"It can detail the exact girth measurements of your major muscles, obviating the need for tape [measurements](#). It can show you a heat map that illustrates areas of muscle growth and flab reduction. And ShapeScale says the system can provide highly accurate data on [body](#)

mass—similar to the accuracy of hydrostatic weighing, and within 95 percent accuracy of a DEXA scan."

The company said ShapeScale will be available in 2018. According to *VentureBeat*, company cofounder Martin Kessler said the company is refining the product.

An exercise psychologist and a kinesiology professor mentioned in *The Verge* report thought "something like the ShapeScale would be best for those who already know a lot about fitness and can contextualize the [numbers](#)."

More information: shapescale.com/

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