

Buzz off: Italian start-up offers social distancing bracelets

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Social distancing measures are being encouraged across Italy as it emerges from lockdown

As the world embraces a new post-pandemic reality, an Italian start-up has come up with a novel way to maintain social distancing: an electronic

bracelet that informs users when they are too close to others.

The device also tells users if they have come into contact with someone who later tests positive—key to tracing cases that have allowed some countries to keep their coronavirus [cases](#) under control.

The gadget has already been adopted by some businesses hoping it may prove handy—maybe even life-saving—as Italy emerges from its months-long lockdown.

"We've already received orders from seaside resorts, hotel chains, schools and companies," said Antonello Barracane, manager of MetaWellness, the firm behind the bracelet.

The Bari-based [company](#) came up with the "Labby Light" bracelet that vibrates when another person comes within a one metre (over three foot) range.

The device also tracks other bracelets around it, so if someone later tests positive for the virus it will alert those who came in close contact with that user.

The bracelet sells for 25 euros (\$27) and traces contact via a chip that can be removed and worn in a mask or an electronic key.

A similar bracelet has been developed by the Belgian company Rombit, which said in mid-April that workers at the port of Antwerp would test it.

Both companies say their devices guarantee privacy.

Giuseppe Di Bari, a Bari-based [dentist](#), has started using the device at his practice to ensure clients don't get too close to each other.

When patients arrive they are equipped with a mask, shoe coverings and an electronic bracelet.

The device could also come in handy if a client falls ill later and suspects they may have caught the virus at the dentist.

"I would be able to prove that he has not been in contact with any positive person and that social distancing was observed at least during his stay on my premises," the dentist said.

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