Comfort isn’t just a Vision Pro problem — it’s a wearable one

As I sit here writing this in the Apple Vision Pro, I’m acutely aware of how the light seal presses against my forehead and cheekbones. It was relatively comfy when I slipped it on an hour ago. But now, every so often, I push up on the bridge — as if I’m a cartoon nerd saying, um, *well, actually* — just to give my face a break. This is despite the fact that I’ve done the scan to figure out my perfect light seal fit (33W, in case you’re wondering). So no, I’m not surprised that many Apple fans who returned their Vision Pros cited comfort as a major issue.

But this isn’t exclusively a Vision Pro problem. It’s a wearable problem.

I say this a lot in my reviews, but comfort is king. For other gadget categories, comfort is mostly a question of weight. With wearables, fit adds another layer of complexity. You’re not going to wear a smartwatch, smart ring, smart glasses, or a mixed reality headset if you don’t find it comfortable. The catch is that it’s hard to scale a comfy fit for the mass market. Even if a company tries its damnedest, somebody always gets left out.

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The root issue is that every human body is different. You could argue that companies should try to provide a bespoke fitting experience for the best results. However, that can be a logistical nightmare, too. To get a pair of the now-defunct Focals by North, I had to physically go to their store in Brooklyn and get my face 3D scanned. At launch, online scans weren't an option. After, I had to return three weeks later for a fitting with the actual product. Those smart glasses fit me the best, but for most people, in-person fittings weren't feasible unless they lived near the company's Toronto or New York City stores. By the time Focals by North rolled out app-based fittings, the writing was on the wall for the company.

I don't have a solution. I think the best any wearable maker can do is prioritize comfort and make devices easier to wear with each generation. Those that don't, do so at their own peril. It doesn't have to be a category-sweeping innovation, either. The Evie Ring added an open gap up top that makes it easy to take off when your fingers swell. It's small but dramatically improved wearability. If done well, prioritizing comfort has the added benefit of minimizing how many people are left out.

With the Vision Pro, Apple did a reasonably good job of accommodating as many face shapes as it could. But if it truly wants spatial computing to be a thing, it needs to brainstorm ways to make it comfortable enough for the *vast majority* of people to wear for several hours at a time. Some people are lucky because that's already their experience. For me, the headset is relatively comfortable. Today, that wasn't enough. I only made it two-thirds of the way through this article before I had to take it off.

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