

As 2015 heads to a close, it is customary to reflect on the year it has been. So join us as we check what we think are the top CIT stories of the past 365-or-so days...



2015, Year of the Smartwatch: It has been some time coming, but 2015 is the year where the smartwatch became less of a curio and more of an actual device desired by regular consumers. [The Apple Watch](#) was, of course, the market's main drivers, but other vendors were quick to follow with similar wrist-worn devices.

Virtual Reality Edges Towards the Mainstream: 2015 did not actually see the release of any big name virtual reality headsets, but news involving the revamped product category came thick and fast. The Facebook-owned Oculus revealed [the final version of the Rift](#), as did Samsung with the [smartphone-powered Gear VR](#). Meanwhile Google presented an update on the View-Master, and even Valve announced a collaboration with HTC in VR headsets.

WD Swallows SanDisk: Western Digital creates an enterprise and consumer HDD and Flash giant with [the \\$19 billion acquisition of SanDisk](#), one "ideally positioned to capture the growth opportunities created by the rapidly evolving storage industry."

Tablets Slow Down: The year was not too kind to what was once a top seller, as analysts announce customers are no longer interested in tablets. The result is sales slowdown, with even

the mighty Apple feeling at least some iPad related pain. The solution?

[As Gartner puts it,](#)

"unless new compelling innovation or incentives to upgrade tablets are created, the churn of the mature installed base will continue to fall."

Tablets Go Pro: Another solution for tablet slowdown? Aiming at professional customers, apparently. Microsoft seems to have had the right idea with the [Surface Pro](#) (now in its 4th iteration) as Apple and Google launch the enterprise-style [iPad Pro](#) and [Pixel C](#) tablets.

Hybrids, the PC's New Hope: Another possible aid for the tablet situation seen in 2015 is [hybrid devices](#), as analysts say such devices, with their combination of the best of both tablets and notebooks, are increasingly attractive for customers.

Fnac Buys Darty: In European retail news French book & music chain [Fnac acquired electronics chain Darty](#) for £558 million, a move creating a mega-retail group with sales reaching over €7 billion and earnings of around €270m (after estimated annual savings of around €85m).

Staples Buys Office Depot: On the other side of the Atlantic [Staples bought rival office supply retailer Office Depot](#) in a \$6.3 billion deal-- a deal [the FTC sets to block](#), claiming it will lead to higher prices and fewer options for companies buying office supplies in bulk.

PCs Go Stick-Style: PCs-in-a-dongle appeared to be all the rage in 2015, with companies regularly offering such devices. Intel has the [Compute Stick](#), Asus offers the [Pen Stick](#) and [MagicStick](#).

The CIT Top 10 for 2015

Written by Marco Attard
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claims to have the most powerful PC stick of them all.

3D, The Next Big Thing in Printing: Another big thing for 2015 was 3D printers, with models ranging from the [futuristic](#) to the [colourful](#) and the [mass ively industrial](#).

And the best is yet to come, as [Gartner predicts growth across all segments](#) for the 2016-2019 period.