

Internet of Food



Peter Silva, 2014-09-09



For those of you who like to post food pictures, this is something I can see being a benefit. [Smart Chopsticks!](#) Yup, you heard that right. Soon you'll be able to poke that dim sum and know if the food is tainted. [Baidu](#), China's internet giant, [unveiled them](#) at their annual conference last week. While not ready for the mass market, Baidu says the chopsticks can detect oils containing unsanitary levels of contamination. They predict that you'll be able to detect the origin of oil and water and other foods...and whether they've spoiled and their nutritional content. You can hook them up to a smartphone to capture the content.

They have [a video](#) which shows them dipping the chopsticks in olive oil and getting a 'good' reading and then doing the same with recycled oil and getting a 'bad' reading. As of today, the chopsticks only measure the freshness of cooking oil but future chopsticks also will be able to measure PH levels, temperature and calories.

Of course I did a little digging to see what other utensil type things have gotten smarter.

At CES 2013, Hapi Labs shared their [Hapi Fork](#). A little bigger than your regular fork but after a charge, it'll monitor how many bites of food you take and at what rate. If you try to stuff your mouth with more than 1 bite every 10 seconds, the fork will vibrate to tell you to slow down. With USB, you can upload the data to track your eating or share with friends along with the plate in front of you. How about an instrument which tells you when you're about to bite the inside of your mouth?

Then we got the [Smart Cup](#), which counts the number of liquid calories you are two-fisting. [Vessyl](#) is a cup designed to automatically determine what's been poured into it and track what you're drinking in real-time. Whatever you pour into it, coffee, soda, juice, the sensors break it down to the molecular level to identify the beverage. It can even differentiate brands. Imagine the Pepsi Challenge in the one of these. It gives calorie count plus total grams of sugar, fat, protein, sodium and caffeine. You then connect to the app and it stores the drink along with making suggestions on healthier choices. Bad Bourbon...but so good.

I know there are already [smart refrigerators](#) but I wonder what they'll be in the future. I was thinking about a fridge that had Rubik's cube type inside and based on whatever the sensors pick (smelly, past date, UPC, recall, whatever), those cubes move to the front so you can see what's about to spoil or needs to be eaten. How many times have you pulled a few things out and suddenly seen the science experiment covered in plastic wrap?

This Internet of Things is branching in so many directions and it's interesting, at least to me, just how many items are starting to get sensors. The food supply has had it's share of recalls, contaminations, cover ups and other challenges and smart utensils really could be a life saver for some people, especially with food allergies. For me, it would be pretty cool to stick some food to find out if there is any lactose in it and then predict how soon I'll be bending over in stomach pain.

That's smart.

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Related:

- ['Smart Chopsticks' Can Detect Bad Food](#)
- [Is Your Food Safe? New 'Smart Chopsticks' Can Tell](#)
- [Vessyl: A Smart Cup That Counts Liquid Calories](#)
- [CES 2013: Smart Utensils Remind You to Chew Your Food](#)
- [Is IoT Hype For Real?](#)
- [Internet of Things OWASP Top 10](#)
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F5 Networks, Inc. | 401 Elliot Avenue West, Seattle, WA 98119 | 888-882-4447 | [f5.com](#)

F5 Networks, Inc.
Corporate Headquarters
info@f5.com

F5 Networks
Asia-Pacific
apacinfo@f5.com

F5 Networks Ltd.
Europe/Middle-East/Africa
emeainfo@f5.com

F5 Networks
Japan K.K.
f5j-info@f5.com

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