

# Smart luggage new trend in travel industry

By Jane L. Lever, New York Times

It wasn't long ago that the main selling point of a piece of luggage was its durability – think American Tourister and its rather excitable gorilla.

Not for Kevin Harwood.

Like many travelers today, he is looking for technology to go along with durability. He stumbled across a carry-on bag controlled by smartphone – with a Bluetooth-enabled lock, GPS tracking and a USB port for recharging a device. It has a built-in scale, too.

“I'm a little bit of a geek, always looking for products that extend from my phone, that connect my world and me,” said Harwood, a 30-year-old software developer from Austin, Texas.

Why should luggage be any different?

At the crowdfunding site Indiegogo he was among the first to buy into a start-up called Bluesmart that is developing a connected bag. Harwood has plenty of company. Bluesmart raised more than \$2 million from more than 10,000 backers, far surpassing its goal.

Bluesmart, which expects to deliver its first bags in October, is part of what has become a stampede of businesses – both start-up and established – into the nascent connected luggage industry.

**Read the whole story**