# OpenAI enlists Jony Ive to create revolutionary AI hardware beyond smartphones



OpenAI has taken a significant step towards shaping the future of artificial intelligence with its announcement that renowned former Apple Chief Design Officer, Jony Ive, is spearheading a new hardware initiative. This collaboration represents a strategic leap for OpenAI as it aims to innovate user interaction with AI, echoing the transformative impact of the iPhone on mobile technology.

The venture follows the acquisition of Ive's startup, "IO," which was valued at an impressive $6.5 billion. This acquisition allows OpenAI to leverage Ive's unparalleled design expertise, which has been instrumental in crafting iconic products such as the iMac, iPhone, and Apple Watch during his tenure at Apple from 1992 to 2019. Notably, while his collaboration with OpenAI began two years ago, its ambition has outgrown initial expectations, leading to the formation of a new entity dedicated to developing cutting-edge hardware.

OpenAI's CEO, Sam Altman, recently expressed enthusiasm for a prototype designed by Ive, noting that it could be “the coolest piece of technology that the world will have ever seen.” He emphasized that as generative AI becomes more integrated into daily life, a revolutionary interface is essential—arguing that current devices, such as laptops and smartphones, are not equipped to fully exploit the potential of AI. Altman likened the capabilities of this technology to "magic intelligence," suggesting that current means of interaction—primarily through typed queries—are inadequate.

However, this bold ambition also poses a potential challenge to Apple, which has struggled to effectively harness AI within its ecosystem, particularly with regards to its voice assistant, Siri. Following a disappointing performance in integrating generative AI into its devices—most notably with the new iPhone 16—Apple has been forced to postpone significant updates to Siri. The tech giant's shares fell nearly three percent recently, indicative of market concerns over its AI strategy.

The competitive landscape further intensifies with Amazon's recent efforts to infuse generative AI into its Alexa voice assistant. Known as Alexa+, Amazon aims to enhance the functionality of its connected home devices, aiming to capture a share of the evolving AI market. Similarly, a startup called Humane made waves with its AI Pin, a wearable device intended to offer seamless AI interaction—though initial reception has highlighted issues of performance and pricing.

Industry experts, such as Roger Beharry Lall from IDC, underline the significance of this venture, noting that while smartphones currently serve as the primary gateways to accessing AI technologies, there is potential for a dedicated AI device to redefine user interaction. “Right now, the phone is the medium through which you can access these technologies. If anyone can figure out what the next-generation interface is going to look like, it's probably Mr. Ive,” Lall remarked.

As OpenAI continues to develop its ambitious project, it appears poised to redefine the landscape of AI hardware. The anticipation surrounding its upcoming products is palpable, with expectations that they may not simply complement existing technology but redefine how society interacts with the vast capabilities of artificial intelligence. The prospect of this collaboration not only revitalises a potent legacy of innovative design but also poses significant questions about the future relevance of current smartphone technology in an era increasingly dominated by AI.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1: Sources 1, 3, 4
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Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20250521-apple-design-legend-jony-ive-joins-openai> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theverge.com/2023/9/27/23892135/jony-ive-sam-altman-ai-device-openai-ceo-apple-designer> - In September 2023, reports emerged that former Apple Chief Design Officer Jony Ive and OpenAI CEO Sam Altman were in discussions to develop a new artificial intelligence hardware device. The collaboration aimed to create a product that would revolutionize user interaction with AI, similar to how the iPhone transformed mobile technology. The project was in its early stages, with no specific product details disclosed at that time.
3. <https://www.macrumors.com/2024/09/23/jony-ive-working-on-new-device-openai/> - In September 2024, Jony Ive confirmed his involvement in an AI hardware project with OpenAI CEO Sam Altman. The venture, funded by Ive and the Emerson Collective, aimed to develop a new family of hardware products powered by AI technology. The project was in its early stages, with a small team of ten employees, including former Apple designers Tang Tan and Evans Hankey, working on the initiative.
4. <https://finance.yahoo.com/news/openai-jony-ive-talks-softbank-094633011.html> - In September 2023, OpenAI, Jony Ive, and SoftBank's Masayoshi Son were reportedly in advanced negotiations to create a new device that could become the 'iPhone of artificial intelligence.' OpenAI CEO Sam Altman had engaged Ive's company, LoveFrom, to design the first consumer-facing device for ChatGPT. Discussions included potential financial backing from SoftBank and involvement of Arm, SoftBank's chip design company.
5. <https://www.thewrap.com/openai-jony-ive-softbank-iphone-chatgpt-artificial-intelligence-ai/> - In September 2023, reports indicated that OpenAI, Jony Ive, and SoftBank's CEO Masayoshi Son were in talks to create the 'iPhone of artificial intelligence.' The collaboration aimed to develop a new AI device, with discussions involving potential funding of up to $1 billion from SoftBank. The project was in its early stages, with no formal agreement reached at that time.
6. <https://www.theverge.com/2024/9/21/24250867/jony-ive-confirms-collaboration-openai-hardware> - In September 2024, Jony Ive confirmed his collaboration with OpenAI CEO Sam Altman on an AI hardware project. The venture, funded by Ive and the Emerson Collective, aimed to develop a new family of hardware products powered by AI technology. The project was in its early stages, with a small team of ten employees, including former Apple designers Tang Tan and Evans Hankey, working on the initiative.
7. <https://techxplore.com/news/2023-09-openai-jony-ive-ai-iphone.html> - In September 2023, reports emerged that OpenAI was in talks with former Apple designer Jony Ive to create an 'iPhone of Artificial Intelligence.' The collaboration aimed to develop a new AI device, with discussions involving potential funding from SoftBank and the involvement of Arm, SoftBank's chip design company. The project was in its early stages, with no formal agreement reached at that time.