# Apple restructures AI teams to drive innovation in Siri and robotics



Apple Inc. is undergoing a significant restructuring of its artificial intelligence (AI) initiatives, splitting what was previously a unified AI team into specialised leadership groups. This move reflects a strategic change in how the company plans to develop AI technologies, particularly following years of internal challenges and increased competition.

The reorganisation includes major shifts within Apple's secretive robotics division and its Siri voice assistant. As part of the restructuring, Siri's engineering team has been reassigned from the AI division to report under Mike Rockwell, who formerly led the Vision Pro headset projects. Rockwell now reports directly to Craig Federighi, Apple’s software chief, and has incorporated key members from the Vision Pro team to enhance Siri's development approach.

Meanwhile, the robotics division has been transferred from the AI group to Apple’s hardware department, where it will be overseen by Senior Vice President John Ternus. Ternus currently manages engineering for Apple’s flagship products such as the iPhone and Mac, indicating a closer connection between robotics projects and core hardware development.

These changes come amid ongoing issues with Apple’s AI progress. Since 2018, John Giannandrea, a former Google executive, has led Apple’s AI and machine learning efforts. However, Tim Cook, Apple’s CEO, has begun phasing Giannandrea out from major projects due to missed deadlines and slower-than-expected progress. Internal testing revealed Siri struggled to meet user demands, failing nearly one-third of requests, which pointed to performance gaps behind rival voice assistants.

Sources within Apple cited internal strife over budgets and collaboration difficulties, with some staff quipping about the AI team’s reduced productivity by dubbing it “AI/MLess.” Additionally, disputes over financing AI chip development in 2023 further hampered the company's momentum in pursuing advanced AI technologies.

Under the new leadership, Siri is expected to receive significant enhancements focused on personalisation, contextual understanding, and responsiveness. However, some planned improvements have been delayed into the following year as the team integrates and reorganises. Meanwhile, Apple’s robotics team is exploring innovative devices, including a table robot featuring an iPad-like display capable of physical movement, and a mobile robot designed to aid videoconferencing and smart home control.

By integrating robotics and hardware engineering more closely, Apple aims to create new product categories that combine AI capabilities with physical devices. This strategy marks a departure from previous AI organisational structures and reflects Apple’s ambition to speed up decision-making and innovation.

The broader implications of these changes suggest that Apple is prioritising deeper alignment between hardware and AI development to regain competitive ground against rivals like Google and Amazon, which have made rapid strides in generative AI and conversational technologies. John Giannandrea’s role is now primarily focused on basic AI models, with speculation that he may eventually step aside to allow new leadership in guiding Apple’s overall AI direction.

As Apple advances through 2025 with this revamped framework, the industry will be observing closely to see if these leadership shifts can help the company close the AI gap and deliver enhanced AI experiences that stand out in a competitive market.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

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