

Apple's AI strategy: Why the sudden rush?

Apple's been taking the long way home when it comes to artificial intelligence. Has it paid off?

By: Alexis Dubree

For as long as I can remember, Apple has been top dog of the smartphone and tech world. Apple was built on a desire to innovate technology as we knew it, particularly when it came to design and usability. Now, nearly everyone I know owns an iPhone, Mac, iPad, the list goes on and on. But the tech world has been totally upheaved by the Artificial Intelligence advancements of the past few years, and while Alphabet, Amazon and Microsoft quickly jumped into the AI race, Apple has been lagging behind quite noticeably. What's going on, and what could this mean for Apple's brand image?

Siri's 2025 update

As early as 2017, Apple's voice assistant, Siri, started to leave [a lot to be desired](#) when it came to its artificial intelligence capabilities. Needless to say, the Siri revamp Apple promised in 2025 was long overdue. However, the Siri overhaul and new features [never arrived](#), even after the company had already released an advertisement marketing the new



Figure 1 - Apple's voice assistant, Siri, has yet to receive the upgraded features promised by the company in 2024 (Screenshot from [Apple.com/siri/](https://apple.com/siri/))

and improved Siri, leaving both consumers and analysts alike confused and disappointed. Why would Apple rush to heavily advertise a feature update far before it was ready to launch? In an interview back in June 2025 with The Wall Street Journal's Joanna Stern, Apple executives [Craig Federighi and Greg Joswiak admitted](#) they should not have advertised the Siri features when the rollout was not yet concrete, but were adamant that the strategy Apple has taken when it comes to AI—slow and steady wins the race—is the right one. If that's the case, it certainly shows that Apple has been feeling the pull between its dedication to its strategy and external pressure to deliver.

Apple sales are stronger than ever

A survey done at the end of 2024 that while [iPhone consumers do value AI features](#) integrated into their smartphones, a majority of them saw the current Apple Intelligence features as having little to no value. In the end, though, despite the failures to deliver on artificial intelligence promises in 2025, iPhone sales were [through the roof](#) over this last holiday season after the release of the most recent iPhone 17 model. Apple is a company that holds one of the highest rates of brand loyalty. In May of 2025, Apple's brand loyalty

had gone down [from 94% to 89% since 2021](#), but 89% is still incredibly high. This all suggests that Apple doesn't really need to be ahead in the AI race, because 89% of its customers continue to prove that, with or without new AI features, they will still show up to buy the next iPhone release. In other words, Apple seems to believe it can more than take its time on the road to artificial intelligence. Or, at least, it used to.

The Google Gemini partnership

In January 2026, [Apple announced](#) it would be partnering with Google to power Apple's artificial intelligence features with Google's Gemini. This is a surprising move by Apple, as Apple has never before been keen to lean on major competitors, and has typically always developed its own technology in-house. Relying on Google's AI technology could put Apple at risk, as it gives Google power and leverage. While time will tell if this partnership will work in Apple's favor, it begs the question of why Apple seems to be in a sudden rush to catch up. With sales currently as high as they are, just it doesn't feel like the Google Gemini partnership is in Apple's best interest. Inversely, perhaps Apple has realized that no matter what they do regarding artificial intelligence, iPhone sales are not at risk of falling anytime soon.

Generally, I am among the group of iPhone users who are not exactly thrilled by the idea of many AI features, especially if they are invasive and unnecessary. I am, however, someone who does think Siri needs major improvements. All this to say, I am fairly interested to see how Apple advances in AI from here with the Google Gemini partnership on the horizon.

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About the author

Alexis Dubree is a growing PR and social media professional in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex area. She will be graduating from the University of North Texas in May 2026 with a bachelor's degree in journalism with a concentration in public relations. Alexis hopes to one day pursue a career in analytics.



Figure 2 - The iPhone 17 Pro Max released to high sales during the 2025 holiday season (Image courtesy of Apple.)



Figure 3 - Alexis Dubree. All rights reserved.