

# "Hey Siri..."

When did a digital voice become so important in everyday life?



# "Hey Siri..."

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Siri is a virtual assistant that “lives” inside an iPhone to help the user perform personal tasks. It was originally developed by Dag Kittlaus from SRI International Artificial Intelligence Centre as an app for the iPhone and was purchased by Apple in 2010. Later, it was then modified and released as part of the iPhone 4S and iOS 5 launch in 2011. Nowadays, Siri is available on all Apple devices such as the Apple Watch, Apple Homekit, iPhone, iPod, iPad, Carplay, iMac and MacBooks.

Siri has become an iconic feature in Apple products especially the iPhone. Through Siri’s assistant-like capabilities, users are able to easily organise their busy schedules and their daily activities. When in use, Siri is able to perform countless tasks including phone commands, social media and organisation. With a short command, Siri is able to make calls, check missed calls or call emergency services. Siri is also able to set reminders, change calendar dates and inform the user of their agenda for the day. Siri has the ability to respond to the user’s interests and refer them to articles they might desire.

Siri has opened a window of communication for people suffering with a disability that was largely overlooked when mobile phones were first produced. Siri enables people with a disability, to easily converse with others through the phone and text command features, allowing Siri to read their messages to them or talking to Siri instead of typing a message. What was once a difficult task, has become easier and less frustrating. For example, Siri is able to facilitate the visually impaired as it is able to recite their text messages and guide them through using their iPhone. The collaboration of Apple and the Cerebral Palsy Foundation’s campaign, “Just Say Hi”, further ensures that people with a disability are able to communicate with others.

Aside from facilitating easier socialisation between individuals, Apple has developed Siri mannerisms when it comes to mental health issues, abuse and emergency situations. A case study was made by JAMA intern Med in 2016, where they tested the capabilities of Siri’s reactions. Like the ‘Just say Hi’ approach, Siri replies in an apologetic tone when it comes to ‘I’m

Depressed' as the assistance will reply with 'That's sad to hear' and refer one to clinics. When stating 'My husband has physically abused me', Siri is able to register a situation and refer the user to online solutions instead of replying. Individuals who wouldn't want to discuss this with others, feel more comfortable allowing a digital presence to present collected online solutions for them.

As Siri's features have developed over the years, so has the ability to personalise the digital assistant. Siri is available in a variety of different languages allowing Siri to not only be used by English speakers but worldwide. Siri's accent and gender can also be customised depending on the language and the user's personal preference. The user also has the option of Siri calling them by a nickname of their choosing. Siri is able to be taught how to pronounce that name in order to add further personalisation to the assistant.

Prior to an introduction of a digital assistant it wasn't considered necessary or important with Apple's competitors. The release of

the iPhone 4S grew to 4 million within the first week after the introduction of a digital assistance. This marked a revolution and all phones include a digital assistance. So far Apple has been the most successful within the market as Samsung Voice still lacks flexibility.

With the latest update of the iPhone 8 and iPhone X, Siri's capabilities are even more flexible for the user. This update just requires the user to say 'Hey Siri' to activate it. This will allow individuals to multitask without having one's phone in their hand.



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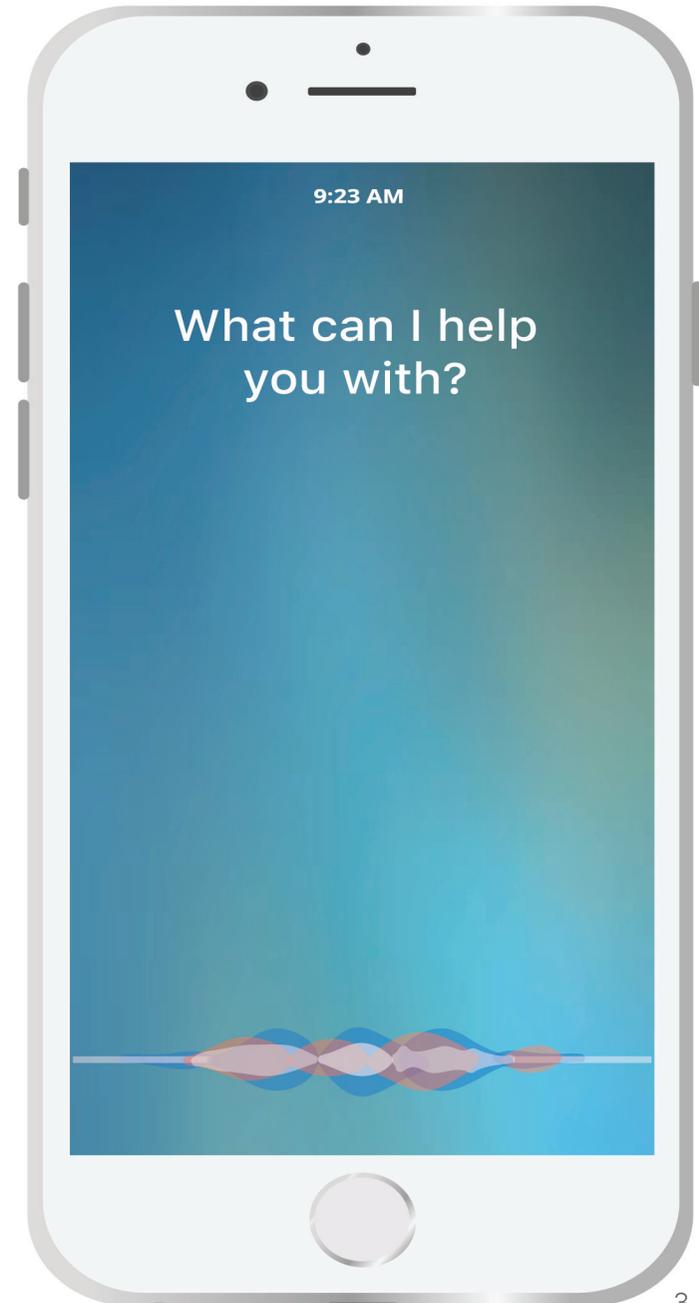
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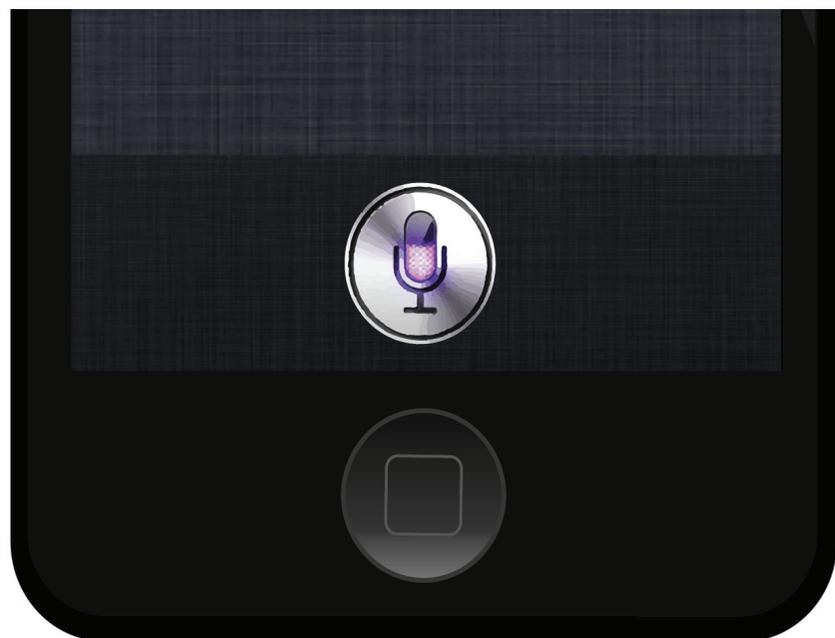


Siri's assistant-like capabilities enables the user to easily organise their busy schedules and daily activities. When in use Siri is able to undertake countless tasks including phone commands, social media and organisation. It is able call someone, answer calls, send and read aloud text messages, call emergency services, set reminders, change calendar dates and inform user of agenda for the day.

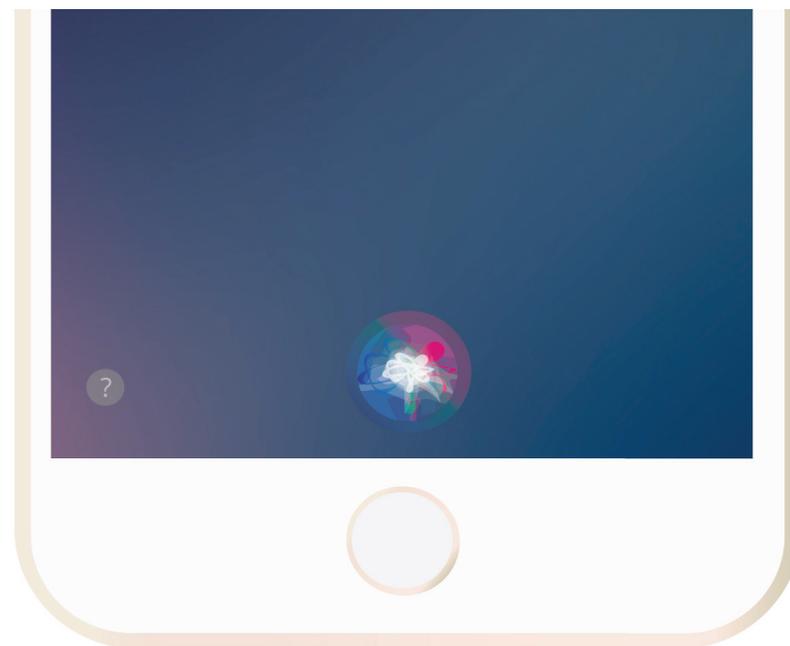


# The Evolution of Siri's Design Interface





Siri logo in iOS 5

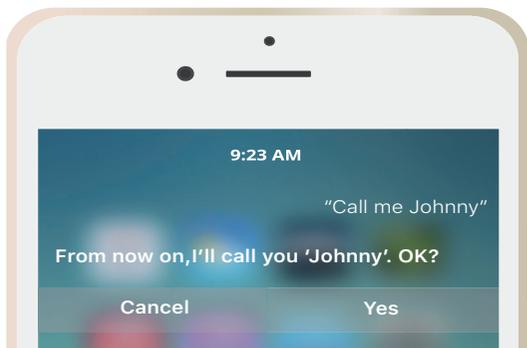


Siri logo in iOS 11

## Siri's Contributions in the Disabled Community

The creation of Siri in the iPhone has opened a window of communication to people suffering with disability that was once overlooked when mobile phones were first produced. Siri enables people with disability to easily converse with others through the phone and text command features allowing Siri to read their messages to them or talking to Siri instead of typing a message.

This allows what was once a difficult task become easier and less frustrating. For example, Siri is able to facilitate someone who is visually impaired as it is able to recite their text messages or guide them through using their iPhone. The campaign collaboration of Apple and the Cerebral Palsy Foundation "Just Say Hi" further conveys this as with the aid of Siri people with disability are able to communicate with others.



## Personalisation of Siri

As Siri has developed over the years so has the ability to personalise the digital assistant. Siri is now available worldwide and offers a vast variety of different languages. Both Siri's accent and gender can be changed depending on the user's language and personal preferences. The user also has the option of further customisation of Siri by asking Siri to call the user by a nickname and learn how to pronounce it the way they desire.