

Apple previews new iPhone software, changes to Mac chips

June 23 2020, by Michael Liedtke



In this photo provided by Apple Inc., CEO Tim Cook delivers the keynote address during the 2020 Apple Worldwide Developers Conference Monday, June 22, 2020, in Cupertino, Calif. At its postponed and now-virtual developers conference, Apple is expected to unveil some modest changes to iPhone operating software and possibly to drop some hints about its efforts in augmented and virtual reality, although any new gadgets are still probably a few years away. (Brooks Kraft/Apple Inc. via AP)

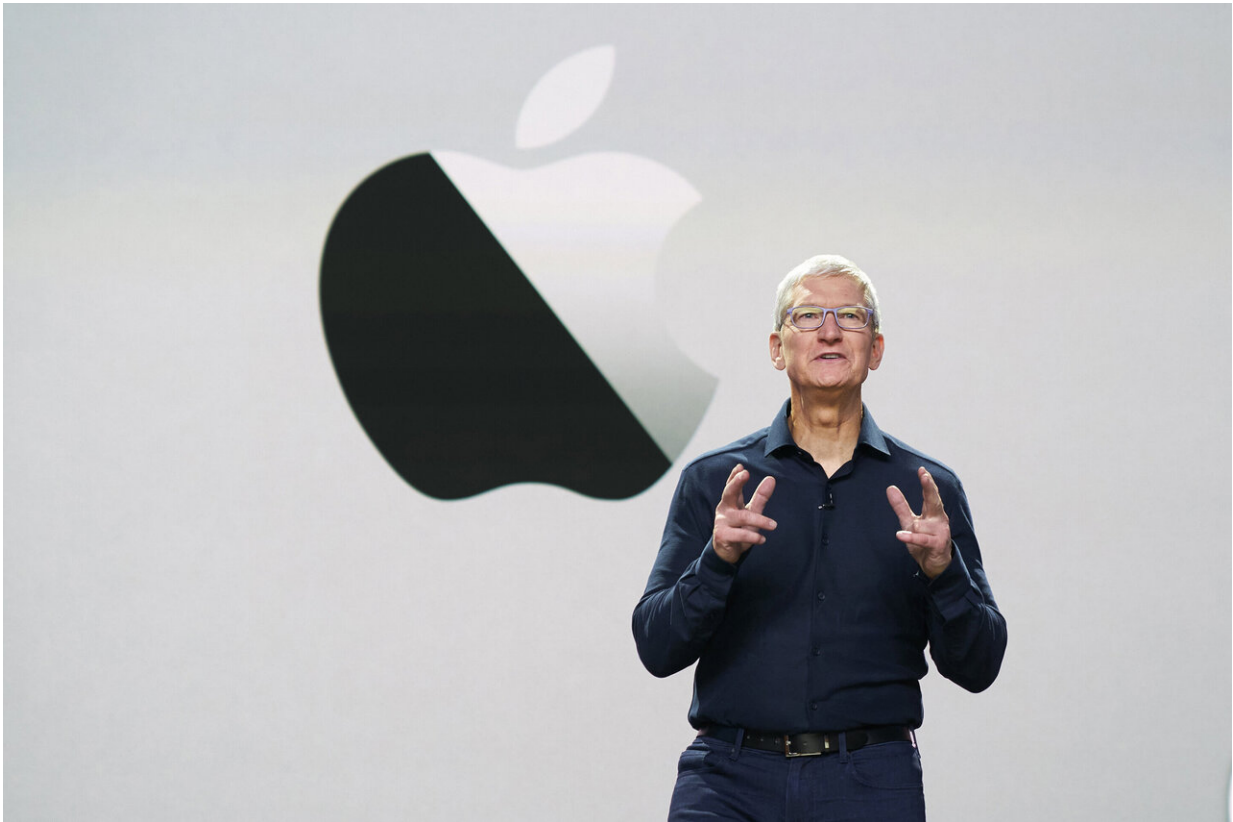
Apple on Monday provided a glimpse at upcoming software changes designed to make the iPhone even easier to use and also announced a long-anticipated shift to a new type of chip to power its line of Mac computers.

The preview of the next version of the iPhone's operating system, known as iOS 14, highlighted Apple's annual conference for computer programmers and mobile app makers. The event, which was delayed for three weeks due to the coronavirus pandemic, took place in virtual form via a webcast from the company's Cupertino, California, headquarters.

In recognition of the pandemic, Apple's next iPhone operating system will include an option to put a face mask on a personalized emoji. Upgraded software for the Apple Watch will also detect when wearers wash their hands.

Apple CEO Tim Cook kicked off Monday's session with remarks that acknowledged the nationwide protests triggered by George Floyd's death last month at the hands of Minneapolis police, as well as the social and business challenges posed by the worst pandemic in a century.

But most of the presentation revolved around an array of new features that, for instance, could help iPhone users manage their apps better, find new ones, and use their phones to unlock and start their cars remotely. (Though that last feature will initially only be available for a 2021 BMW model.)



In this photo provided by Apple Inc., CEO Tim Cook delivers the keynote address during the 2020 Apple Worldwide Developers Conference Monday, June 22, 2020, in Cupertino, Calif. Apple on Monday provided a glimpse at upcoming software changes designed to make the iPhone even easier to use as people become ever more dependent on technology as they minimize personal contact during the worst pandemic in a century. (Brooks Kraft/Apple Inc. via AP)

Apple also promised an upgraded version of its digital assistant Siri intended to make it smarter and less cumbersome, helping it fend off rival voice-activated concierges made by Google and Amazon.

Apple also said its Mac computers will begin using its own chips as it phases out the Intel processors that have powered the machines for the

past 15 years. Some Macs will have the Apple chips before the end of the year, but the full transition away from Intel chips won't be completed until 2022.

There had been speculation that Apple would unveil apps that rely on augmented reality, or AR, a technology that melds digitally projected images with the real world. Although Cook has been hyping AR has the next big wave in technology, it hasn't caught on in the mainstream yet and Apple didn't drop any new bombshells about it during Monday's event. Instead, the company disclosed a few relatively minor features in its AR platform for iPhones and iPads in a written summary.

Apple is widely believed to be working on an AR headset and internet-connected glasses that could be released in the next two to three years. True to its secretive nature, Apple hasn't disclosed any plans for its own line of AR devices.



In this photo provided by Apple Inc., senior vice president of Software Engineering Craig Federighi speaks during the keynote address of the 2020 Apple Worldwide Developers Conference Monday, June 22, 2020, in Cupertino, Calif. Apple on Monday provided a glimpse at upcoming software changes designed to make the iPhone even easier to use as people become ever more dependent on technology as they minimize personal contact during the worst pandemic in a century. (Brooks Kraft/Apple Inc. via AP)

The company gave no indication whether the pandemic-driven disruptions in work in the factories that make iPhone parts will delay the release of the next model. The company typically unveils its next iPhones in early September and then starts selling them toward the end of the month.

Analysts believe the release of the iPhone 12 will be come later than usual, but are expecting it still will be on sale well before the pivotal holiday shopping season. Earlier this month, the CEO of chip maker Broadcom, Hock Tan, told analysts he expected a delay in the production of a product made by a major North American smartphone maker. Broadcom is a major supplier for the iPhone.



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Apple is expected to roll out as many as four different iPhone 12 models this year, including its first version that will be able to work on the next generation of ultrafast wireless networks known as 5G.

Investors are betting heavily that Apple could emerge even stronger from the pandemic and the associated recession. The company's stock hit a new all-time high Monday before closing at \$358.87—a gain of 22% so far this year that gives Apple a [market value](#) to give the company a market value of more than \$1.5 trillion.

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