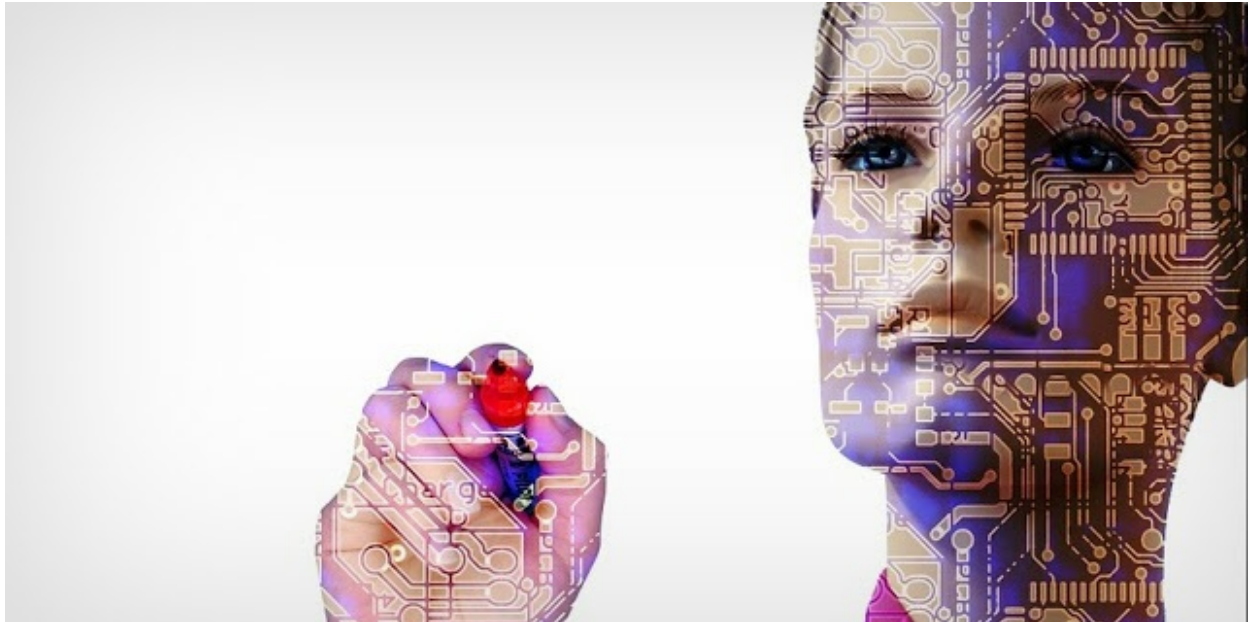


# Apple Warming up to Race AI with Google, Amazon & Microsoft

[indrastra.com/2018/04/Apple-Warming-up-AI-004-04-2018-0006.html](http://indrastra.com/2018/04/Apple-Warming-up-AI-004-04-2018-0006.html)

By Kevin Simon



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Apple has just managed to land one of Google's top Search & Artificial Intelligence (AI) executives, John Giannandrea, in a move that is a shot in the arm to catch up to the AI technology of its rivals.

Apple said on Tuesday that Mr. Giannandrea will head Apple's *"machine learning and A.I. strategy,"* and become one of 16 executives who report directly to Apple's CEO, Tim Cook.

Giannandrea first joined Google in 2010 after it acquired MetaWeb, a start-up where he served as chief technology officer. Metaweb was building what it described as an *"A comprehensive database of World's Knowledge"* which Google eventually rolled into its search engine to deliver direct answers to users' queries. During his tenure, A.I. research gained prominence inside Google, with its primary A.I. lab, Google Brain, moving into space beside the chief executive, Sundar Pichai.

The hire is particularly important as Apple has seemed to fall far behind its rivals in the race to build smarter software powered by artificial intelligence. Siri, the digital assistant into which Apple has pumped much of its consumer-facing AI technologies, is far behind Amazon's Alexa and Google's Assistant in capabilities.

Apple by far has struggled for years to make progress in fast-moving and increasingly important AI fields like computer vision and natural language processing. It was also lagging to enable machines to handle more complex tasks, like understanding voice commands or identifying people in images.

John Giannandrea would be joining hands with other high-profile hires in the field by Apple, including the Carnegie Mellon professor Russ Salakhutdinov. Mr. Salakhutdinov studied at the University of Toronto under Geoffrey Hinton, who helps oversee the Google Brain lab.

What makes Apple slow to respond in this field is its strong stance on protecting the privacy of people who use its devices and online services, which could put it at a disadvantage when building services using neural networks.

Researchers train these systems by pooling enormous amounts of digital data, sometimes from customer services. Apple, however, has stated that it is developing methods that would allow it to train these algorithms without compromising privacy.

With the recent backlash on Facebook, Google & Microsoft making User data accessible for Private firms to manipulate, with EU even stepping towards to charge a **digital tax** for these firms, Apple appointment make even more exciting who is committed to building a leakproof, privacy-focused AI machine.

#### **About the Author:**

**Kevin Simon** (ORCID: [0000-0002-2962-8008](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2962-8008)) is a Marketing Professional at Cognitio Innovo, with a keen interest in Technology, Business & Sports updates worldwide. He is graduate in management studies (MBA) from the Institute of Management, Nirma University, Ahmedabad.