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How Apple Explained Apple Intelligence to its Audience

When AI started becoming more common across the world, many companies were finding new ways to use it. This led to many AI tools coming out, but people were skeptical about how it worked and how they used their data. In June 2024, Apple revealed how they would be using AI across their products with the introduction of Apple Intelligence. Since Apple was adding AI to devices that people used and kept their personal information on, they needed to give users a reason to feel comfortable and accept it. Their audience also contained people who weren't familiar with what AI was, and I found it interesting how Apple explained and reassured users about this new technology. I think Apple did a good job making its case for Apple Intelligence. It used familiar situations to show why people might want AI on their devices, then explained how it planned to protect the same personal information that made those features useful.

A useful way to understand the announcement is through the rhetorical situation. This means considering why a message was needed and how the audience affects what the speaker says (Grant-Davie). Apple is introducing a product, but they also need to explain why it would be worth using it. When Tim Cook introduces Apple Intelligence, he explains that their AI

should be easy to use, understand a person's personal circumstances, and protect their privacy. By explaining these goals before showing the product, Apple gives people a way to judge the product throughout the presentation (Apple, "Keynote" 1:05:04–1:05:51). The audience includes developers attending WWDC, as well as people watching online who might own Apple devices. Those groups of people have different interests. Developers might want to know what they can build, while a casual iPhone user might mainly want to understand what would become easier.

One way that Apple appealed to users was repeatedly describing their AI as personal. They call Apple Intelligence "personal intelligence," which puts the focus on the person that's using it (Apple, "Keynote" 1:05:27–1:05:51). This wording helps viewers to better understand that Apple made it to help with things specific to their own lives, without knowing how it works. Porter's discussion of intertextuality helps explain how Apple makes that idea easier to understand. He describes how texts can build on what the audience already knows (Porter). In the keynote, Apple talks about Siri and apps that many people already use, and so it helps give them something familiar to start with and picture how their AI can improve that better.

Apple develops this idea with scenarios that people can relate to. In one example, a parent has a meeting moved to later in the day and wonders whether they can still make it to their daughter's performance. Apple explains that its AI could use the meeting details, information about the performance, and traffic between the two areas to help the parent figure that out (Apple, "Keynote" 1:11:09–1:11:36). This example works because viewers can understand why getting to that performance matters and relate to that without really knowing how AI works. This allows Apple to show how Apple Intelligence can be useful to people, and how using your personal information from different places on your phone can result in a more personal experience.

Apple uses a similar approach in their Siri demonstration. The presenter asks Siri about her mother's flight, their lunch plans, and how long it would take to get from the airport to the restaurant. She explains that Siri can find information from emails and messages and with other information to help give you an answer. She says that it helps her from switching between several apps on her phone to make the plan (Apple, "Keynote" 1:22:14–1:23:02). This example shows how beneficial Apple Intelligence can be with a task that users can picture doing themselves. It also helps users understand why Apple Intelligence would need access to your information, giving users a greater understanding of the product.

These examples also help to allow users to picture themselves using Apple Intelligence. Grant-Davie explains that a speaker can invite the audience to see themselves in a certain role, but the audience doesn't have to accept it (Grant-Davie). In this announcement, viewers are invited to see themselves as people who could be in situations like from the examples they used and understand that if they were in those situations they might want help. Some other viewers might take it differently though. For example, someone who is more concerned about privacy might wonder about what happens with their messages when using something like Siri and may find it more skeptical than beneficial.

Apple addresses that by explaining what happens to personal information when someone uses Apple Intelligence. After the example about getting to the daughter's performance, Craig Federighi says that people shouldn't have to send details about their lives to the cloud just to use AI. He further explains that Apple Intelligence can handle many of those requests on its own (Apple, "Keynote" 1:11:32–1:12:14). The timing of this explanation helps Apple greatly, as any concerns that users might have had from the example and privacy is explained. This helps Apple to get people to trust the product even more.

Apple then continues the explanation by bringing up their Private Cloud Compute. Apple acknowledges that some requests need more processing power than someone's device can provide, and so they explain how those requests can be sent to their servers while still being private. They also mention how independent experts can inspect the software running on the servers to further verify that your information is inaccessible and safe (Apple, "Keynote" 1:14:07–1:15:32). This gives another level of credibility to Apple as other experts unassociated to apple can verify their claims, showing how seriously they take it which builds another level of trust.

Kantz explains that when we read a source, it helps to ask what the author might want us to believe (Kantz). This made me think about why Apple talks about privacy in both the keynote and written announcement. In the written announcement, Apple says its AI can use personal information to help people while still keeping that information private (Apple, "Introducing"). I think Apple includes this in both areas because they believe that it's an important aspect to use AI with your information. By explaining privacy with the benefits, Apple gives a reason why viewers should consider using Apple Intelligence.

Overall, I think Apple did a good job explaining Apple Intelligence in a way that made sense even for people who weren't familiar with AI. When I watched the keynote, I found their explanation of it convincing because I could picture myself using those features. As a person concerned about privacy as well, their plan on how to protect it helped me trust it even more. Looking at the presentation more closely helped me understand why they presented it in the order they did. By the time Apple had explained what they would do to protect user's information, viewers already understood why that would be important and helped to conclude why it would be beneficial to use without worry. That made me realize that explaining something

well depends on knowing what your audience might want to know and when they would be thinking about that. By knowing that like how Apple did, it helps to present a product like Apple Intelligence in an accepting and understandable way.

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