

# What Should Apple Name Its Next New iPhone?

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- [the name of Apple's next product is not simply a semantics issue — it's a brand opportunity.](#)

Later this year, Apple (NASDAQ: AAPL) will launch the next iPhone. As a celebration of the tenth anniversary of the first iPhone launch, the new product has already generated a lot of hype and outsized expectations. Many people eagerly await the new product's design and features, but I can't wait to see what the company uses as the name of its next iPhone.



A new iPhone will be introduced later this year. (Credit: ODD ANDERSEN/AFP/Getty Images)

For the last couple of years, Apple seems to have been playing it safe with product design and functionality, simply rolling out refinements to the iPhone 6 rather than breaking new ground. This next launch is rumored to include a stunning design that features a curved AMOLED display instead of the usual flat LCD panel, a glass back, and no home button, and a host of advanced features and capabilities including a vertically-oriented dual-camera lens, 3D cameras, augmented reality features, wireless charging, an iris scanner, and new sensing technology that enables the phone to respond when you touch any side of it.

Clearly the next new iPhone will be a major launch for Apple and, accordingly, its name should signify a major change. The company shouldn't simply follow the same numerical naming convention that has characterized all the versions of the product before it. Not only would the name "iPhone 8" suggest a mere incremental improvement from its previous rendition, but also it keeps Apple in a naming horserace with Samsung which adopted the numerical approach and just recently introduced the Galaxy S8.

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Some have suggested Apple use the name "iPhone X." They favor the "X" as a play on iPhone's 10th anniversary, using the Roman numeral for 10. Also, they say it provides a noticeable departure from the number-based naming convention but doesn't veer off course so dramatically that the next launch couldn't return to the numeric sequence and be named the iPhone 11. Plus X does sound intriguing and somewhat futuristic.

According to a [post](#) on the Japanese blog Mac Otakara, the product is going to be called the "iPhone Edition." The "Edition" name follows the precedent Apple set by naming its higher-end Apple Watch the "Apple Watch Edition" to differentiate it from the standard Apple Watch Series 2. (The newly designed iPhone will be a major step above the iPhone 7s and iPhone 7s Plus, which will feature only modest upgrades from last year's devices and will be introduced right before it.) But the name iPhone Edition is boring and anticlimactic and seems to position the new product as a merely a rendition or version of an existing product instead of the breakthrough one it looks like it will be.

Apple needs to use a name that fits the giant leap forward it is making with this next new product. But rather than thinking up a clever descriptor to tack onto the end of the word "iPhone," I suggest the company re-consider the term "iPhone," or more specifically, "Phone" altogether. A new suffix doesn't adequately signal the significance of the launch and it's about time that someone acknowledge that "smartphones" have evolved into so much more than phones.

In a 2015 [study](#) among U.S. smartphone users, Pew Research found that text messaging was the most widely- and frequently-used feature of a smartphone. It found that people also used their devices as phones for voice/video calls but accessing the Internet and for email were just as popular applications. These results were collected two years ago — people's usage of these devices beyond phone calls has certainly only increased since then.

Pew has also [reported](#) that 68% of smartphone owners use their phone to follow along with breaking news events at least occasionally, 67% use their phone for turn-by-turn navigation while driving, and 57% do online banking with them. Parks Associates [data](#) shows 68% of U.S.-based smartphone owners listening to music via streaming outlets on a daily basis and 71% watch short video clips. And according to personal media startup [Magisto](#), the average smartphone user takes 150 new photos during a given month.

Given how dramatically usage of these devices has changed and expanded, calling them phones is like calling cars horseless carriages and rubber-soled footwear tennis shoes. Moving away from the "phone" nomenclature would institute a more accurate depiction of what the device is, but [the name of Apple's next product is not simply a semantics issue — it's a brand opportunity.](#)

A wholesale name change would help Apple to not only promote the remarkable capabilities of this new device but also to lay the foundation for its future evolution. As the company looks to increase and evolve the device's capabilities with artificial intelligence and sensor technologies, usage will likely expand even further into medical, home, and transportation applications.

Twenty-five years ago Apple introduced "a personal digital assistant" device named the Newton. Although the product didn't take off, perhaps the company was onto something with its approach to its name back then. By evoking Isaac Newton, one of the most influential scientists of all time and a key figure in the scientific revolution, the name suggested the product was revolutionary. For its next new iPhone launch, perhaps Apple should consider a name that similarly suggests something entirely new and different.

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