

## Technology

# Apple to Start Publishing AI Research to Hasten Deep Learning

Apple Inc. will allow its artificial intelligence teams to publish research papers for the first time, marking a significant change in strategy that could help accelerate the iPhone maker's advances in deep learning.

When Apple introduced its Siri virtual assistant in 2011, the company appeared to have a head start over many of its nearest competitors. But it has lost ground since then to the likes of Alphabet Inc.'s Google Assistant and Amazon.com Inc.'s Alexa.

Researchers say among the reasons Apple has failed to keep pace is its unwillingness to allow its AI engineers to publish scientific papers, stymieing its ability to feed off wider advances in the field.

That policy has now changed, Russ Salakhutdinov, an Apple director of AI research, said Monday at the Neural Information Processing Systems conference in Barcelona, according to Twitter posts from those present. One attendee posted a photo of a slide from Salakhutdinov's presentation stating "Can we publish? Yes. Do we engage with academia? Yes." An Apple spokeswoman didn't immediately respond to an e-mail requesting comment.

Apple hired Salakhutdinov from Carnegie Mellon University in October. The ban on publication has hindered the company's ability



Photographer: David Paul Morris/Bloomberg

to hire the best talent because researchers are often less willing to work in a secretive environment where they can't engage openly with others. To compensate for the hiring difficulties, Apple has bought a series of AI

startups, spending \$200 million on Seattle-based Turi Inc. earlier this year to add to half a dozen other acquisitions.

By Alex Webb