

AUTOMOTIVE

## Why Apple may have chosen McLaren over Tesla for autonomous driving

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*McLaren 570GT*

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With the race for autonomous vehicles heating up, Apple may make a move that could potentially help it join in on the competition faster with assistance from a boutique automotive manufacturer.

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The rumor mill has been turning in the automotive and tech industries regarding a possible purchase of British automaker McLaren by Apple. In its continuous fight against Google, Apple has been working with a variety of tech-related firms for autonomous driving research and development, and acquiring **McLaren** could mean a faster prototype as the automaker has a much smaller manufacturing process than others in its sector.

"A boutique automaker will allow for Apple to engage earlier in the development process," said Kari Shimmel, chief marketing officer at ad agency **Campbell Ewald**. "With large automakers developing platforms with close to a decade of investment, it can be difficult to respond quickly to the ever evolving landscape of design and technology from the ground up.

"This partnership could allow Apple to do what it does best, create a product for the consumer of the future," she said. "Tech companies stepping into the auto category are only going to push innovation to the forefront.

"Apple has been a leader in design, the user experience and connected technology, all things that the current luxury auto shopper is wanting."

Full speed ahead

Apple's jump to **McLaren** left many perplexed, as the automaker appeals to a very niche, fanatic group rather than a mass audience. However, with mass auto manufacturers, innovative and product growth can be very slow to see reality.

McLaren being a small boutique manufacturer means much greater control, which could mean faster innovation for Apple.

According the Financial Times, experts close to Apple and McLaren have revealed that the tech giant is hoping to

invest a significant share with the automaker. The rumors follow news of Apple's Project Titan, its program for autonomous driving technology development.



*Apple's new iPhone 7*

With Google and Tesla making serious headway in the driverless vehicle field, and Apple losing strength with its iconic iPhone, the tech giant is clearly hoping to get into the game. But what exactly will come about with the acquisition is yet to reveal itself.

Thanks to German automakers Mercedes-Benz and Audi, the general public is starting to see autonomous vehicles become a reality after years of mostly behind-the-scenes progress.

Even at the beginning of the decade, autonomous vehicles seemed more like an idea out of science fiction than an imminent reality, but development by Google and other tech companies and automakers has gradually brought the possibility to light. While the race will continue for years, consumers are getting their first look at the not-so-distant future ([see more](#)).

British automaker Jaguar Land Rover is also throwing its hat in the ring by beginning real-world testing for autonomous vehicles.

Over the next four years, the automaker plans to have a fleet of more than 100 research automobiles for development and testing of Connected and Autonomous Vehicle technologies. The announcement comes immediately after the company detailed plans for all-terrain autonomous driving, signaling the urgency of the goal ([see more](#)).

#### Tech integration

If McLaren were to integrate Apple software into its vehicles, the potential could be endless. The brand values technology and innovation, as does its audience, so bringing Apple products into its cars would make a natural partnership for McLaren.

As of press time, McLaren is completely denying the rumor claims.



*The McLaren 650S Spider*

"It's very hard to say exactly what impact because McLaren, though denying the rumors completely, are in a totally different demographic and market segment than Tesla," said Brett J. Levine, automobile consultant, cofounder and creator of [DriveAnything.com](#). "Apple may want some of the patents on technology McLaren owns outside of the racing, motorsport, performance cars.

"It's tough to say this early on how Apple might leverage McLaren the deals primarily in the ultra-high-end vehicle

market would be," he said. "Very tough question to answer with regard to the affluent customer wanting something created by Apple involving McLaren.

"I don't personally see the correlation between the two brands, because McLaren primarily appeals to a very passionate and enthusiastic customer. McLaren has always embraced technology in all of the vehicles and are at the forefront with regard to engineering, so I could see how integrating technology from Apple into their systems would benefit them, but not necessarily vice versa."

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