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New iPhone Brings New iOS, Putting Apple's Craig Federighi In The Spotlight -- Again

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If stage time is any measure of celebrity, then Apple's Craig Federighi has arrived.

At the company's [Worldwide Developers Conference](#) in June, it was Federighi, promoted last year to oversee the operating system software that powers the iPhone and Mac, who clocked in more time on stage (about 30 minutes) than any other executive, including Apple CEO Tim Cook.

Federighi smiled his way through demo after demo, talking about the new version of iOS for the iPhone, as well as the updated OS X software for the Mac. It was a

big reveal for the those programs, which were designed for the first time with help from Apple's famous hardware design chief, Jony Ive, whose job was expanded last year to include oversight of the look-and-feel of software.

Even so, it was Federighi who showed off the new features, colors and icons in iOS 7 to more than 5,000 developers in San Francisco as Ive watched from the audience. And it will be Federighi, promoted to serve as Apple's senior vice president of software engineering after his predecessor screwed up the Maps app in iOS 6, who will be the man in the spotlight when iOS 7 is released in coming weeks.

Apple is expected to announce when iOS 7 will be released at an invite-only event on Sept. 10 at its Cupertino, California headquarters, where it's expected to unveil colorful new versions of the iPhone, as well as a lower-cost model dubbed the iPhone 5c designed to appeal to cost-conscious buyers around the world.

Tall and thin, Federighi is an affable showman. In 2012, he won over the WWDC crowd for taking in stride a reference to his abundant and well-coiffed gray hair when his Game Center app account popped up under the name "Hair Force One." "Yeah, like I chose that," Federighi, 44, said to laughter.



Apple's software chief Craig Federighi says iOS 7 is an "exciting new beginning."
(Photo courtesy of Apple.)

This year, he earned lots of laugh and applause at WWDC for his numerous one-liners. On a redesign of the old-fashioned poker table used as a backdrop in Apple's "Game Center" app, Federighi quipped, "We just completely ran out of green felt and wood as well – this has got to be good for the environment." On Apple's decision to stop naming Mac OS X after cats and switch to California place names: "We do not want to be the first software in history to be delayed due to a dwindling supply of cats." The software is called Mavericks. Apple fans have called his performance "flawless" and "masterful," and posted compilations of his best WWDC moments on YouTube. The Wall Street Journal called him Apple's new frontman. Forbes last month named him as one of the 10 rising stars at the world's most innovative companies.

After earning electronic engineering and computer science degrees from UC Berkeley, Federighi ended up at NeXT, the software company that Steve Jobs started after being fired from Apple. When Apple bought NeXT in December 1996, Federighi went along. But he only stayed four years before exiting for enterprise software maker Ariba, where he served as chief technology officer.

He was lured back to Apple in 2009 to lead the team working on Mac software, including "Mountain Lion, the most successful OS X release in Apple's history," the company notes in Federighi's bio on its website.

In October 2012, he joined Cook's executive team when he was tapped to head software engineering after iOS software chief Scott Forstall was ousted, in part, for being unapologetic over the problems with Apple's Maps app. Insiders say Federighi plays well with others, a trait prized by Cook and lacking in Forstall. "He is a brilliant software engineer, but he's also a much better manager for collaboration than Forstall ever was," says longtime Apple analyst Tim Bajarin. Reviews of the pre-release versions of iOS 7 have focused on the redesigned flat, white interface, with its colorful icons and new font, with some praising the look-and-feel and others saying it masks the lack of great technological leaps in the software. Apple blogger John Gruber of Daring Fireball praised Ive for eliminating the "saccharine" and "exuberant textures" like wood grain, linen and Rich Corinthian leather — the skeuomorphic elements favored by Forstall and former Apple CEO Steve Jobs. ZDNet reviewer Zack Whittaker said the software, which made his six-month old iPhone feel "brand new" and called out the sideways-swiping multitasking view as one of the headline-making features.

Helen Timofeeva, a senior mobile software developer with DataArt, said Apple has borrowed too heavily from competitors. "Would you like to imagine how the new iOS interface looks like? Then take a look at Google+ or Google Drive. Does the new handy task manager appeal to you? It has already been realized in Android."

‘Exciting New Beginning’

Apple, which has posted videos about how the new software works, says its goal has never been to design “beautiful” software. “Simplicity is often equated with minimalism. Yet true simplicity is so much more than just the absence of clutter or the removal of decoration,” Apple says in a post about [iOS 7’s design](#). “It’s about offering up the right things, in the right place, right when you need them. It’s about bringing order to complexity. And it’s about making something that always seems to “just work.” When you pick something up for the first time and already know how to do the things you want to do, that’s simplicity.”

Among the [new features](#) are a Control Center that puts controls for a variety of functions — Airplane Mode, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, Do Not Disturb, screen brightness, the Clock, Camera, Calculator and Flashlight — a single swipe away; an updated Notification Center that adds an at-a-glance look at a day’s events; and Airdrop, a new way to share content with nearby contacts. Users can also choose among new male and female voices for Apple’s Siri voice navigation service.

Federighi told developers in June that iOS 7 is the most significant update to the software since the first version released with the iPhone in 2007. He called it an “exciting new beginning,” showcasing the collaboration between Ive’s design team and engineering. Millions of Apple users, who downloaded iOS 6 last September and immediately began calling out problems with the Maps app, will get to decide for themselves shortly. If there are any complaints this time around, Apple’s loyal and vocal users – and Cook – will know who to turn to.

