

Apple looking to smarten up Siri with patent application for crowd sourcing

November 15 2013, by Bob Yirka



Apple Inc. of Cupertino California has applied for a patent on new

technology that if employed could boost the accuracy of answers provided by Siri, the digital personal assistant that comes with its line of Smartphones. According to the patent application, Apple is looking to improve upon answers that Siri gives by offering a second go that would include looking through other websites, databases, or even asking other people that seem to be in a position to know. Such an option, the company notes, would lie outside the realm of instantaneous results that Siri normally provides, extending wait times to hours, days, or even weeks.

Apple's Siri has without question, met with a divided response from the public. Some claim they love the application and use it extensively, others laugh and call it quaint—an indication that it's not really something they take seriously. Apple is aware of the application's limitations, of course, and by applying for a patent on technology that would help the app do a better job of supplying answers to real world questions, the company has revealed that it realizes that serious improvements need to be made.

In the [patent application](#), Apple makes clear that Siri needs more than its current slew of resources such as Yelp, Bing, or even Yahoo. Such new resources it appears would include expert databases, data from existing Question & Answer forums, or perhaps even answers drawn from a real-time application that would simply ask relevant people if they know they answer. Using such resources would of course, alter Siri's response time, and it's not clear if users would be willing to wait, especially if they are looking for answers to help them out of real-time quandaries.

Many in the press have noted that what Apple appears to be looking for already exists in the form of Q&A site ChaCha—people type in questions and other people type in answers. Users of either type can visit the site directly or access it through a smartphone. What makes the site powerful is that it keeps track of every question and answer pairing ever

asked and answered, so if someone asks again, it can dish up all the answers ever given, which sounds like something Siri could use.

It might be that Apple's patent application is merely a preamble to an acquisition by the company, after all, buying ChaCha and giving Siri access to all those [answers](#) would seem a simpler way to go. Or it might just mean Apple is looking at various options. Either way, users will likely cross their fingers, hoping that whatever Apple settles on, it will be an improvement over what exists right now.

More information: [United States Patent Application](#)

© 2013 Phys.org

Citation: Apple looking to smarten up Siri with patent application for crowd sourcing (2013, November 15) retrieved 19 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2013-11-apple-smarten-siri-patent-application.html>

| |
|--|
| <p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p> |
|--|