

One of iPhone founders leaving Apple

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A customer checks a new iPhone 5c in front of a display of cases inside an Apple store in Hong Kong on September 20, 2013

One of the pioneers behind the iPhone, software engineer Greg Christie, is leaving Apple, a spokesman said Wednesday.

"Greg has been planning to retire later this year after nearly 20 years at Apple," an official said in an email, saying he had made vital contributions to Apple.

Christie was part of the team that developed the iOS [software](#) for the first iPhone, which came out in 2007.

Christie was until now leading a team working on a so-called human interface team developing more software for Apple.

His role will be taken over by the current vice president for design, Jonathan Ive.

Ive in recent years has been working on Apple products' external look.

But industry publications say he has played a major role in developing the latest version of the iPhone operating system iOS 7.

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