

Apple puts brakes on car team but keeps eye on road

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Apple is reorganizing its secretive unit working on autonomous cars but the California giant remains committed to the technology, according to a statement

Apple acknowledged Thursday that it has trimmed its team devoted to self-driving car technology but stressed that its still in the race.

Apple's comment came in response to a CNBC report that the staff of a secretive Project Titan was reduced this week by more than 200 people, some of whom were transferred to jobs elsewhere at the California-based [technology](#) group.

"We have an incredibly talented team working on [autonomous systems](#) and associated technologies at Apple," the company said in a released statement.

"We continue to believe there is a huge opportunity with autonomous systems, that Apple has unique capabilities to contribute, and that this is the most ambitious machine learning project ever."

Apple added a former Tesla executive to a leading role on the self-driving [vehicle](#) tech team last year, and the staff cut came with internal reorganization.

"As the team focuses their work on several key areas for 2019, some groups are being moved to projects in other parts of the company, where they will support [machine learning](#) and other initiatives, across all of Apple," the statement said.

Notoriously tight-lipped Apple revealed its autonomous vehicle technology aspirations late in 2016 in a letter to the US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration offering the company's opinion about regulations for the sector.

Chief executive Tim Cook later said he saw autonomous driving systems as a "core technology" for the future, and that Apple wants to move into the automotive sector because "there is a major disruption looming" from new technologies.

Instead of designing and producing a complete self-driving car, the

group was to concentrate on developing underlying technologies for autonomous vehicles.

Most major auto manufacturers and many technology groups are currently developing autonomous vehicles, considered to be the future of the automobile, along with electric power.

The latest move comes as Apple faced pressure to show its fortunes are not tethered solely to iPhone sales.

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