

Angela Ahrendts Leaves Apple

Written by Frederick Douglas
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Apple gets a change in leadership as senior retail VP of retail Angela Ahrendts announces her departure from the iPhone maker after 5 years for, as she puts it, "new personal and professional pursuits."



"The last 5 years have been the most stimulating, challenging and fulfilling of my career. Through the teams' collective efforts, Retail has never been stronger or better positioned to make an even greater contribution for Apple," Ahrendts says. "I feel there is no better time to pass the baton to Deirdre, one of Apple's strongest executives. I look forward to watching how this amazing team, under her leadership, will continue to change the world one person and one community at a time."

Replacing Ahrendts in the Apple hierarchy is People team leader Deirdre O'Brien, who retains her current responsibilities as she becomes SVP of both retail and people. As such, she will both take care of Apple retail operations (covering 506 retail locations and 35 online stores) and what is essentially human resources, overseeing talent development and Apple University, recruitment, employee relations and experience, business partnership, compensation and inclusion and diversity.

Ahrendts came to Apple on October 2013 from Burberry. She is credited with unifying the Burberry retail presence by pushing in-store technology, establishing a strong social media presence and creating a more seamless online marketplace. Under her influence, Apple stores became more of a "town square" through the introduction of creative workshop and interactive displays. She also played an important role in pushing the Apple Watch as a piece of luxury jewelry, although Apple quickly gave up on that approach in favour of more traditional electronics retail.

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