McDonald's to Acquire Apprente, An Early Stage Leader in Voice Technology

Move Will Expand McDonald's Presence in the Bay Area and Integrate New Teams with Advanced Technology Skillsets into the McDonald's Business

CHICAGO, IL – September 10, 2019 – McDonald's Corporation (MCD) announced today an agreement to acquire Apprente, an early stage leader in voice-based, conversational technology. The agreement marks another bold step in advancing employee and customer facing innovations while further strengthening McDonald's technology capabilities. The announcement comes after extensive exploration with several parties, including evaluating Apprente's solutions in McDonald's test restaurants.

Apprente was founded in 2017 in Mountain View, California, to create voice-based platforms for complex, multilingual, multi-accent and multi-item conversational ordering. In McDonald's restaurants, this technology is expected to allow for faster, simpler and more accurate order taking at the Drive Thru with future potential to incorporate into mobile ordering and kiosks.

"Building our technology infrastructure and digital capabilities are fundamental to our Velocity Growth Plan and enable us to meet rising expectations from our customers, while making it simpler and even more enjoyable for crew members to serve guests" said Steve Easterbrook, President and Chief Executive Officer, McDonald's Corporation. "Apprente's gifted team, and the technology they have developed, will form McD Tech Labs, a new group integrated in our Global Technology team that will take our culture of innovation one step further."

"McDonald's commitment to innovation has long inspired our team. It was quite clear from our various engagements that McDonald's is leading the industry with technology" said Itamar Arel, Ph.D., co-founder of Apprente and Vice President of McD Tech Labs. "Apprente was borne out of an opportunity to use technology to solve challenging real world problems and we're thrilled to now apply this to creating personalized experiences for customers and crew."

The Apprente team will be the founding member of a new, integrated, internal group within McDonald's Global Technology team called McD Tech Labs. Over time, McDonald's expects to grow its presence in Silicon Valley with the hiring of additional engineers, data scientists and other advanced technology experts to join McD Tech Labs to meet future business needs and support deployment.

The latest investment builds on several key technology initiatives McDonald's has introduced in recent years to improve the employee and customer experience. In April, McDonald's [acquired Dynamic Yield](#), a leader in personalization and decision logic technology, which is now deployed in over 8,000 restaurants in the U.S. with plans to be integrated into nearly all Drive Thrus in the U.S. and Australia by the end of 2019. McDonald's will utilize this decision technology to provide an even more personalized customer experience by varying outdoor digital Drive Thru menu displays to show food based on time of day, weather, current restaurant traffic and trending menu items. The decision technology can also instantly suggest and display additional items to a customer's order based on their current selections.

McDonald's also invested in Plexure, a mobile app vendor, earlier this year to further advance the development of McDonald's Global Mobile App.

About McDonald's
McDonald's is the world's leading global foodservice retailer with over 38,000 locations in over 100 countries. Approximately 93% of McDonald's restaurants worldwide are owned and operated by independent local business men and women.

About Apprente
Apprente is a privately held company in Mountain View, California building intelligent, voice-based conversational agents for customer service applications. Leveraging proprietary neuroscience-based AI technology, the company is creating integratable systems that are naturally engaging, capable of understanding context and able to offer the same sense of immediacy found in human interactions. Apprente helps businesses and their employees minimize customer wait times, boost service productivity and improve customer experience quality.

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PRIVACY (UPDATED)

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