

In the last 10 years, we've learned a lot. We've learned to treat every day with the same enthusiasm we had on the first day. We've learned the importance of giving our customers just as much attention as they give us. And we've learned the art of hiring the right people for the right positions. We've learned it's better to adapt to the neighborhood rather than expecting the neighborhood to adapt to us. Which is why we spend so much time and energy building stores the way we do. Our first store, in Tysons Corner, taught us our first lesson within the first 30 minutes. We had just opened the doors when we noticed the steel already needed polishing. With a special polishing solution. And a special polishing tool. That's when we learned that blasting steel with virgin sand makes it less prone to scuff marks. We've also learned that glass can be much more than just glass. We've learned that a 32'6" transparent glass box can stand tall even among the giants of the Manhattan skyline. That when glass becomes as iconic as the Fifth Avenue Cube, it can also become the fifth most photographed landmark in New York City. And we've learned that if you have to, you can close an entire street in Sydney to bring in three-story panes of glass. And when you create three-story glass, you also have to create a rig that can install three-story glass. We've even figured out how to make the world's largest pieces of curved glass for one of our stores in Shanghai. We've also learned more than a few things about stone. Like how to reveal granite's true color with a blowtorch. And that sometimes granite has veins of color that have to be matched. We've also learned that getting these details perfect can feel like trying to move a mountain. Sometimes two. But in the end, the effort is worth it. Because steel, glass, and stone can combine to create truly unique and inspiring spaces. We also understand that finding the right design for our stores is critical. We even built a full-scale facade of the Regent Street store in a Cupertino parking lot to be sure the design was right. Which taught us the value of seeing things full size. We once had a notion that ministores would offer the ultimate in convenience. Then we built one. Which showed us that bigger can actually be better. And we've learned that even when our stores are big, no detail is too small. This is something we learned all over again when we restored the Paris Opera store down to the last of its more than 500,000 tiles. We've also learned that our customers like open spaces, glass staircases, and handcrafted oak tables. And that those spaces don't need to smell like pine trees or tomatoes to make them inviting. We're constantly working to make our stores more artful, more iconic, and more innovative. And we're awfully proud of every single one. We're proud of our stores not just because they're successful, but because of everything they've taught us. Along the way Apple Stores have made Apple stronger as a company. Over the past 10 years, we've learned that our stores are the embodiment of the Apple brand for our customers. Now, our customers just happen to be the entire reason we're here, so let's dedicate a few words to them. Around the time we opened the store in Tysons Corner in 2001, everyone else was trying to talk to their customers less. Which made us think that maybe we should talk to them more. Face-to-face if possible. So we've found ways to strike up a conversation at every possible opportunity. We talk while they play with the products on the tables. And when they join us for a workshop. These conversations have taught us that customers love our products, but what they really want is to make a scrapbook out of family photos. They want to make a movie about their kid. Or a website about traveling across the country. Which has taught us that Apple Stores can and should be centers for creativity. And we've figured out through programs like Apple Camp and Youth Workshops that creativity doesn't care about age. The movies and the slideshows we've seen kids make are proof that all you need are the right tools and an idea. And we must be doing something right, because the kids' smiles are just as big as ours. We've also learned that musicians can record an album in our stores that goes to the top of the charts. And that award-winning film directors are interested not just in our computers but in our workshops. We've learned a lot about having fun. And we've learned our customers like to use our products for business too. Experience has taught us that having one Pro Day per week dedicated to business customers isn't enough. That we need to be open for business every day. And have space devoted to business training sessions, workshops, and events. We've learned that every staff member should be just as fluent in the needs of a business customer as the needs of any other customer. Our millions of conversations with customers of every stripe have taught us it's not about making people feel like a computer or phone loves them. That's impossible. Instead, it's about giving people the tools to do what they love. And we've learned how to create amazing programs like One to One and Personal Setup to give people those tools. We created programs like these to replace fear with confidence. Because our customers have shown us that the ownership experience is even more important than the sale. We learned all this by asking questions. And genuinely listening to the answers. And to be sure we're hearing everything, we've learned to converse in 36 languages, and a few local dialects as well. We've even learned a few cultural things. The proper use of the word y'all, for example. And our Japanese customers once taught us that their superheroes don't wear capes. Which also taught us to see feedback as a gift. We've learned that a visit to the Genius Bar can fix more than just computers. It can also restore a customer's relationship with Apple. And that we don't need a minifridge stocked with free water to get people to talk to a Genius. Knowing they can get exactly the right answer when something isn't working is enough. We even figured out how to shorten the time an in-store repair takes from seven days to one day. Our customers hold us to exceptionally high standards. So we've learned how to raise ours even higher. 325 store openings have taught us that a grand opening creates blocks and blocks of excitement. That people will stand in line for hours, even days, just to be among the first to walk through the front door. And to get a free T-shirt. Speaking of T-shirts, we've learned more than you can imagine about our own. We've found that when we wear black T-shirts, we blend in. And when we wear too many colors it's confusing. But blue shirts are just right. We've also learned that it takes precisely 4,253 stitches to embroider the Apple logo on those blue shirts. And we even figured out which direction the stitches should go in. When it comes to product launches, we've learned we have to work hard to ensure supply meets demand. If not on the first day, then soon thereafter. And we've learned how to put our own products to use in innovative ways in our stores. We've created entirely new systems like EasyPay to help our customers as efficiently as possible. We've replaced the red phone behind the Genius Bar with more expertise right in our Store. All of these experiences have made us smarter. And at the very center of all we've accomplished, all we've learned over the past 10 years, are our people. People who understand how important art is to technology. People who match, and often exceed, the excitement of our customers on days we release new products. The more than 30,000 smart, dedicated employees who work so hard to create lasting relationships with the millions who walk through our doors. Whether the task at hand is fixing computers, teaching workshops, organizing inventory, designing iconic structures, inventing proprietary technology, negotiating deals, sweating the details of signage, or doing countless other things, we've learned to hire the best in every discipline. We now see that it's our job to train our people and then learn from them. And we recruit employees with such different backgrounds—teachers, musicians, artists, engineers—that there's a lot they can teach us. We've learned how to value a magnetic personality as much as proficiency. How to look for intelligence but give just as much weight to kindness. How to find people who want a career not a job. And we've found that when we hire the right people, we can lead rather than manage. We can give each person their own piece of the garden to transform. We've learned our best people often provide the best training for the next generation. And that it's important for every member of our staff to not only feel a connection to their store, but to the teams in Cupertino and to the stores around the world. Because the best ways of doing things usually translate, regardless of language or country. We've also learned that due to the exceptional quality of our applicants, it can be harder to get hired at the Apple store than in Cupertino. It can sometimes take two to three years to bring someone in. Not because they aren't right for Apple but because we want to be sure the opportunity we have to offer is right for them. Why have we learned to be so selective? So careful? Because our people are the soul of the Apple Stores. And together, our team is the strongest ever seen in retail. As beautiful and iconic as our stores may be, the people who create and staff those stores are what matters most. So on this 3,652nd day we say thank you to every single one of you. We say thank you to those who were there on the first day, to those whose first day is today. The past 10 years of the Apple Store have changed Apple as a company. Our experiences, our successes, even our occasional missteps, have made us better. They've made Apple better. And it's because of those experiences, and the ways they've changed us, that we can't wait to see what we'll learn next. It's been 10 years. What an amazing first step. 🍏