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Apple Inc.

Apple FlightPlay

"Plane and Simple."

Table of Contents

Organizational Overview — Apple Inc.

- **Subsidiaries:** Air Canada, West Jet, Jet Blue, Delta, Sunwing, Southwest, Lufthansa, United Airlines

- **Website and Social Media:** Website: https://www.apple.com/ca/, Instagram: @apple, Facebook: @Apple, X: @Apple, YouTube: @Apple, TikTok: @apple, LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/apple/.

- **Who is Apple?**
  - Apple is a tech giant based in Cupertino, Calif., that supplies the world with infamous, cutting-edge devices like the iPhone, Mac, and iPad, as well as software and services.

- **Product Overview: Apple FlightPlay**
  - Based on Apple AirPlay and Apple CarPlay, Apple FlightPlay will serve as a tool that allows Apple users to mirror the content on their iPhone, iPad, or Mac to supporting devices while aboard commercial flights by scanning the unique QR code on the screen. The new feature would allow Apple users to connect to the screens available wirelessly and securely (via Face ID or Touch ID) on select airlines, granting them access to all content available on their device without Wi-Fi. Whether through Apple Music, Apple News, Apple Podcasts, Apple TV, or other third-party streaming services, this new feature will enable a new travel experience for those immersed in the Apple ecosystem. In addition, FlightPlay would also allow for multitasking, as users would be able to use the screen on the back of the seat while still using their devices for other purposes, such as messaging or email.

- **Internal Publics**
  - Apple's management departments and teams are the individuals responsible for overseeing the organization's operations on a global scale.
  - Apple's communications and PR departments work in tandem to create the brand's new products and features and its innovative and user-friendly culture.
  - Apple's IT departments and teams are the groups most responsible for developing or updating apps or features behind the scenes.

- **External Publics**
  - Apple's customers are the primary audience that supports the brand physically, financially, and culturally.
  - Apple's external suppliers, such as the various airlines, that will implement this new software on their on-flight hardware.
  - News outlets such as The Globe and Mail or The New York Times are the primary contributors to making the public aware of Apple FlightPlay and its benefits.

- **Executive Summary**
  - On June 9, 2025, Apple will hold its 36th annual Worldwide Developers Conference (WWDC) at Apple Park in California. This event is where the company announces the new software updates for all Apple devices and allows developers, engineers, and tech enthusiasts to converse throughout the week. According to recent statistics, WWDC 2024 eventually reached 819,1000 Peak Viewers, which was achieved within the first half hour when spectators received updates regarding Vision OS 2 and iOS 18 (STREAMS CHARTS PO., 2024).
  - As a result of this statistic and the "hype" surrounding this event each year, Apple plans to reveal Apple FlightPlay—a new software feature that will be available on iOS 19, iPadOS 19, and MacOS Everest that allows users to connect their devices to the screens available on airplanes. The WWDC 25 event's slogan will be "Plane and Simple" to initiate discourse regarding the new software feature. The campaign will utilize event management, media relations, influencer relations, celebrity relations, and community relations to satisfy its goal: to raise awareness about the new software feature across all supported Apple devices, reinforcing the brand's eagerness to innovate the Apple ecosystem and commitment to facilitate relationships with new and existing audiences in the air.
  - By leveraging the brand's ability to conduct media relations strategically, prepare to host a memorable event, create successful collaborations, and construct interactive environments, these tactics will support the following SMART Objectives: i) to secure widespread acquisition of Apple FlightPlay with 60 per cent of major North American airlines within the six months of launch ii) to

increase iPhone, iPad, and Mac device usage by 40 per cent among all users within the first year of launch.

Part I: Research — Situational Analysis

Communications Audit

A key strategy across all of Apple's communications is consistency in messaging and priority in the user experience. When executing Apple FlightPlay, it is crucial to implement these strategies that are already prevalent throughout all of Apple's communications. More specifically, one of FlightPlay's primary focuses is the Continuity aspect, which allows users to use their iPhone, iPad, or Mac to connect seamlessly to the screen available on the airplane.

Website

- Highly interactive
- Apple's website has a dedicated page that discusses Continuity and how "when you use a Mac, iPad, iPhone or Apple Watch, you're able to do incredible things. And when you use them together, you can do so much more" (Apple, n.d.-d).
- In addition, Apple refers to the Mac and iPhone as the "dream team," accentuating how the company's devices are designed to work together (Apple, n.d.-c).
- The company also clarifies that using the AirPlay feature enables users to connect their device "just like that," facilitating the brand's user-friendly ideals while making universal software (Apple, n.d.-a).

Social Media

- Apple's most active social media platforms are Instagram and Youtube
- While present on Facebook, X, TikTok, and LinkedIn, the company is inactive on these platforms.
- Since Instagram is a visuals-focused platform, Apple's Instagram heavily focuses on the photography aspect of their brand, showcasing high-contrast photos and videos shot on iPhone.

- Comparatively, YouTube is a platform where more informative and cinematic content is welcome. That said, Apple tends to upload more advertisements and story-focused videos to this platform.

Email

- Apple typically utilizes its email letters for post-Apple-Event recaps highlighting any products or services the company announced at their most recent event.
- Usually mirrored from their website home page, these email letters contain messages like, "introducing the unbelievably thin and portable iPad Pro with Apple M4 chip, the redesigned iPad Air in two sizes and the all-new Apple Pencil Pro" (Apple, 2024a).

Overall, the communications tactics present across Apple's website, social media, and email letters emphasize how the brand is fully established and prepared to support the introduction of FlightPlay. When thinking through a PR lens, strategically utilizing Apple's interactive website to demonstrate Apple FlightPlay alongside the secondary benefits their social media and email provide would be most advantageous for the company.

Competitor Analysis

- Airlines
    - Although some airlines like Jet Blue offer perks such as "fast, free Fly-Fi for all," the content available on the provided screens is limited (JetBlue, n.d.).
    - Similarly, Air Canada offers inflight entertainment (IFE), offering various content to listen to and watch.
    - However, both of these airlines' software does not give users the ability to connect their own device and have a personalized, seamless experience.
- Google
    - The most comparable software Google currently has to Apple FlightPlay is Chromecast—a TV plugin that transforms the user's television into one with smart TV qualities.
    - While effective on the television, this plugin is not transferable to an aircraft and is not as unique and innovative as FlightPlay.

- Samsung
  - Samsung offers Smart View, a software similar to Apple's AirPlay. It allows users to "wirelessly connect a compatible Samsung phone to a Samsung Smart TV or a Chromecast device" and "beam" content (Share the Screen of Your Galaxy Phone With Smart View | Samsung Canada, 2024).
  - Once again, this software is meant to be used in a home setting, not aboard a plane, therefore restraining Samsung's product to one type of setting.
- Although similar types of software exist across all of Apple's most noteworthy competitors, none of them are tailored or centred around the immersive on-screen experiences available on aircrafts. Apple's ability to consistently reinforce a sense of ease among its consumers is what makes the brand stand out from its competitors repeatedly, which is why FlightPlay will carry on this tradition and positively contribute to the Apple ecosystem.

Part I: Research — SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- **Positive Brand Reputation:** Effectively establishes long-term relationships with customers by emphasizing the benefits of the Apple ecosystem. In all distributed media about all Apple products, the organization not only highlights the features of the individual product but also bolsters the product's capabilities when used alongside other Apple devices and with products or services that other brands offer (such as air transportation).
- **Informative, Engaging, Entertaining Content:** Captivates consumers with high-quality visuals, interactive content, and live cinematic events. For example, on Apple's website, the company tends to feature detailed, pixel-perfect images of the products on the homepage, allows users to view a product in their space via Augmented Reality, and broadcasts any significant events that the company hosts (like WWDC).
- **Successful Launch Events:** Whether in person on 5th Ave., New York City or virtually across the globe, Apple is well-known for its product and software launch events. The company strategically utilizes impressive visuals, prominent voices like CEO Tim Cook,

and well-known collaborators like Nike to generate buzz and set trends—something that the brand should consider when outlining potential subsidiaries to partner with.

- **Cross-Promotion:** By taking advantage of the new and existing relationships involving their subsidiaries (in this case, Jet Blue and Air Canada), Apple continues to engage in practical cross-promotional efforts with partnering brands to maximize awareness of various products, services, and features. The brand strategically uses the exclusive access provided by its subsidiaries, such as open collaboration with public relations teams and permission to use Meltwater.

- **Ample Media Coverage:** Enacting these previous three strengths secures media coverage in news outlets like The New York Times, CNBC, People, and many others. Whether the coverage is positive or controversial, it influences people to talk about the brand nonetheless, revitalizing Apple's undeniable presence.

Weaknesses

- **Exclusionary Ecosystem:** A substantial portion of Apple's communications currently focuses on the seamlessness of using all its products simultaneously in different situations. However, this communication method is not always well-received by consumers. In particular, consumers who use both Apple and Android products feel that Apple is exclusionary in its methods and segregates other companies.

- **Expensive Products:** While the quality of Apple's products is not in doubt, the price point of its products is often questioned. Consumers frequently perceive the brand's communication methods to favour only those with high income, once again alienating particular audiences in another way.

- **Transparency:** It is well-known that Apple clearly communicates how it prioritizes its environmental efforts, with the ultimate goal of its products being carbon neutral by 2030 (Apple, n.d.-b). However, individuals often speculate the validity behind these claims as the brand is not always clear on its specific environmental strategies.

- **Crisis Response:** The company has been criticized for its crisis response strategies in specific cases and for not addressing the public's concerns promptly. When reports emerged discussing "issues such as poor working conditions, excessive overtime, child labor, and inadequate safety measures in some of the factories producing Apple

products," the brand did not publicly respond or rectify these issues for a substantial amount of time (Abbas, 2023).

Opportunities

- **Expansion into Unique Markets:** Apple currently has a presence in the phone, tablet, computer, watch, headphones, TV and home, and augmented reality markets. However, Apple can still grow its brand by amplifying the versatility of its products to be used in even more environments where its collaborative nature with airlines would be appreciated.

- **Collaboration:** Apple has successfully executed multiple collaborations with well-known brands like Nike and Hermès with their Apple Watch product. The brand possesses the potential to initiate collaborations with additional, prominent brands to enhance the widespread recognition of its products in environments it is not currently a part of. For example, launching a collaboration with a major subsidiary such as Jet Blue would instigate conversations among a variety of stakeholders.

- **Software Improvements:** Each year, at WWDC, Apple is granted the opportunity to unveil new software improvements and features across all its products. This annual event is a primary opportunity for the company to showcase its creative efforts and surprise its audiences with beneficial and exciting enhancements for their devices.

- **Relationship Building:** By enacting all of the opportunities listed above, Apple can further develop its relationship with its audiences and continue to impact the individuals it serves with its technology.

Threats

- **Competing Brands:** In the ever-changing technological landscape, Apple faces several competitors like Samsung and Google, who constantly challenge each other's ability to launch the most innovative product or feature first and who's is considered the best. For example, these tech giants are all currently competing to be the new face of AI with Galaxy AI, Google AI, and Apple Intelligence.

- **Regulatory Forces:** The larger the organization, the more susceptible it is to regulation from authoritative forces like governments. As technology advances, so do policies that

tech companies like Apple must follow to remain in business, making the creation of innovative technology even more complex in particular situations.

- **Consumer Perceptions:** As time and technology progress, so do consumer perceptions. As a brand with such high stature as Apple, it is imperative that the company remain consistent in its messaging and consistently adapts to consumers' wants, needs, and desires while still maintaining its ethical and regulatory obligations. Especially when contributing jointly with other brands, it is imperative to communicate what the brands are becoming while acknowledging their past successes.

- **Negative Media Coverage:** Negative news travels faster than positive news in contemporary society, reinforcing the importance of Apple moving forward strategically with its product development and marketing. While positive news is beneficial, negative news can damage a brand's image through the magnification and hyper-fixation of particular issues.

Key Findings

- Since FlightPlay will be the first software of its kind, Apple can maintain its positive brand reputation by creating engaging content at a captivating launch event that will secure media coverage. Doing so will take advantage of all of its opportunities and mitigate the innovation threats that competing brands present while creating a free, cutting-edge feature for Apple users to benefit from.

- When crafting communications methods for FlightPlay's launch alongside other software launches at WWDC 25, it is critical to remain transparent in which airlines Apple partners with and what they stand for. Applying this approach will ensure the brand maintains its positive reputation, remains transparent, collaborates effectively, and mitigates negative media coverage.

- Since Apple's collaborative campaigns have been immensely successful in the past, it will be crucial to utilize the strategies and tactics that have worked well and replicate them in a new way that aligns with the mission and values of the airlines and celebrities involved.

Part I: Research — Target Audience Profile

Demographics

When considering the global and consistently growing impact Apple has across the globe, there is no doubt that its target audience is extremely broad. In terms of demographics, according to Business Research Methodology's report on Apple Segmentation, the brand's target audience lives in urban areas, are aged 20–45, are in any life phase, are of either gender, have high earnings, and may have jobs as working professionals, managers, and executive level workers (Simplilearn, 2024). More specifically, consumers engaging with FlightPlay would fall in the same age range, be of either gender, but may be more focused on productivity and entertainment than the typical Apple user.

When analyzing the types of products they offer, it is clear that Apple's "Air" and "Pro" lines of products assist in catering to this large demographic. The "Air" (or less pronounced) line of products—iPhone 16, MacBook Air, iPad Air, and Apple Watch SE—are targeting the younger and older portions of the demographic, while the "Pro" (highly focused) line of products—iPhone 16 Pro, MacBook Pro, iPad Pro, and Apple Watch Ultra—target the middle portion of the demographic. The former targets individuals who are not yet or are no longer in the professional field, and the latter targets those who are involved in heavy, professional workflows. Although there are differences between these product lines, it is the software embedded in these devices that remains the same, no matter the product line. This strategy emphasizes how Apple's consistent look and feel establishes seamlessness and cohesion not only across its devices but also across its demographic.

Psychographics

Apple employs various methods that strategically instil psychographics among its consumers. The brand adheres to the technology acceptance model, which measures "how certain factors [like perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness] contribute to the adoption of a piece of technology" (Kim & Stark, 2023). Apple has clearly put this model into practice "by providing individuals with a relatively easy to use design while being compatible with Apples ecosystem," catering to the needs of both the businessperson and the everyday individual (Kim & Stark, 2023). By enacting these methods, the company has characterized its consumers to

value the modernity, innovativeness, and convenience it provides, strengthening the reason for making Apple a part of their identity (Edwards, 2024). The more cutting-edge and user-friendly Apple's products and software become, the more these psychographics are enhanced among consumers, further substantiating their relationship with the brand and its integration into their different lifestyles. More specifically, the psychographics of a FlightPlay user would consist of an individual who enjoys travelling, taking full advantage of their flight experience, and thrives while using Apple's ecosystem. These individuals can range from the upper-class businessperson who takes pride in being efficient during their flight to the working-class parent whose main priority is keeping their children calm and entertained throughout their time in the air.

In every regard, Apple positions itself as the "hero" of the tech industry, influencing its consumers to look up to the brand as a partner in their everyday ventures. Similar to their "Get a Mac" campaign (popular in the early 2000s) that established Apple as casual, confident, creative, and fun—the antithesis to its competitions, like PC, that were formal, frustrated, and fun-deprived (Livingstone, 2011). Despite this campaign's age, the company continues to instil these ideals among its audience by creating new products and increasingly personalized software that frames the brand as innovative and its consumers as unique, productive, and ever-changing. The depiction of Apple's products as the heroes of its own stories that feature everyday activities makes the brand appear more relatable to audiences and enables consumers to yearn for the practicality and comfort that the products and software provide (Lim & Puspita, 2020). As Apple evolves, it continues to make its products and software speak for itself, being so simple, easy, and universal that they make audiences want these tools to assist their daily lives.

Part II: Action Planning

- Timeline: Jan. 2025–July. 2025
- Target Audience: Tech-savvy consumers who frequently travel and value the consistency and simplicity that exists across Apple devices.
  - Goal: Apple FlightPlay's launch aims to raise awareness about the new software feature across all supported Apple devices, reinforcing the brand's eagerness to innovate the Apple ecosystem and commitment to facilitate relationships with new and existing audiences in the air.

- o SMART Objective 1: To secure widespread acquisition of Apple FlightPlay with 60 per cent of major North American airlines within the first six months of launch.
  - Strategy A1: Starting three weeks before launch day, allow PR teams to start conducting media relations with major North American news outlets such as The New York Times, CNN, The Washington Post, CBC News, The Globe and Mail, and the Toronto Star to maximize awareness among both audiences and potential collaborators like Air Canada and Jet Blue.
    - ➢ Tactic i: To gain insight into which reporters cover cutting-edge, tech-related stories, create a targeted media list of 100 relevant contacts using Meltwater within the first week.
    - ➢ Tactic ii: Starting two weeks before launch, begin pitching via phone and email, tailoring each media pitch to the specific journalist or reporter. Mention previous stories they have covered to highlight how covering FlightPlay can serve as a mutually beneficial relationship with Apple, News outlets, and airlines.
    - ➢ Tactic iii: Two weeks before launch, with the accompanying pitch, provide each contacted media member with a FlightPlay media kit focusing on the launch event and the software feature. The media kit will include a media advisory and press release, backgrounder, fact sheet, biography, and high-resolution photos with accompanying captions.
  - Strategy B1: Host the WWDC 25 event at Apple Park in California on June 9, 2025 (launch day) that prioritizes Apple FlightPlay's introduction and attracts developers and investors. Hosting this event will allow for both written and oral communication tactics to be employed.
    - ➢ Tactic i: On May 19, 2025, distribute the WWDC 25 announcement and logo across all owned and shared platforms with the slogan "Plane and Simple." The WWDC 25 logo will consist of Apple's logo displayed in the sky surrounded by clouds, sparking interest among audiences.

> ➢ Tactic ii: Also, on May 19, slightly alter Apple's website to display subtle hints about the new software feature on various web pages without giving away explicit details. For example, on particular areas of the homepage, the iPhone page, the iPad page, and the Mac page will reveal linked messages in smaller font sizes, such as "get ready for an upgraded travel experience," that, when clicked on, will direct users to the Apple Event page that lists where and when individuals watch the event live.

> ➢ Tactic iii: To prepare for launch day on June 9, 2025, decorate Apple Park in flight-themed décor and construct in-person FlightPlay demonstrations available for all attendees, developers, and investors on June 6, 2025.

- ○ SMART Objective 2: To increase iPhone, iPad, and Mac device usage by 40 per cent among all users within the first year of launch to positively impact FlightPlay's launch.

  - ▪ Strategy B1: After securing a partnership with a major airline, conduct influencer and celebrity relations to secure partnerships with Diana Blinkhorn (@mrsblinks)—a famous family travel influencer—and Drake—a mainstream hip-hop artist. This four-way collaboration will strategically utilize the individuals' popularity, social status, and frequent travel schedules to demonstrate the new software in use. The ad campaign will showcase the latest features and benefits of FlightPlay to consumers and organizations, influencing all Apple users to upgrade to the new software and implement FlightPlay into their air travel excursions, thereby increasing device usage.

    - ➢ Tactic i: To convey that FlightPlay is valuable among various audiences, the ad will use strategic communication techniques with both popular figures to display its versatility. The ad will feature Drake on one side of the aisle using FlightPlay to listen to hip-hop music with AirPods on and Diana Blinkhorn (@mrsblinks) using FlightPlay to play a comforting show for a

crying child on the other side of the aisle. At the end of the ad, the slogan "Travel your way with FlightPlay" will appear, accompanied by Apple's logo.

➢ Tactic ii: To prepare for the ad's filming, public relations professionals will give the influencer and celebrity participating in this advertisement proper media training, ensuring that all brands' key messages are effectively communicated. For example, media training may consist of familiarizing the individuals involved with Apple and FlightPlay and providing advice on the type of body language to display while on camera to raise awareness in a welcoming manner.

- Strategy B2: Construct interactive environments in several locations that utilize props such as airplane seats with FlightPlay integration so the public can see and feel the software feature's benefits.

  ➢ Tactic i: Similar to how Apple's website users can view the brand's products in augmented reality, craft a similar experience that is tailored to FlightPlay, allowing users to see what the environment would look like on an airplane and what the software would look like on the screen in front of them.

  ➢ Tactic ii: Dedicate a sizeable portion of all Apple stores to creating an interactive FlightPlay area that will allow visitors to sit in an actual airplane seat with FlightPlay installed and test out the feature for themselves. Signage will be provided stating that these in-person interactive sights will only be available for the first three months after launch, encouraging individuals to visit Apple stores and interact with the software.

Part III: Communication

- Campaign Name: Apple FlightPlay
- Campaign Slogan: "Plane and Simple."

- <u>Key Message #1:</u> Apple FlightPlay is the first software of its kind to be fully integrated into the flight experience.

- <u>Key Message #2:</u> We believe individuals should be able to personalize their flight, so we created an immersive software feature that enables them to use their Apple device to seamlessly use the in-flight screens to watch content, mirror their phone, and increase their productivity.

- <u>Key Message #3:</u> With privacy features like FaceID and TouchID that already exist on Apple devices, FlightPlay ensures that your data is protected throughout your flight.

Part IV: Evaluation

- <u>Event Attendance</u>
  - Tracking the attendance at Apple's WWDC 25 event is critical in determining the initial success of Apple FlightPlay. By utilizing technology such as QR codes, mobile apps, and manual and digital check-ins, the company can effectively monitor who has entered Apple Park and how much awareness of the feature was raised (Broom, 2024). If all developers, investors, and media members invited to the event attend, Apple will be more likely to receive coverage, impressions, and device usage in the long term. In contrast, if Apple receives less attendance than expected, the brand can re-evaluate its public relations objectives, strategies, and tactics to improve for future events.

- <u>Impressions</u>
  - Following the event, Apple can review and continue to track the number of impressions WWDC 25 and Apple FlightPlay had and will continue to receive using Meltwater's media monitoring software. Doing so will allow the brand to "analyze billions of social conversations and identify their social strategy based on the existing happenings" (Iversen, 2023). The software will allow the company to view FlightPlay's reach, reception, and identify potential areas of improvement.

- <u>Device Metrics</u>
  - Taking advantage of the on-device metrics tools Apple currently has enabled on its users' devices is crucial to determine whether or not device usage has increased after Apple FlightPlay's launch. With users' permission, Apple can access

particular analytics on individuals' devices such as Screen Time, iCloud Activity, updates, and downloads (Appendix A). These metrics will help the company assess whether awareness was raised, if Apple FlightPlay is meeting expectations, and how to improve future efforts.

Appendix

Appendix A: Analytics and Improvements Screen
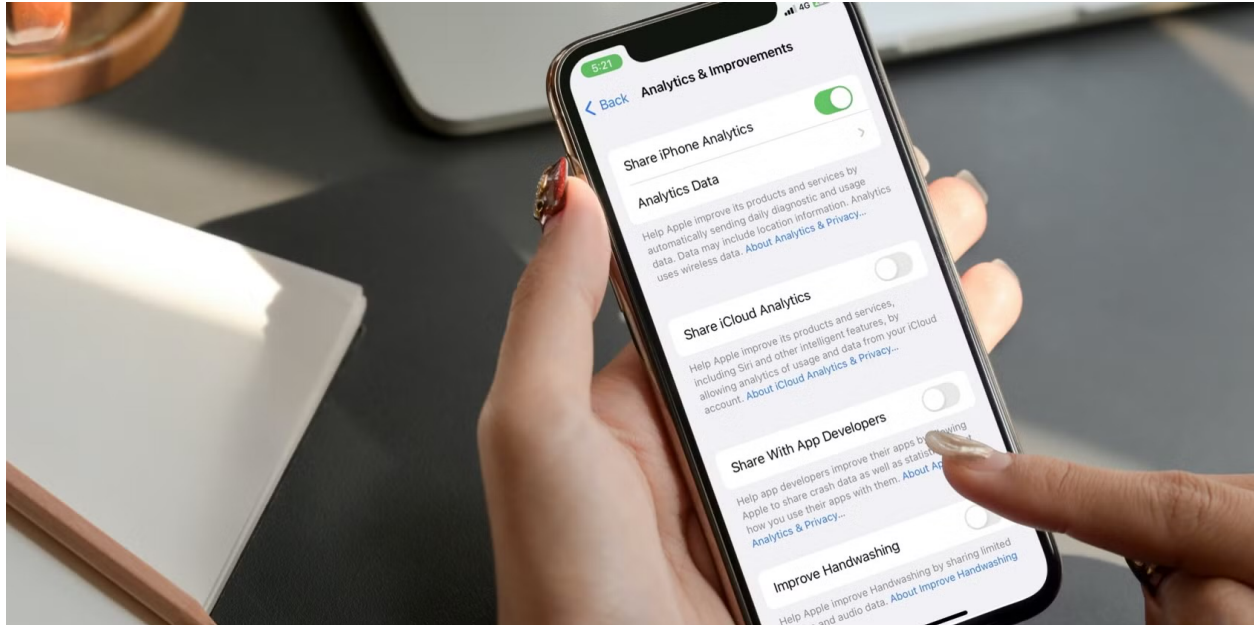
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