THE NOTE BOOK



Where the City's movers and shakers have their say. Today, it's **Neil West**, former head of music at Apple, with the pen

Has anyone even noticed that Apple has a new CEO?

THREE months into his tenure as Apple's new CEO, John Ternus has overseen the launch of a foldable iPhone, a smart home display and a touchscreen Macbook Pro. After years of criticism that Apple had lost its appetite for bold moves, the company seems ready to be more adventurous.

And yet, watching Ternus on stage, giving interviews and posing for selfies with customers in Apple Stores, I've been struck by how little seems to have changed. He looks and sounds like an Apple executive, talks about the same values and appears perfectly at home in the rituals of an Apple product launch.

I suspect that's no accident. Apple wants to excite customers with new products while reassuring them that the company they trust isn't about to become something unrecognisable.

During my 16 years at Apple, I learned that the company pays enormous attention to how its products and experiences feel, not just how they work. There's a psychological principle called cognitive fluency: our brains respond more positively to things that are easy to process. It helps explain Apple's simple product designs, its consistent typography and why Apple Stores feel familiar everywhere.

And I think Apple is applying the same thinking to its new CEO.

Ternus's first keynote emphasised continuity rather than a grand new vision. He talks about excellence, simplicity and making great products, just as his predecessors did. He dresses the part. Most of us have just met him, yet somehow he feels familiar. And familiarity makes us more comfortable, confident and trusting.

It's too early to judge his leadership, but there's a lesson for leaders managing change. The more adventurous the future you're asking people to embrace, the harder you should work to make everything around it feel familiar.

Great organisations don't just make change happen. They make change feel like a natural next step.

IS HOME VIEW A RARE APPLE MISS?

Steve Jobs once failed to catch five paper balls thrown at him simultaneously. It was a clever demonstration of why great advertising should communicate one clear message, not five.

I think of that story when contemplating Apple's new Homeview. Music, Facetime, home security, smart home controls: there's plenty to love, but no single message as compelling as iPod's "1,000 songs in your pocket" or Macbook Neo's "the magic of Mac at a surprising price".

I've no doubt Homeview's a fantastic product. But Apple needs to give us one compelling reason to fall in love with it. One ball, not five.



Almost seven years after Covid derailed the careers of a Welsh lobster fisherman and a London-based photographer, their unlikely venture, Lockdownlobsters.co.uk, is still going strong, delivering some of the UK's finest seafood to homes and restaurants across London. Sustainably caught, superb quality and run by genuinely good people. A cracking business, in more ways than one.

I split my time between London and Madrid, so Spain's upcoming general election has my attention. Among the weightier issues, Pedro Sánchez wants to abolish the twice-yearly clock changes.

But which time should Spain keep? Sleep specialists favour winter time, while two-thirds of Spaniards prefer summer time and lighter winter evenings. Having spent the last fortnight in London, I know whose side I'm on. The Spanish have already convinced me of the merits of leisurely lunches and beer served in ice-cold glasses. Perhaps they're onto something with the clocks, too.

> Simplicity is really hard!
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> Jony Ive in Objectified. Sixteen years at Apple taught me he was right. But I can report that helping other businesses discover how the hard work pays off is a lot of fun.

MY PICK OF THE PODCASTS

With a new Rubber Soul box set just released and four Sam Mendes films on the way, it's a good time to be a Beatles fan. Not that I've ever needed much encouragement.

During my years running the music team for iTunes, I regularly visited Abbey Road Studios and never missed a chance to stand in Studio Two, where the Beatles recorded so much of their music, and just breathe it all in.

These days my favourite regular Beatles fix is Tim Tucker's podcast, My Favourite Beatles Song. Tim has a remarkable musical brain, but it's his infectious, wide-eyed enthusiasm that makes the podcast so wonderful. Every week he reveals something new in songs I've known all my life. A splendid time is guaranteed for all.

