

Just 6 Months: Apple Chops Retail Head

Written by Marco Attard
02. November 2012

Head of Apple retail, John Browett, is OUT, just 6 months after the former Dixons CEO was hand-picked by Tim Cook in a very publicised move involving a golden "Hello" of \$55 million spread over 5 years.



The company gives no reason behind the ousting of Browett, but back in August the *Wall Street Journal*

reported Browett introduced a "new staffing formula" to Apple Stores-- an unpopular strategy involving the slashing of hourly shifts and staff numbers.

According to IFO Apple Store, Browett felt the stores were "too bloated" with employees and was willing to create a "leaner" operation in the name of boosted profits. It's traditional retail thinking that made Browett a hit in his jobs at Tesco and Dixons Stores Group.

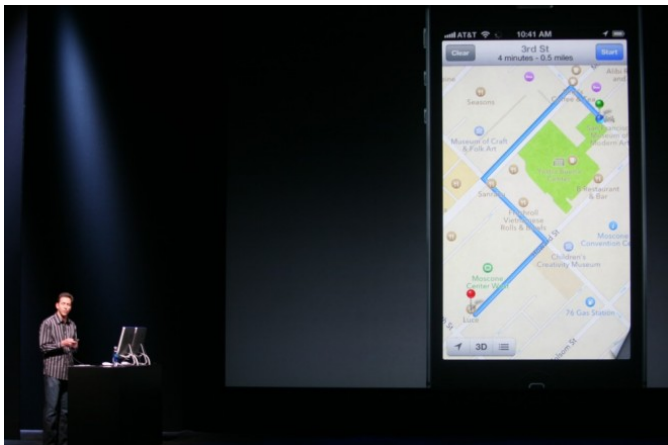
Other unpopular orders reportedly issued by Browett include a stop to all recruiting and hiring events, the stopping of promotions, the firing of all new hires still going through probation, the reduction of available hours for part time employees, reductions (if not elimination) of overtime and the layoff or firing of employees able to only work more than 32 hours a week.

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Clearly, the last thing Apple wants is a cadre of unhappy Geniuses messing up its famed retail "experience." Former Apple retail VP Ron Johnson who created the "Genius Bar") left Apple in late 2011 to accept a new role as J.C. Penney's CEO. Browett, ex-Tesco as well as Dixons, joined Apple in 2012.

Cook now oversees Apple retail until the company finds a suitable replacement.



A second Apple exec getting the boot is iOS VP Scott Forstall. The Forstall firing perhaps comes less as a surprise following the embarrassment surrounding the novel take on geography adopted by the iOS 6 Maps app.

Forstall refused to admit to the fiasco, forcing Cook to apologise in his stead.

Previously seen as a potential successor to Cook, Forstall has a history with Apple stretching back to 1997. A familiar face at Apple product launches, Forstall was not present at the iPad mini event, not to mention in May 2012 he sold 95% of his Apple stock for the tidy sum of \$38.7 million.

Three top execs will share Forstall's responsibilities-- Eddy Cue (Siri and Maps), Craig Federighi (iOS and OS X), Bob Mansfield (head of the new Technologies group). They report to Sir Jony Ive, the man responsible for "leadership and direction for Human Interface across the company."

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