# Bringing Drivers' Digital Lives into the Car with Cerence Extend

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I still remember my first fender bender; it was a cold winter day with sub-zero temperatures, and I was on my way to university. I was approaching a familiar intersection with the right-of-way when my phone chimed with a new notification. The temptation of looking at the phone got the best of me, and I took my eyes off the road, just for a moment. Those few seconds were enough for me to not notice the stopped car in front me – by the time I looked up and started braking, my car had slid into the one in front of me. While a minor accident in which, luckily, no one was hurt, this is an all-to-common occurrence in the age of the smartphone.

Fast-forward some 10 years and I am now a father. As anyone with children knows, parenthood comes with a slew of new responsibilities, one of which is being a much more careful driver. I am stricter than ever about not using my phone while driving and paying close attention to the road and other drivers, ensuring that I complete my and my family's journeys safely. But that doesn't mean the distraction of the phone has disappeared; if anything, it's increased. In those same 10 years since my first fender bender, the mobile landscape has evolved dramatically, and the role our smart devices play in our lives has only grown. As we are bombarded with messages, notifications and other distractions, the temptation to interact with our devices has never been greater. Being a safe driver means putting FOMO – Fear Of Missing Out – aside and, unfortunately, disconnecting as much as possible while we're on the go.

This is why I'm so excited about our newly launched product, Cerence Extend, a new feature for Cerence-powered automotive assistants that gives drivers safe, voice-enabled access to their smartphone apps, content and services directly from their car's infotainment system. This helps minimize distractions and allows the driver to access their personal digital life while driving in a safe way.

Cerence Extend supports drivers' unique preferences by offering interactive, AI-powered access to the most popular apps on a driver's smartphone – irrespective of the phone operating system – removing the boundaries and limitations that are prevalent in other similar solutions and bridging the gap between drivers' personal lives on their phones and their cars. With Cerence Extend, drivers can access native phone apps like calendaring, alarms and reminders, and phone calling, as well as third-party apps like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, WhatsApp, Amazon, and Starbucks, all through simple, natural voice commands. Information and notifications from these apps can be displayed directly on the car's infotainment screen, eliminating the need for drivers to pull out their phones and resulting in a safer driving experience.

In addition to its benefits to drivers, Cerence Extend supports OEMs in their mission to create unique, branded experiences that foster deep connections between drivers and their cars. Other smartphone connectivity solutions operate through full control over the vehicle's UI and UX, creating separation between the smartphone and the car and a clunky experience for the driver. Cerence Extend enables OEMs to maintain their ownership over the cockpit, resulting in a more streamlined, enjoyable and safe experience for drivers.

Cerence Extend is available as a cloud-based service, using Cerence's multi-region and multi-tenant cloud behind the scenes as it continuously adapts to driver behavior and preferences without any additional action or effort on their part.

I am convinced that Cerence Extend will have a real impact on how we interact with our mobile devices while driving, removing the stress and fear of missing out on our digital lives and enabling drivers to focus solely on driving. To learn more, check out this video.