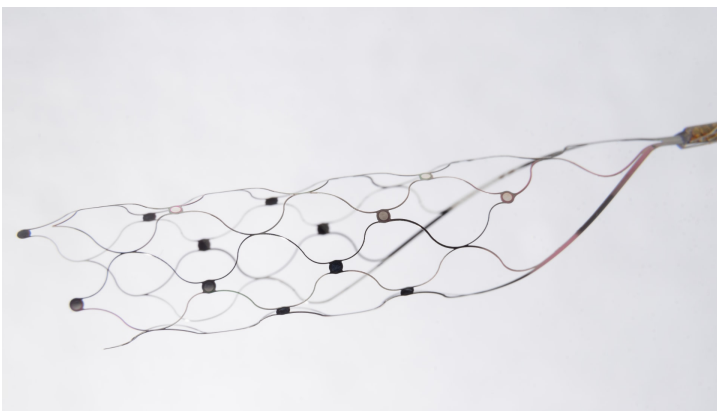


Summary

Synchron demonstrated a thought-controlled iPad for ALS patients using Apple's new Brain-Computer Interface Human Interface Device (BCI HID) protocol. The protocol allows Synchron's implanted brain-computer interface device, Switch, to collect motor data and translate it into iPad actions. This breakthrough technology could significantly improve the lives of individuals with ALS and other movement-limiting conditions.

Christian Zibreg · August 4, 2025

Medical company Synchron has demonstrated using Apple's new thought protocol to enable a patient to use an iPad solely by thinking.



Stentrode converts brain signals into onscreen actions.
Image: Synchron

What if you could use your iPad just by thinking? No tapping, no swiping no voice commands—just pure thought. That once sci-fi-sounding idea just became real, as a patient suffering from ALS, which is a condition that causes progressive loss of muscle control, was able to use an iPad using only their brain.

A [video](#) published on YouTube demonstrates this in action. Instead of some Frankenstein lab setup, the solution uses Apple's new Brain-Computer

Interface Human Interface Device (BCI HID) protocol, [unveiled in May 2025](#) and shown in action for the first time.

Thought-controlled iPads are becoming a reality

It permits Synchron's brain-computer interface (BCI) device, implanted through a vein, called Switch, to collect motor data from the blood vessel in the brain. Apple's protocol interprets the data and translates it into swipes, taps, etc. The BCI HID protocol permits BCI devices to send input to Apple devices in a standardized way.



synchron



Watch Mark control an iPad with his mind using Apple's BCI HID

The patient in the demo, Mark Jackson, cannot use his hands at all. Instead, he can be seen using their mind to control actions on the iPad, performing everyday tasks that most of us take for granted.

“When I lost the use of my hands, I thought I had lost my independence,” Jackson told [The Wall Street Journal](#). “Now, with my iPad, I can message my loved ones, read the news, and stay connected with the world, just by thinking.”

Imagine being locked inside your body, unable to move or speak. But now with this technology, you can text your family, scroll through social media, browse the web or send an email without assistance. It's a real example of how technology can dramatically change lives for people with ALS, spinal cord injuries or other movement-limiting conditions.

“This is the first time the world has seen native, thought-driven control of an Apple device in action,” said Dr. Tom Oxley, CEO and Founder, Synchron. “It is a technical breakthrough, and a glimpse into the future of human-computer interaction, where cognitive input becomes a mainstream mode of control.”

Over the years, Apple has become a leader in accessibility, and this latest move shows how deep its commitment runs. Keep in mind that Synchron's implant is currently in the clinical trial stage in the United States, so it could be years before it's fully commercialized.