

**Marketing Messages****MARY CHARLESON*****What Apple has taught us about great marketing***

Steve is gone, in what seemed mere weeks after leaving the top job at Apple, the company he founded. The bitter irony that millions would learn of his death via a device he invented was not lost on us. Over the course of his tenure, Steve Jobs led Apple on a wild ride and changed our world irrevocably. Arguably he was one of the best marketers out there. Here's why:

He understood product innovation and design. By my count, he introduced five disruptive technologies.

1. He invented the personal computer. Emphasis on personal. It was nothing like the hulking mainframes sitting in airtight controlled rooms that were being introduced at the time to house and crunch data.

2. He gave us Apples and Mac's specifically. He told us a mouse wasn't a rodent, but rather an intuitive device to navigate a desktop. He made it possible to print a document by pointing to something that looked like a printer in a pull down menu, and not some geeky series of key commands. I remember being a CS100 student at the University of Waterloo in 1984 and being the study group for 30 new Apple Mac's. The ease of use to a non-computer science student was driven home in a subsequent work term at IBM prior to Windows launching. What a difference!

3. He changed the music industry forever with the iPod and had the foresight to understand that the distribution system for digitized content was key to the success of that product, so he invented iTunes.

4. The iPhone changed the way we communicate and access the web on the go. Suddenly to call it a phone was a humble misrepresentation, when it also had become a camera, a computer, a music player, a TV, a GPS navigation system, an email platform, a voice recorder, and had endless other capabilities through apps. He didn't invent the 1 million + apps out there, but he made it so others could.

5. He has shown us that the iPad will be the most disruptive technology the computing industry has seen. It is challenging the desktop and laptop categories. And it will change the distribution of print and broadcast media, as well as book industries just like the iPod changed the music industry.

In each of these five major launches, Steve Jobs had the uncanny ability to give us something we wanted before we knew we needed it. While other companies change, copy and upgrade products, few have invented with such success. He not only strategically saw an opportunity and evolution of the effected industries before he entered them; he molded them to his liking along the way.

He understood the principles of good design. Apple products are intuitive, simple and sexy. He understood the impact of great advertising. Good design plus good advertising makes for a lustful combination. Few have created so many products that customers (shall we say fans?) lust over.

He understood the importance of the distribution system as a marketing tool. He created iTunes to integrate with iPod and disrupted the music industry forever. He created Apple stores to ensure a consistent retail experience. He didn't go for mass distribution; he went for strategic retail representation in keeping with the premium pricing strategy.

He understood the importance of showmanship and sales. Apple, the king of "controlled leaks" knows how to create anticipation around product launches like few other companies. It doesn't hurt that many of your customers are already rabid fans.

And it now looks like Apple has set its sights on disrupting the TV industry and distribution channels for content. That will be one to watch as the line between computers and TV disappears.

In short, Steve Jobs was a visionary and a great marketer. His footprint has irrevocably changed our society for the better.

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