



How Steve Jobs' Product Management Took Apple to World's Most Valuable Company

How Steve Jobs' Product Management in the 90s took Apple from Nearly Bankrupt to World's Most Valuable Company

A business is ultimately defined by its products and services. As such, product management is one of the crucial skills every business leader should master. A perfect example of this is Steve Job's brilliant product management that rewrote Apple's fate.

Steve Job's brilliance in turning around Apple's fortunes is well documented. There is absolutely no question about his dedication and contributions in propelling the company to unprecedented success, His vision and specifically product management acumen were perhaps most prominent in 1997, the year he returned to Apple, a company he co-founded over 40 years ago.

The Role of Steve Jobs in Turning Apple Around

According to [Timothy B.Lee](#) (Blockchain expert), [after Steve Jobs regained control over Apple soon after his return, the company was in frustrating disarray.](#) Apple, at that time, was

trying to sell a plethora of different products with poor strategy and focus and bleeding millions of dollars.

That is when Steve Jobs distilled Apple's product matrix into four key products:

1. iMac
2. iBook
3. PowerMac
4. PowerBook

Each product brilliantly represented different types of end-users in the market:

1. Desktop/Consumer
2. Portable/Consumer
3. Desktop/Professional
4. Portable/Professional

It was a brilliant move. The strategy has become legendary not only in Silicon Valley, but a timeless lesson for businesses across the world on how to create and market products with a sharp focus, offering best-in-class products and services to customers.

In 1998, Steve Job launched the iMac. It was a beautiful device with a nice sleek look and was one of the most successful computers to design and sell. As this strategy rolled out, Steve Jobs spearheaded revolutionary products in the years to come.

He made over three thousand employees redundant, steering clear of a \$1B loss and successfully converting that loss into a \$300M profit back in 1998.

Introducing the Legendary iPod

Before the launch of the iPhone, in 2001, Apple first launched the iPod. People went crazy after the product. Its unique

selling point was a sleek and elegant design that customers could store thousands of songs without any third-party software intervention. More importantly, the device was seamlessly compatible with Apple iTunes Store. Towards the end of the decade, Apple was able to sell more than 200M of these music players.

The Introduction of the iPhone in 2007

As per [Matt Weinberger](#), [Jobs was very decisive. He single-handedly put a halt on a majority of Apple's products to focus on just a handful of devices](#). He continued this focus with the development of the iPhone.

After Jobs unveiled the next future of mobile phones, the iPhone, it quite literally changed the entire landscape of handheld communication devices. The company went on to sell more than 1.2B iPhones to date.

As per [Ruth Umoh \(Forbes Reporter\)](#), [the company augmented the success of the iPhone by unveiling the iPad in 2010](#); it was a tablet computer that ran on the same software. The company was able to sell more than 360M of these devices. It is also important to understand that there was another individual that played an instrumental role in driving Apple's products and sales, Jony Ive.

All the products that made Apple the company it is today were designed by Jony Ive. He is Steve's go-to man, and the two formed a powerful bond. Jobs was always in a meeting with Ive discussing the company's future tech landscape and the products it had in the pipeline.

When he came back to Apple, Steve Jobs came with an ideology – and one of the first things he did was reinvent the company by launching the famous “Think Different” campaign. Instead of

hollow advertising, it was an innovative marketing initiative building upon ingenious product management. It underscored the importance of creating quality products while keeping customers in mind. Any business can take a page out of Apple's book and learn from how Steve Jobs steered the company from near bankruptcy to the world's most valuable company.

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