Steve Jobs Essay, Research Paper

Steve Jobs

Born 1955 Los Altos CA; Evangelic bad boy who, with Steve Wozniak, co-founded

Apple Computer Corporation and became a multimillionaire before the age of 30.

Subsequently started the NeXT Corporation to provide an educational system at a

reasonable price, but found that software was a better seller than hardware.

Steven Paul, was an orphan adopted by Paul and Clara Jobs of Mountain View,

California in February 1955. Jobs was not happy at school in Mountain View so

the family moved to Los Altos, California, where Steven attended Homestead High

School. His electronics teacher at Homestead High, Hohn McCollum, recalled he

was “something of a loner” and “always had a different way of looking at

things.”

Going to work for Atari after leaving Reed College, Jobs renewed his friendship

with Steve Wozniak. The two designed computer games for Atari and a telephone

“blue box”, getting much of their impetus from the Homebrew Computer Club.

Beginning work in the Job’s family garage they managed to make their first

“killing” when the Byte Shop in Mountain View bought their first fifty fully

assembled computers. On this basis the Apple Corporation was founded, the name

based on Job’s favorite fruit and the logo.

Steve Jobs innovative idea of a personel computer led him into revolutionizing

the computer hardware and software industry. When Jobs was twenty one, he and a

friend, Wozniak, built a personel computer called the Apple. The Apple changed

people’s idea of a computer from a gigantic and inscrutable mass of vacuum tubes

only used by big business and the government to a small box used by ordinary

people. No company has done more to democratize the computer and make it user-

friendly than Apple Computer Inc. Jobs software development for the Macintosh

re-introduced windows interface and mouse technology which set a standard for

all applications interface in software.

Two years after building the Apple I, Jobs introduced the Apple II. The Apple II

was the best buy in personal computers for home and small business throughout

the following five years. When the Macintosh was introduced in 1984, it was

marketed towards medium and large businesses. The Macintosh took the first major

step in adapting the personal computer to the needs of the corporate work force.

Steve Jobs was considered a brilliant young man in Silicon Valley, because he

saw the future demands of the computer industry. He was able to build a personal

computer and market the product. His innovative ideas of user-friendly software

for the Macintosh changed the design and functionality of software interfaces

created for computers. The Macintosh’s interface allowed people to interact

easier with computers, because they used a mouse to click on objects displayed

on the screen to perform some function. The Macintosh got ride of the computer

command lines that intemidated people from using computers. After resigning from

Apple Inc., Jobs would continue challenging himself to develop computers and

software for education and research by starting a new company that would

eventually develop the NextStep computer.

After school, Jobs attended lectures at the Hewlett-Packard electronics firm in

Palo Alto, California. There he was hired as a summer employee. Another employee

at Hewlett-Packard was Stephen Wozniak a recent dropout from the University of

California at Berkeley. An engineering whiz with a passion for inventing

electronic gadgets, Wozniak at that time was perfecting his “blue box,” an

illegal pocket-size telephone attachment that would allow the user to make free

long-distance calls. Jobs helped Wozniak sell a number of the devices to

customers.

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Wozniak and Jobs designed the Apple I computer in Jobs’s bedroom and they built

the prototype in the Jobs’ garage. Jobs showed the machine to a local

electronics equipment retailer, who ordered twenty-five. Jobs received marketing

advice from a friend, who was a retired CEO from Intel, and he helped them with

marketing strategies for selling their new product. Jobs and Wozniak had great

inspiration in starting a computer company that would produce and sell computers.

To start this company they sold their most valuable possessions. Jobs sold his

Volkswagen micro-bus and Wozniak sold his Hewlett-Packard scientific calculator,

which raised $1,300 to start their new company. With that capital base and

credit begged from local electronics suppliers, they set up their first

production line. Jobs came up with the name of their new company Apple in

memory of a happy summer he had spent as an orchard worker in Oregon.

Jobs and Wozniak put together their first computer, called the Apple I. They

marketed it in 1976 at a price of $666. The Apple I was the first single-board

computer with built-in video interface, and on-board ROM, which told the machine

how to load other programs from an external source. Jobs was marketing the Apple

I at hobbyists like members of the Homebrew Computer Club who could now perform

their own operations on their personal computers. Jobs and Wozniak managed to

earn $774,000 from the sales of the Apple I. The following year, Jobs and

Wozniak developed the general purpose Apple II. The design of the Apple II did

not depart from Apple I’s simplistic and compactness design. The Apple II was

the Volkswagon of computers. The Apple II had built-in circuitry allowing it to

interface directly to a color video monitor. Jobs encouraged independent

programmers to invent applications for Apple II. The result was a library of

some 16,000 software programs.

Quickly setting the standard in personal computers, the Apple II had earnings of

$139,000,000 within three years, a growth of 700 percent. Impressed with that

growth, and a trend indicating an additional worth of 35 to 40 percent, the

cautious underwriting firm of Hambrecht & Quist in cooperation with Wall

Street’s prestigious Morgan Stanley, Inc., took Apple public in 1980. The

underwriters price of $22 per share went up to $29 the first day of trading,

bringing the market value of Apple to $1.2 billion. In 1982 Apple had sales of

$583,000,000 up 74 percent from 1981. Its net earnings were $1.06 a share, up 55

percent, and as of December 1982, the company’s stock was selling for

approximately $30 a share.

Over the past seven years of Apple’s creation, Jobs had created a strong

productive company with a growth curve like a straight line North with no

serious competitors. From 1978 to 1983, its compound growth rate was over 150% a

year. Then IBM muscled into the personal computer business. Two years after

introducing its PC, IBM passed Apple in dollar sales of the machines. IBM’s

dominance had made its operating system an industry standard which was not

compatible with Apple’s products. Jobs knew in order to compete with IBM, he

would have to make the Apple compatible with IBM computers and needed to

introduce new computers that could be marketed in the business world which IBM

controlled. To help him market these new computers Jobs recruited John Sculley

from Pesi Cola for a position as president at Apple.

Jobs designed the Macintosh to compete with the PC and, in turn, make Apple’s

new products a success. In an effort to revitalize the company and prevent it

from falling victim to corporate bureaucracy, Jobs launched a campaign to bring

back the values and entrepreneurial spirit that characterized Apple in its

garage shop days. In developing the Macintosh, he tried to re-create an

atmosphere in which the computer industry’s highly individualistic, talented,

and often eccentric software and hardware designers could flourish. The

Macintosh had 128K of memory, twice that of the PC, and the memory could be

expandable up to192K. The Mac’s 32-bit microprocessor did more things and out

performed the PC’s 16-bit microprocessor. The larger concern of management

concerning the Macintosh was not IBM compatible. This caused an uphill fight for

Apple in trying to sell Macintosh to big corporations that where IBM territory.

“We have thought about this very hard and it old be easy for us to come out with

an IBM look-alike product, and put the Apple logo on it, and sell a lot of

Apples. Our earning per share would go up and our stock holders would be happy,

but we think that would be the wrong thing to do,” says Jobs. The Macintosh

held the moments possibility that computer technology would evolve beyond the

mindless crunching of numbers for legions of corporate bean-counters. As the

print campaign claimed, the Macintosh was the computer “for the rest of us.”

The strategy Jobs used to introduce the Macintosh in 1984 was radical. The

Macintosh, with all its apparent vulnerability, was a revolutionary act infused

with altruism, a technological bomb-throwing. When the machine was introduced to

the public on Super Bowl Sunday it was, as Apple Chairman Steve Jobs described

it, “kind of like watching the gladiator going into the arena and saying, ‘Here

it is.” [Scott, 1991, p.71] The commercial had a young woman athlete being

chased by faceless storm-troopers who raced past hundreds of vacant eyed workers

and hurled a sledgehammer into the image of a menacing voice. A transcendent

blast. Then a calm, cultivated speaker assured the astonished multitudes that

1984 would not be like 1984. Macintosh had entered the arena. That week,

countless newspapers and magazines ran stories with titles like “What were you

doing when the ‘1984′ commercial ran?”

Jobs’ invocation of the gladiator image is not incidental here. Throughout the

development of the Macintosh, he had fanned the fervor of the design team by

characterizing them as brilliant, committed marhinals. He repeatedly clothed

both public and private statements about the machine in revolutionary, sometimes

violent imagery, first encouraging his compatriots to see themselves as outlaws,

and then target the audience to imagine themselves as revolutionaries. Jobs,

like all those who worked on the project, saw the Macintosh as something that

would change the world. Jobs described his Macintosh developing team as souls

who were “well grounded in the philosophical traditions of the last 100 years

and the sociological traditions of the 60’s. The Macintosh team pursued their

project through grueling hours and against formidable odds. A reporter who

interviewed the team wrote: “The machine’s development was, in turn, traumatic,

joyful, grueling, lunatic, rewarding and ultimately the major event in the lives

of almost everyone involved”.