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Steve Jobs

Dragana Stojkovic

This paper offers a review of the role played by the late Steve Jobs in the development and commercialization of trendy and innovative IT devices (Mac computer, iPod, iPhone, iPad) that have greatly influenced the daily lives of hundreds of millions of people around the world.

Keywords: Apple, Innovation, IT Devices, Steve Jobs.

Although many considered him to be the best innovator in the technological world, *Steve Jobs* was never such a skilled engineer as he was able to recognize a good idea and do everything necessary to realize it and bring it to perfection. Even he himself honoured his long-time partner *Steve Wozniak*, with whom he founded the company Apple Computer, for his ingenious engineering skills. However, although Steve Wozniak was the man who was the most responsible for the construction of the first revolutionary computer Apple I, as he said, the idea of selling them never crossed his mind at the time. Jobs was the one who gathered resources, organized production, and assembled a great team of successful managers.

After the success of Apple II, the next generation of the computer, the inventor of the famous Macintosh computer (also known as Mac) *Jef Raskin* insisted that Apple team, led by Jobs, visit the company Xerox PARC which were working on the greatest innovations of that time at their premises – the graphic user interface and computer mouse. However, what people from Xerox did not know was how to realize their idea, and how to preserve it. Recognizing the ingeniousness of these creations, Jobs immediately made his team work on the development of implementation of the idea in the next generations of Apple computers, Lisa and Macintosh.

When mentioning Macintosh, it is hard to find a tech savvy or a marketing expert who has not heard of the "1984", the famous commercial that this computer was presented with in the

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USA during the Super Bowl in 1984. What is less known is that the Board of Directors did not like the commercial at all, and that Jobs was the one who supported the project until its very realization. After the premier broadcast, all three major TV networks of the time and around 50 local TV stations broadcasted their reports about the commercial, and hundreds of newspapers and magazines wrote about it, providing publicity worth 5 million dollars for free.

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After the dispute within the company, Jobs left Apple and founded his own computer company called NeXT. When 12 years later Apple bought NeXT and brought Jobs back, what he found was a company that was slowly dying since major companies such as Microsoft, IBM, and Dell had produced the same machines as Apple did, but at a lower cost and with faster processors. Visiting Apples premises, across from the main building in a basement, Jobs found a designer who was sitting between a bunch of prototypes and thinking about quitting. Among the prototypes he had been working on was a monolithic monitor with soft edges and integrated components. In that room did Jobs see that other managers had missed. Almost immediately, he said to the designer, Jonathan Ive, that from that moment on, they would be working on a new line of computers. That was when the first iMacs were born.

The next device that directed the development of high technology, this time in the consumer electronics field, was certainly the famous iPod. Considering existing digital music players to be either too big or too small but

> **" During his life he enjoyed the status of a rock star "**

useless, and their software completely inadequate, Jobs engaged a team of engineers which would design a complete line of iPods. The first model was presented in 2001 and it was the size of a deck of cards, which at the time was a really great progress, storing up to 1000 songs, while the battery lasted amazing 10 hours. And, of course, the whole story about iPod devices would not have any sense without the existence of iTunes Music Store announced in 2003, which caused a revolution in the mass distribution of digital content.

It might be needless to say how much iPhone has affected the development of smartphones since 2007 with its revolutionary design and user interface. It is enough to mention that it did not have a worthy competitor at the market for years, and even today the fans of Apple ecosystem would not exchange it for a model of another company. However, the path from the idea to the final product was immensely demanding and difficult, especially for the engineers. It is known that Jobs broke at least three iPhone prototypes into pieces before he was finally satisfied.

The iPhone has literally changed the appearance of the mobile phone and caused fast growth of smartphones and subsequently the tablet PCs. Great interest in the tablet market was caused by Apple's iPad which borrowed the OS and interface from the iPhone. At first observed with a dose of scepticism

as a useless device which was nothing but enlarged iPod touch, iPad has quickly become the best-selling tablet PC ever. If it is about the belief that your creation will be something extraordinary, then Jobs was certainly the greatest believer, at least in the tech world.

Jobs was frequently asked to comment on his vision. Once, for the American magazine *Fortune* in January 2000, he said:

"*This is what customers pay us for – to sweat all these details so it's easy and pleasant for them to use our computers. We're supposed to be really good at this. That doesn't mean we don't listen to customers, but it's hard for them to tell you what they want when they've never seen anything remotely like it. Take desktop video editing. I never got one request from someone who wanted to edit movies on his computer. Yet now that people see it, they say, 'Oh my God, that's great!'* "

During his life he enjoyed the status of a rock star thanks to his interesting life story, eccentric behaviour, and unmistaken vision when it comes to products of the future. It is certain that there is a whole team of engineers, designers, and loyal associates standing behind his success, however, Jobs was the one who knew how to spin an idea.

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