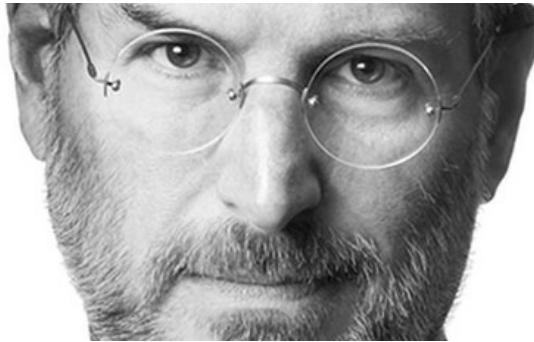


Focus on the consumer was secret to Jobs's success

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OPINION

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Steve Jobs: A lasting impression

Steve Jobs has passed away aged 56, but the technological visionary has left behind plenty for us to remember him by.

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Steve Jobs, the mastermind of Apple who created innovative and cool consumer IT devices and applications that transformed the everyday use of technology, from personal computing (MacPC), mobile phone (iPhone) to utility computing (iCloud), is now eternally resting. He has transformed the way we use computers and phones, listen to music, communicate and access information and entertainment with the iCloud.

We are deeply saddened to lose a prominent technology figure. His work will have an everlasting impact, not only on the technology industry, but on consumers.

Steve Jobs was the greatest visionary that the IT industry has ever seen. He was perhaps its most influential trendsetter, who sparked a consumer-driven IT industry over the past two decades. His approach was not just inventing new technology, but pushing the envelope for better usability for consumers.

The Apple products have always been intuitive, direct, efficient, and natural. His secret potion for making Apple a success story was his vision to prioritise ease of use on all products.

Jobs was a genius who drove Apple products to be designed and marketed as a unique and superior experience with consumer focus. In 1976 he launched Apple I, which primarily targeted private consumers and pioneered the availability of computers to the public.

Jobs strongly believed that product design would help convince people of the convenience of computers as a home appliance. In the 1980s, Apple launched its first Mac under Jobs's leadership, which was considered a milestone for the emerging IT industry. It looked like a black-and-white television with an additional keyboard, a mouse, a floppy drive. This first prototype was a computer that could speak: "Hello, my name is Macintosh."

Jobs's clear focus and business acumen helped Apple to regain its momentum during a low period. He completely changed the company's strategy and took significant steps to integrate Apple products with third-party vendor. During the past 10 years, Jobs successfully transformed an almost broken company into the world's most valuable IT business.

In 2001, Jobs initiated the "i-Concept" by launching the iPod, which allows users on the move to listen to music via a sleek pocket-size device. Over the years, the company has undergone tremendous improvements on all fronts.

Jobs redirected the company's products to become not only a digital hub in people's living rooms, but portable and dynamic lifestyle devices.

At the recent "iCloud" launch, Jobs proclaimed the end of the PC era. He pushed the Cloud industry into the limelight via the Apple iCloud initiative and the iTunes Match – a cloud-based subscription music service.

Jobs's legacy will be written in pages of IT history and he well be remembered as a visionary. He will continue to be a role model for future innovators and entrepreneurs.

Dr Rajkumar Buyya is Professor of Computer Science and Software Engineering; and director of the Cloud Computing and Distributed Systems (CLOUDS) Laboratory at the University of Melbourne. He is also serving as the founding CEO of Manjrasoft, a spin-off company of the university, commercialising its innovations in cloud computing. Karthik Sukumar is serving as a director of Manjrasoft, in the area of product management and business analysis.

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