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Steve Jobs' moment of silence

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STEVE JOBS' MOMENT OF SILENCE

Company Name: Apple, Inc.
Product Name: Moment of Silence, Macintosh, iMac, iPod, iPhone, iPad
Website: stevejobsmomentofsilence.org
Country Strategy Deployed in: United States
Strategy Name: Steve Jobs Moment of Silence
Tactical approach: Web
Sector name: Information Technology
Industry Group: Technology Hardware and Equipment
Industry: Computers and Peripherals
Sub Industry: Computer Hardware
Date of the Campaign: 2012

Situational Analysis

What can be said to commemorate someone whose foresight and innovation transformed the way we communicate?

Perhaps it's best to say nothing.

Steve Jobs, founder and longtime center of Apple Inc. passed away on October 5, 2011. Tributes to this visionary were spontaneous and abundant. Two students from the School of Visual Arts in New York, Hyui Yong Kim and Bryan Wolff, working with KNARF® Advertising, conceived of a means by which a traditional remembrance, the moment of silence, was upgraded to a modern technological tribute. Users of iPods, iPhones, iPads and other computing devices could download to their iTunes library eight seconds of silence as a remembrance to Jobs' contributions to technology, to communication and to the impact on their lives.

Apple Inc., started in 1976 in the Jobs' family garage, funded by the sale of his Volkswagen bus and the sale of partner Steve Wosniak's scientific calculator. Apple burst onto the scene in 1984 with the now famed Superbowl commercial, and, thus, became Jobs' and Wosniak's national foray into the computer industry they were destined to revolutionize. Elliott credits the 1984 spot, created with Lee Clow, Steve Hayden and Brent Thomas of Chiat/Day, with the idea of "big concept, big-budget commercials produced especially for the Super Bowl."¹ Apple I and Apple II laid the foundation for the evolution of modern technology and for planting home computing in the consumer culture. Computers would no longer be the auspices of

1. Elliott, Stuart. "Apple's Longtime Ad Partner Reflects on Jobs." *New York Times Media Decoder*, October 7, 2011. Accessed October 10, 2012.

<http://mediadecoder.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/10/07/apples-longtime-ad-partner-reflects-on-jobs/>.

government and big business, but would be democratized and made available to consumers for home and personal use.

Jobs was removed as the CEO of Apple in 1985 at which time he started NeXT, and he bought the company that would become Pixar Animation Studios. Apple bought Pixar in 1997 and reinstated Jobs as the CEO. Jobs is widely credited with revitalizing Apple in the 1990s, returning to his maverick product development and initiating Macbook Air, iPod, iPhone and iPad. Junrod described Jobs as someone who “rewrote the language of technological progress” and “gave us back our toys.”²

Jobs’ focus in product development was clearly on people and their needs more than on tangible, physical items. According to Morris, new product ideas began in the gut and were fleshed out in conversation and “what if” style questions. What things that we use do we hate? What kinds of things would we like to have? Jobs wanted Apple to conceive of and build products that he and Apple employees, as well as ultimate users, found interesting and exciting. The product was hero, according to Crain, a notion that may be out of favor with most manufacturers today.

Throughout his history with Apple, Jobs was not only a genius with technological innovations, he was a Machiavellian marketer as well. He has been described as an “obsessive CEO”³ whose “convention-challenging ads” and “rebel-shtick”⁴ captivated audiences. According to Learmonth, Jobs “saw advertising as inextricable from products . . . The product wasn’t an iMac or iPod, it was the brand itself and how a well-designed product can make your life easier.”⁵ He was “involved in every aspect of”⁶ and had a “respect for and obsession with the craft of advertising.”⁷ It is Jobs’ recognition of the significance of messaging that spawned such memorable and iconic advertising as 1984, Think Different and Mac vs. PC.

In normal marketing circumstances IBM and Microsoft immediately surface as the greatest rivals of Apple, but the Moment of Silence tribute is not an instance that benefits from rivalry. It is one that drew empathy from competitors. The project is not about drawing new customers, but an opportunity for loyal users to memorialize the innovator they admired, and competitors shared their regard for Jobs. Even the most stalwart competitors were compelled to join in the commemorations.

2. Junod, Tom. “Steve Jobs.” *Esquire*, December 2011, p. 176.

3. Morris, Betsy. “What makes Apple Golden.” *CNN Money: Fortune, America’s Most Admired Companies*, March 3, 2008. Accessed October 10, 2012. http://money.cnn.com/2008/02/29/news/companies/amac_apple.fortune/index.htm.

4. Steinberg, Brian. “Why Apple had to Evolve its Approach,” *Advertising Age*, September 3, 2012.

5. Learmonth, Michael. “He Thought Different.” *Advertising Age*, October 10, 2011, 3.

6. Steinberg, *Why Apple*, 6.

7. Parekh, Rupal. “In Post-Jobs Era, TBWA will be Keeper of Flame.” *Advertising Age*, October 10, 2011, 3.

Target Market

Jobs himself resisted the notion of target markets, arguing that customers could not possibly tell marketers their sentiments about products that were still “around the corner.”⁸

According to Arvidson’s research, Apple targets younger, affluent, early adopters. On the whole they tend to be between 18 and 34, liberal, live in cities and see themselves as unique and hoping to make their mark. Beyond that broad demographic profile, Morris says, “Almost everything Apple makes transcends gender, geography, age and race. An Apple Store is a demographic melting pot, with computer games for kids and a Genius Bar for their parents, and so much cool stuff to touch that it’s a magnet for teens and twenty-somethings.”⁹

Other market analysts, however, argue that Apple has clear markets and market segments. Music enthusiasts between 12 and 35 are iPod users. The majority of traffic on the Apple website is under 35 years of age, and iPhone users are younger, affluent and spend more per month on their phone bills. Other segments often linked with Apple are creative professionals, enterprise users, developers, iPads for people who don’t need computers, and mothers.

The Moment of Silence campaign, however, cannot mesh with most notions of targeting. Its appeal is broad, and The Steve Jobs Moment of Silence website itself described the target for this particular tribute as Apple users between 15 and up. Naturally, because the download generates funding for pancreatic cancer research, individuals interested in supporting that particular cause must be considered an additional target segment.

Although Jobs was competitive he was highly regarded, and many who were not loyal users of Apple products recognized the impact he had on the industry. They, too, have found the Moment of Silence worthy.

Marketing strategy

The challenge facing the students at the School of Visual Arts was multifaceted.

- Complement the creativity that is the hallmark of Apple advertising.
- Pay homage to the technology that transformed an industry.
- Create a respectful, fitting tribute.
- Recognize the deep loyalty of Apple users.

The KNARF Advertising team, Executive Creative Director, Frank Anseimo, and the two student copywriters/art directors, Hyui Yong Kim and Bryan Wolff recognized the issues they

8. Morris, What makes Apple, 1.

9. Arvidson, Erik. “Target Audience for Mac or Apple Computers.” *eHow*. Accessed November 12, 2012. http://www.ehow.com/info_8737092_target-audience-mac-apple-computers.htm.

faced. Kim asked, “What if we harnessed the passion people have for the Apple brand and steered it toward helping in the fight against the disease that took the Apple founder’s life?”¹⁰

He also realized that, “Apple products mean more to their users than mere pieces of plastic enclosing silicon chips. The loyalty people have to the Apple brand has made it the world’s most beloved brand.”¹¹ Any tribute would also had to carefully balance honoring Jobs’ life and calling attention to his contributions while avoiding an appearance of commercialization.

Marketing tactics

With simplicity that would have gratified Jobs, Kim and Wolff, on January 13, 2012 launched a moving commemoration and fundraiser employing the essence of Jobs’ creations. Through a 99¢ iTunes purchase customers can download eight seconds of silence to their iTunes library. The eight seconds represent the eight years Jobs battled the cancer that eventually took his life, and the sudden elongated pause in the music library is an ever-present reminder of Jobs.

The campaign launched with some online print ads, significant media coverage, especially online blogs, but viral was the main means of passing the message. The stevejobsmomentofsilence.com link was shared among bloggers, news and business sites, personal webpages and email.

Customers visiting the website are greeted with a simple black screen, a profile image of Jobs and an explanation that purchasing the Moment of Silence will generate funds for pancreatic cancer organizations including The Pancreatic Cancer Action Network®, The Lustgarten Foundation® and The Hirshberg Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research®.

When the brief video is activated, white type displays on a black screen to say, “How do we pay homage to one of history’s greatest innovators?” and dissolves to “And also inspire people to help fight the disease that took his life?” The Steve Jobs Moment of Silence logo fades in, and a demonstration of how to purchase the download follows. Then consumers see a hand holding an iPhone with the end of a Dylan selection playing. The Jobs’ profile from the logo appears and eight quiet seconds tick off. Suddenly “Revolution” by the Beatles bursts from the iPhone. Following is the text, “This small break in our iTunes library will remind us to never forget the man who brought us:” and five of Jobs’ most revolutionary products appear on the screen beneath the text. Finally the last of the message, “And help fight cancer,” concludes the video.

The entire video runs one minute and 18 seconds, yet it establishes a strong connection with users of Apple products. Jobs packaged sound and images into small affordable devices that Kim and Wolff have juxtaposed against simple silence and black screens. The song (i.e., silence)

10. Hawkins, Chelsea. “An Award Winning Tribute to Steve Jobs.” *KoreAm. The Korean American Experience*, August 27, 2012. Accessed October 4, 2012.

<http://iamkoream.com/august-issue-an-award-winning-tributes-to-steve-jobs/>.

11. Ibid.

“cleverly appropriates into the digital era the moment of silence we use to show reverence.”¹² The blast of Revolution is a particularly appropriate break in the silence and a jolting reminder of Jobs’ impact on technology, on communications, on the way we interact with media and on our lifestyles.

Outcome

According to vimeo’s website tracking statistics, by early December 2012 the Steve Jobs Moment of Silence website had averaged 2058 plays a week. Peak viewing occurred during January and February of 2012. The Steve Jobs Moment of Silence Presentation Board website claimed 210,000 loads in a single day early in the year and noted that 27% of the site’s visitors have downloaded the eight-seconds of silence.

In addition to the quantitative measures, the Steve Jobs Moment of Silence campaign has meet critical success. To date is has been awarded the following prestigious recognition: Art Directors Club Global, 2012, Product Design, Silver Award; Clio Awards, 2012, Interactive, Silver; One Show, 2012, Public Service, Bronze; London International Awards, 2012, Innovative Use of Design, Bronze; Design and Art Direction, 2012, Digital Advertising, In-Book; Andy Awards, 2012, Public Service, Shortlist; Cannes Lions, 2012, Direct Lions, Shortlist.

Sidebar

The announcement of Steve Jobs’ passing triggered tributes and homages worldwide. They were moving and creative.

The Steve Jobs Moment of Silence did not come from Apple’s long time advertising agency TBWA/Media Arts Lab but from a small New York based agency with largely student affiliation, KNARF®.

TBWA/Media Arts Lab and its earlier incarnations of TBWA and Chiat/Day worked closely with Jobs on the Apple account from the beginning. Lee Clow was involved in the creation of 1984 and continued to craft with Jobs most of the iconic Apple messages and images.

Just shortly after Jobs’ death, TBWA/MAL did not issue a public statement, but circulated an internal memo remembering his genius, innovation and friendship. Later the agency launched a microsite with a portrait of Jobs compiled from a selection of commercials, interviews, and recorded conversation. Currently TBWA/MAL is expected to continue representing the Apple account.

12. Schenker, Dylan. “Apple Offers Steve Jobs ‘Moment Of Silence’ Track As Fundraising Tribute.” *psfk*, January 17, 2012. Accessed October 4, 2012.
<http://www.psfk.com/2012/12/01/steve-jobs-moment-of-silence.htm>.

Apple recently replaced their homepage with a short video of Jobs on the anniversary of his death. Other clever homages to the renowned innovator include an iSad computer screen, Doyle, Dane, Bernbach's sad faced Macintosh launch icon, visual artist Olivier Lefebvre's landart tribute of a portrait fashioned from 3750 apples, and a note left at a spontaneous gathering at an Apple Store near Toronto, Canada, "See you in the cloud, Steve."¹³

13. "See You in the Cloud, Steve: Makeshift Memorials in Toronto and Around the World Pay tribute to Jobs. *Toronto Star* (Toronto, Canada), October 7, 2011, B2.

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