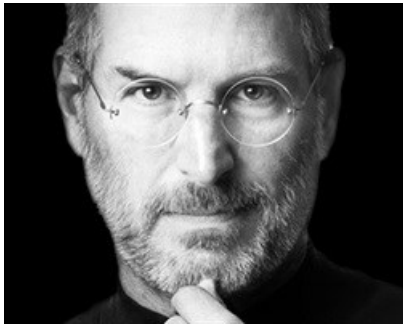


What would Steve Jobs do?

 By [Aki Kalliatakis](#)

3 Mar 2016

I'm one of those people who prefers not to replace stuff just because someone tells me it is time to do so. I like driving the same car until it's really, really dead. We still have the same appliances that we bought when we got married 30 years ago. (Well, those that still work, anyway.) I refuse to replace the bathroom tiles because some celebrity tells me that the "old" classical colours are now out of fashion.



If I sound like an old curmudgeon, then I wear that badge with pride – and my wife is with me on this journey of “enough is enough.”

So when I bought my perfectly capable and convenient iPhone 4S four years ago, it was more than enough for all of my needs – and more. That is until my sons and the cell phone company finally persuaded me to replace it with a brand new iPhone 6S. The new and exciting features did give me a thrill – for about four days – until I suddenly realised that this new upgraded and more expensive model had about half the memory of the older phone. At 16GB, it is woefully inadequate for all the photos, videos, apps, books and magazines that I have downloaded over the years.

Now I do firmly believe in the wise old adage of “*caveat emptor*” or let the buyer beware. I know I should have been more careful in doing my homework properly before making my final decision. I must add that I have always been a great admirer of the Apple company and Steve Jobs for their innovation and design capability, for their obsessive customer focus, for their ability to shake up whole fat-cat industries and to literally change the world. They truly represent what it means to be an all-round entrepreneurial company.

I know that these amazing characteristics do come at a price – financial and human. The products are definitely not cheap. But, visionary that he was, Steve Jobs was not always a pleasant person to his staff, and there is a rumour that he one day fired someone who worked for him - in the time it took an elevator to reach the next stop. Nevertheless, most of his colleagues bought into his vision for the future, and were happy to put up with his occasional quirky behaviour.

Customers, of course, loved his products, and the accompanying service. At one stage pundits threw around a random quotation that Steve Jobs didn't care about customers. As business journal *Forbes* put it in an article: “*No one is saying to form a communist-style committee to ask customers what features they want in a new product because, as Jobs said, “People don't know what they want until you show it to them.”*”

But this statement doesn't reflect who the true Steve Jobs was. In reality, Steve Jobs spent most of his life listening to customers and giving them more than what they wanted. A less-used Jobs quotation was made at a software developer's conference in 1997, when he made this statement: “*You've got to start with the customer experience and work backwards to the technology...I've made this mistake probably more than anybody else in this room...As we have tried to come up with a strategy and a vision for Apple, it started with ‘What incredible benefits can we give to the customer? Where can we take the customer?’...I think that's the right path to take.*” This doesn't sound like someone who doesn't care about customers and what they think.



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But I probably won't be buying shares in this most valuable company in the near future, and I'll tell you why: Somehow between Job's death and the purchase of my brand new iPhone, something went wrong. I went back to the store where I'd purchased my new gadget, and asked if I could buy some additional memory. The answer nearly knocked me out, because it was "No, that's impossible."

"Not even an SD card?" I asked. Again, the answer was no.

Bewildered by this, I asked the young "expert" how it could be possible that an old phone would have such a superior feature while the new one didn't – especially because we know that phone-memory has become increasingly more essential in today's digital world.

Almost furtively, he looked around and then said, "It's because Apple wants you to store your information in the Apple iCloud."

My blood pressure just shot up, because we all know what this means: For an additional fee at some point in future, and supporting the further expense of downloading and uploading data from your mobile company, I didn't have a choice in this matter. Something big changed and nobody explained it to me.

You see, I don't want to use "the cloud." I'm not interested in storing my stuff elsewhere, where it can be snooped upon by governments and corporates alike, where it can be stolen or "lost," as has already happened numerous times. I don't trust the cloud, and probably never will, and I hate being forced into this with no other option.

As difficult as he may have been, I don't think Steve Jobs would have approved. He had proven himself adept at viscerally understanding customer's needs, giving them more than what they expected, and, most importantly, when he realised they were upset about something, he would back off and apologise. This didn't happen once, but on a number of occasions, such as when Apple lowered the price of a new model too soon after the early adopters had paid a fortune to be seen as the cool and hip pioneers.

So, Mr. Tim Cook, (current CEO of Apple,) I know you are desperate and under pressure to keep your shareholder's happy, and I imagine your ego will not be able to handle that Apple will not always be the most valuable company and brand in the world. You already received negative reviews and customer complaints about the desperately poor memory on the iPhone 6 model, so why haven't you responded?

I think Mr. Cook needs to ask himself a very important question with respect to Apple's customers: "What would Steve Jobs do?" The answer to me is clear as day.

(PS You can upgrade your 16GB of memory in some countries like China and Dubai to 128GB – but it is apparently “illegal” to do so.)

ABOUT AKI KALLIATAKIS

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