
Apple Inc. Vs Microsoft

It 103, section 2

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Introduction

Have you ever been walking to class, tuning out the world just listening to your favorite music, whether it is Lady Gaga or Drake? Maybe something old school like Tina Turner or The Beatles. Chances are when a glance is cast down to your hand it's an iPod that is gripped tightly in your hand, as iPods are at the top of the list when it comes to handheld music devices, a title that they have held onto for nearly six years. When it comes to your online office needs Microsoft takes the round, as iWork is very rarely used/talked about. Then next time you walk into a lecture style course, have a look around, and you'll see the room divided. Two opposites in a constant struggle for brand supremacy: the ultimate battle continues to rage on. The commercials are out there. The Mac Vs PC, which is all a part of the larger war that is being waged between the entire Apple Incorporated Company, headed by Steve Jobs and the Microsoft Corporation, headed by Bill Gates. The question remains, which company is offering the best consumer product? Whichever may be the "better" company the fact remains that both companies are responsible for a full technological overhaul in people's everyday life.

Microsoft Background

For twenty seven years Apple and Microsoft has been in what seems like a total war for brand supremacy, with no clear winner in sight (Levy/CBS). Microsoft has been an incorporated company since 1981, founded by Bill Gates and Paul Allen in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Prior to the company's incorporation Bill Gates and Paul Allen worked with the Altair company. The company really received its "big break" when they decided to partner with IBM and allow them to sell their MS-Dos operating system in their computers, which made the first ever PC available. Several years later the company developed its first Word processing program with the intention of creating the new operating system that would soon be one of the most recognizable brands in

the world. The first ever Windows product shipped in November of 1985, only to be succeeded by Windows 3.1 in April of 1992. It quickly became one of Microsoft's most popular products. As the times began changing with the introduction of the internet Bill Gates decided that it was time for Microsoft to explore other fields, so in November 1995 Microsoft made the first ever Internet Explorer to compete with Netscape Navigation who up until that point had a monopoly on the sector. In 1997 the Microsoft/Apple feud came to a cease fire, which as told by later years was only a temporary situation. Due to Microsoft's extreme success it has more than once been the target of the US Justice System, many cases having to do with the company having monopolies on the computer industry...

Several years after the introduction of Windows XP, the company turned its focus to the newest hot commodity, the cellular age. Windows Mobile was distributed in June of 2003. Since then Microsoft has gone on to emerge as a powerhouse in the world of next generation gaming as they have produced the ever popular Xbox 360. From there Microsoft has gone on to produce two more highly successful operating systems; the first being the less than flawless Windows Vista that was soon replaced by the state of the art Windows 7. There's nothing but open water for Microsoft, and the only thing to do is to wait and see what happens next. (CBS)

Apple Background

Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak basically started Apple Incorporated out of a garage! Jobs and Wozniak were both considered to be a bit alternative by social standards of the mid-seventies. Even though they were considered to be social outcasts that didn't stop them from becoming two of the most innovative men in the world, starting with the creation of the Apple 1 in March of 1976. In that very same year Wozniak developed a prototype for the Apple II computer all while being introduced to the man that would become one of the largest investors in Apple, Mike

Markkula. The Apple Company incorporated the next year in 1977 due to the commercial success of the Apple computers. Apple's next stroke of genius came in 1979 when Jobs put together a partnership with the Xerox Company for the Lisa project. Since then there have been several versions of the Apple computer created, the most recognizable being the original iMac (Linzmayr). Apple's most successful creation didn't come until October, 2001, when the first ever iPod was released. This portable music player revolutionized the way that people would listen to and buy music. Since the original iPod was released several variants have become available, furthering the monopoly that Apple had on the music industry. These variants were the iPod Shuffle, the iPod Nano, the iPod Touch, and the ever popular iPhone. With the commercial success of the iPod and the iMac, Apple Incorporated is pioneering new technological waters with the introduction of the iPad.

Collective Impacts

While the two companies appear to be bitter rivals when it comes to products and sales, one cannot argue that both have been extremely instrumental in the progression of technology. Before Microsoft and Apple, computers needed their own rooms and took up a full wall with a screen that was only about four to five inches wide. There was no spectrum of colors, only black and green. Before Steve Jobs and Bill Gates it was impossible to spend those lazy days downloading music and hanging out on the Mecca of Laziness, the internet. Computer users of today have Steve Jobs and Bill Gates to thank for their tiny compact desktops and laptops.

The Mac's original competition—the green-phosphorus-screened stuff made by RadioShack, DEC, and then-big kahuna IBM—now inhabit landfills, both physically and psychically. Yet the Macintosh is not only thriving, it's doing better than at any time in its history. Much of the attention directed at Apple over the past few years has focused on

new products like the iPod and the iPhone. Click wheels and touch screens have distracted us from the news that the Mac market share has quietly crept into double digits. That's up from barely 3 percent in 1997, just before the prodigal CEO returned to the fold after a 12-year exile. Any way you cut it, the Mac is on the rise while Windows is waning. Roll over, Methuselah—the Macintosh is still peaking (Levy).

Despite Apple's current explosion commercial success, that does not mean that Microsoft is down for any sort of count. In the case of computers the PC offers the same brand of high quality as the iMacs and the MacBooks without the hefty price tag. Microsoft also has the booming new Windows 7 operating system that has quickly become the cutting edge of technology. "With 88% of respondents indicating that they have or will upgrade to Windows 7 in the next two years, Windows 7 is being adopted far more rapidly than Vista," the analyst firm reports. "In a comparable three-year time period, Vista deployment barely topped 25% while Windows XP remained on more than 50% of business computers" (Brodkin).

Through both companies advanced technological prowess they've managed to achieve a revamping of the education system. Very rarely do you see overhead projectors or even chalkboards in the class room anymore. Now, a lot of schools, in particular, Loudoun County Schools, operate using Promethean Boards which are linked directly to the teacher's computer which is run by Windows XP. Art departments all over the country have adopted the use of iMac computers for their classes, as the sleek silver computers; have the screen resolution and the capabilities to handle programs such as Adobe Photoshop.

It is not only the class room that is receiving technological revamps, but business offices are as well. There have been talks of the iPad replacing traditional pens and papers, as well as laptops in the board rooms; the reason being that the iPad is smaller and more compact with the

capabilities of attaching its own keyboard. The reason for the switch is that it opens up the spectrum of things that can be done; meetings are no longer confined to the four walls of the office building. The iPad's visual power-its screen has 132 pixels per inch-and the ease with which it can be viewed collaboratively and flipped to show different perspectives makes it a useful tool on the road, meeting with clients in their homes or talking one-on-one with a client at the advisor's office. "The iPad has its limits and doesn't replace a computer," Muchler says. "But it is an effective tool that can help accomplish some tasks during a client meeting-for example, a portfolio stress test, a change in a big financial plan or a rebalancing of a 401(k)-that might otherwise require yet another meeting or follow-up contact" (Heires)

Conclusion

What started off as two pipe dreams of two nerdy men have managed to explode into a worldwide phenomenon. Bill Gates and Steve Jobs have single handedly revolutionized the way that people live, work, and do business. Both men achieved feats that no one during their time believed could ever be achieved, but despite it all they managed to persevere and achieve. So when it really comes down to it: is it really possible to say that one is better than the other? The answer would have to be no. It is nearly impossible to really pick a clear winner between the two companies, because in a lot of ways they have the other to thank for the meteoric success of the other.

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