

Jobs pointed out that many people say iTunes is their favorite application for Windows. “It’s like giving a glass of ice water to someone in hell!”⁷

DEMONSTRATIONS

Jobs shares the spotlight with employees, partners, and products. Demos make up a large part of his presentations. When Jobs unveiled a new version of the OS X operating system, code-named Leopard, at Apple’s Worldwide Developers Conference (commonly abbreviated WWDC, the annual conference is an Apple event to showcase new software and technologies) in June 2007, he said Leopard had three hundred new features. He chose ten to discuss and demonstrate, including Time Machine (automated backup), Boot Camp (runs Windows XP and Vista on Mac), and Stacks (file organization). Instead of simply listing the features on a slide and explaining them, he sat down and showed the audience how they worked. He also chose the features *he* wanted the press to highlight. Why leave it to the media to decide which of three hundred new features were the most compelling? He would tell them.

Does your product lend itself to a demonstration? If so, script it into the presentation. Your audience wants to see, touch, and experience your product or service. Bring it to life.

I worked with Goldman Sachs investors to prepare the CEO of a Silicon Valley semiconductor start-up that was about to go public. The company shrinks chips that create audio sound for mobile computers. As we were planning the investor presentation, the CEO pulled out a chip the size of a fingernail and said, “You wouldn’t believe the sound that this generates. Listen to this.” He turned up the volume on his laptop and played music that impressed those of us who were in the room. It was a no-brainer to use the same demonstration (with a more dramatic buildup) when the executive pitched the company to investors. The IPO went on to become a huge success. An investor who had underwritten the company later called me and said, “I don’t know what you did, but the CEO was a hit.” I didn’t have the heart to say that I stole the idea from the Steve Jobs playbook.

PARTNERS

Jobs shares the stage with key partners as well as his products. In September 2005, Jobs announced that all of Madonna's albums would be available on iTunes. The pop star herself suddenly appeared via webcam and joked with Jobs that she had tried to hold out as long as possible but got tired of not being able to download her own songs. Whether it's an artist or an industry partner like the CEOs of Intel, Fox, or Sony, Jobs often shares the stage with people who contribute to Apple's success.

CUSTOMER EVIDENCE AND THIRD-PARTY ENDORSEMENTS

Offering "customer evidence" or testimonials is an important part of the selling cycle. Few customers want to be pioneers, especially when budgets are tight. Just as recruiters ask for references, your customers want to hear success stories. This is especially critical for small companies. Your sales and marketing collateral might look great in that glossy four-color brochure, but it will be met with a healthy degree of skepticism. The number one influencer is word of mouth. Successful product launches usually have several customers who were involved in the beta and who can vouch for the product. Incorporate customer evidence into your pitch. Including a quote is simple enough, but try going one step further by recording a short testimonial and embedding the video on your site and in your presentation. Even better, invite a customer to join you in person (or via webcam) at a presentation or an important sales meeting.

Do you have third-party reviews of your product? Always use third-party endorsements when available. Word of mouth is one of the most effective marketing tools available, and when your customers see an endorsement from a publication or an individual they respect, it will make them feel more comfortable about their purchasing decisions.

VIDEO CLIPS

Very few presenters incorporate video into their presentations. Jobs plays video clips very often. Sometimes he shows video of employees talking about how much they enjoyed working

on a product. Jobs is also fond of showing Apple's most recent television ads. He does so in nearly every major new product announcement and has been doing so since the launch of the famous Macintosh 1984 Super Bowl ad. He's been known to enjoy some ads so much that he showed them twice. Near the end of his presentation at Apple's WWDC in June 2008, Jobs announced the new iPhone 3G, which connects to higher-speed data networks and costs less than the iPhone that was currently on the market. He showed a television ad with the tagline "It's finally here. The first phone to beat the iPhone." When the thirty-second spot ended, a beaming Jobs said, "Isn't that nice? Want to see it again? Let's roll that again. I love this ad."⁸

Including video clips in your presentation will help you stand out. You can show ads, employee testimonials, scenes of the product or of people using the product, and even customer endorsements. What could be more persuasive than hearing directly from a satisfied customer—if not in person, then through a short video clip embedded in your presentation? You can easily encode video into digital formats such as MPEG 1, Windows Media, or Quicktime files, all of which will work for most presentations. Keep in mind that the average viewed clip on YouTube is 2.5 minutes. Our attention spans are shrinking, and video, while providing a great way to keep the audience engaged, can be overused if left to run too long. Use video clips in your presentations, but avoid clips that run much longer than two to three minutes.

Video is a terrific tool for even the most nontechnical of presentations. I was helping the California Strawberry Commission prepare for a series of presentations set to take place on the East Coast. Commission members showed me a short video of strawberry growers expressing their love of the land and the fruit. The images of strawberry fields were gorgeous, and I suggested they create a digital file of the video clip and embed it in the presentation. In the presentation itself, they introduced the video by saying something like this: "We realize that you probably have never visited a California strawberry field, so we decided to bring the farmers to you." The video clip was the

most memorable part of the presentation, and the East Coast editors loved it.

FLIP CHARTS, PROPS, AND SHOW-AND-TELL

There are three types of learners: visual (the majority of people fall into this category), auditory (listeners), and kinesthetic (people who like to feel and touch). Find ways to appeal to everyone. A presentation should comprise more than just slides. Use whiteboards, flip charts, or the high-tech flip chart—a tablet PC. Bring “props” such as physical products for people to see, use, and touch. In Scene 12, you’ll learn much more about reaching the three types of learners.

Most communicators get so caught up in the slides: Which font should I use? Should I use bullets or dashes? Should I include a graph here? How about a picture there? These are the wrong questions to be asking in the planning stage. If you have a tangible product, find other ways outside of the slide deck to show it off. On October 14, 2008, Steve introduced a new line of MacBooks carved out of one piece of aluminum, a “unibody enclosure.” After Jobs discussed the manufacturing process, Apple employees handed out examples of the new frame so audience members could see it and touch it for themselves.

Incorporating all of these elements in a presentation will help you tell a story worth listening to. Slides don’t tell stories; you do. Slides complement the story. This book is software agnostic; it avoids a direct comparison between PowerPoint and Keynote because the software is not the main character in an effective presentation—the speaker is. Jobs himself started using Apple’s Keynote software in 2002, so what are we to make of the extraordinary presentations Jobs gave dating back to 1984? The software is not the answer. The fact that Steve Jobs uses Keynote instead of PowerPoint does not mean your presentation will look more like his if you make the switch. You will, however, win over your audience by spending more time creating the plot than producing the slides.

Use a notepad or whiteboard to script your ideas. It will help you visualize the story and simplify its components. When Jobs

Aristotle's Outline for Persuasive Arguments

A Steve Jobs presentation follows Aristotle's classic five-point plan to create a persuasive argument:

1. Deliver a story or statement that arouses the audience's interest.
2. Pose a problem or question that has to be solved or answered.
3. Offer a solution to the problem you raised.
4. Describe specific benefits for adopting the course of action set forth in your solution.
5. State a call to action. For Steve, it's as simple as saying, "Now go out and buy one!"

returned to Apple in 1996, taking over for ousted Gil Amelio, he found a company with more than forty different products, which confused the customer. In a bold move, he radically simplified the product pipeline. In *Inside Steve's Brain*, Leander Kahney writes that Jobs called senior management into his office. "Jobs drew a very simple two-by-two grid on the whiteboard. Across the top he wrote 'Consumer' and 'Professional,' and down the side, 'Portable' and 'Desktop.'"⁹ Under Jobs, Apple would offer just four computers—two notebooks and two desktops—aimed at consumer and professional users. This is one of many stories in which we learn that Jobs does his best thinking when he's thinking visually. Whether you plan best on a whiteboard, a yellow legal pad, or Post-it notes, spend time in analog before jumping to digital. Your ultimate presentation will be far more interesting, engaging, and relevant.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

- » Start planning before you open the presentation software. Sketch ideas on paper or whiteboards.
- » Incorporate some, if not all, of the following nine elements to make your presentation come alive: headline, passion statement, three key messages, analogies, demonstrations, partner showcase, customer evidence, video clips, and props.
- » Speaking like Jobs has little to do with the type of presentation software you use (PowerPoint, Keynote, etc.) and everything to do with how you craft and deliver the story.

SCENE 2

Answer the One Question That Matters Most

You've got to start with the customer experience and work back toward the technology—not the other way around.

—STEVE JOBS, MAY 25, 1997, WORLDWIDE DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE

In May 1998, Apple launched a splashy new product aimed at shoring up its dwindling share of the computer market, which had sunk to under 4 percent. When Jobs unveiled the new translucent iMac, he described the reason for building the computer, the target market, and the benefit customers would see from buying the new system:

Even though this is a full-blown Macintosh, we are targeting this for the number one use consumers tell us they want a computer for, which is to get on the Internet simply and fast. We're also targeting this for education. They want to buy these. It's perfect for most of the things they do in instruction . . . We went out and looked at all of the consumer products out there. We noticed some things about them pretty much universally. The first is they are very slow. They are all using last year's processor. Secondly, they all have pretty crummy displays on them . . . likely no networking on them . . . old-generation I/O devices, and what that means is they are

lower performance and harder to use . . . and these things are uuugly! So, let me tell you about iMac.¹

After describing the weaknesses of current products in the preceding excerpt, Jobs drew a verbal road map for his audience, listing the features he would explain in more detail. (Learn more about drawing a road map in Scene 5.) The audience learned that the new iMac was fast (“it screams”) and that it had a “gorgeous” fifteen-inch display, a large amount of built-in memory, and components that would make accessing a network easier for students and home users. In one of his typical surprise moments, Jobs then walked to the center of the stage and pulled the cover off the new computer.

Your audience wants to be informed, educated, and entertained: informed about your product, educated on how it works, and entertained while learning about it. Above all, people want to know the answer to one question: Why should I care? Let’s take a closer look at that iMac excerpt. Jobs told the audience, “what that means is . . .” Jobs connects the dots for his listeners. Although he might leave the industry in the dark about future Apple releases, he never leaves his audience guessing when the product is finally introduced. Why should you care about Apple’s new computer, MP3 player, phone, or gadget? Don’t worry. Jobs will tell you.

The Rumors Are True

For years, Apple had a rivalry with Intel—even setting fire to an Intel bunny man in a 1996 TV spot. One decade later, Apple put its rivalry to rest and announced that Intel processors would power its new Macintosh systems, replacing IBM’s PowerPC chips. On June 6, 2005, Jobs announced the switch at Apple’s Worldwide Developers Conference in San Francisco.

Rumors of the switch had been floating around for months, and many observers expressed concern about the transition. Reporters for *eWeek* magazine found it difficult to believe Apple would swap the PowerPC for Intel, since the PowerPC had worked well for the brand. Developers were grumbling. Jobs had

to convince the audience that the switch was the right thing to do. His presentation was enormously persuasive in changing people's opinions because, using plain and direct language, he answered the one question that mattered most: Why should Apple's customers and developers care?

Yes, it's true. We are going to begin the transition from PowerPC to Intel processors. Now, why are we going to do this? Didn't we just get through going from OS 9 to OS X? Isn't the business great right now? Because we want to make the best computers for our customers looking forward. Now, I stood up here two years ago and promised you this [slide shows desktop computer with 3 GHz], and we haven't been able to deliver it to you. I think a lot of you would like a G5 in your PowerBook, and we haven't been able to deliver it. But these aren't even the most important reasons. As we look ahead, though we have some great products now, we can envision some amazing products we want to build for you, and we don't know how to build them with the future PowerPC road map. That's why we're going to do this.²

Jobs articulated the argument so convincingly that few people in the audience that day left without a high degree of confidence that the transition had been the right thing for Apple, its developers, and its customers.

Why Should I Care?

During the planning phase of your presentation, always remember that it's not about you. It's about them. The listeners in your audience are asking themselves one question—"Why should I care?" Answering that one question right out of the gate will grab people's attention and keep them engaged.

I was preparing a CEO for a major analyst presentation and asked how he planned to kick it off. He offered this dry, boring, and confusing introduction: "Our company is a premier developer of intelligent semiconductor intellectual property solutions that dramatically accelerate complex system-on-a-chip designs while

Channel Your Best Steve Jobs Impression

In the summer of 2006, Intel released a processor branded Core 2 Duo. The “duo” stood for dual-core, meaning there were two cores, or brains, on each microprocessor. That may not sound exciting, but if you answer the *one* question that matters—Why should I care?—it becomes very interesting.

Take two scenarios: In both scenarios, a customer walks into a computer store and asks the salesperson for information about notebook computers. The sales professional in the first scenario has not read this book and fails to answer the one question that matters. The salesperson in the second scenario is more likely to win the sale, by virtue of channeling his or her inner Steve Jobs and answering the one question on the mind of the customer: Why should I care?

Scenario One

CUSTOMER: Hi, I’m looking for a notebook computer that is light and fast and includes a DVD.

SALESPERSON: You should look for an Intel Core 2 Duo.

CUSTOMER: OK. I didn’t know Intel makes computers.

SALESPERSON: They don’t.

CUSTOMER: Can you tell me more?

SALESPERSON: An Intel dual-core processor has two performance engines that simultaneously process data at a faster rate.

CUSTOMER: Oh. Maybe I should look somewhere else.

Of course the customer in this scenario will look somewhere else. Although the salesperson was technically accurate, the customer had to work far too hard to figure out how the new system would make the person’s life better. It took too much brainpower, and as you’ll learn, the brain is a lazy piece of meat that tries to preserve energy. Make the brain work too hard, and you’ll lose your audience. The customer had one question in mind and one question only. The salesperson failed to answer it and seemed indifferent, even arrogant. Let’s

try it again. This time, the salesperson will do a stellar Steve Jobs impression.

Scenario Two

SALESPERSON: Hi, can I help you find something?

CUSTOMER: Sure. I'm looking for a notebook computer. One that is light and fast and includes a DVD.

SALESPERSON: You've come to the right place. We have a huge selection of small notebooks that are blazingly fast. Have you considered a system with an Intel Core 2 Duo?

CUSTOMER: Not really. What's that?

SALESPERSON: Think of the microprocessor as the brain of your computer. Now, with these Intel chips, you get two brains in one computer. *What that means to you* is that you can do a lot of fun and productive stuff at the same time. For example, you can download music while your computer is running a full virus scan in the background, and it won't slow down the system at all. Your productivity applications will load much faster, you can work on multiple documents at the same time, your DVDs will play much better, and you get much longer battery life on top of it! And that's not all: the displays are gorgeous.

CUSTOMER: Great. Please show me those computers!

In this scenario, the salesperson spoke in plain English, used tangible examples to make the product relevant, and answered the only question that really mattered to the customer: Why should I care about the processor? Retailers who train their sales staffs to describe products in this way will stand out from the competition. Come to think of it, there is a retailer that does exactly that—Apple. Walk into most any Apple store, and you will be greeted by enthusiastic men and women who are eager to explain how Apple products will make your life better.

minimizing risk.” I was dumbfounded and suggested he take a page from the Steve Jobs playbook, eliminating all of the buzzwords such as *intelligent* and *solutions* and simply answering one question: Why should your customers care about your product?

The CEO revised his introduction. He decided to walk onstage and ask everyone to take out his or her cell phone. He said, “Our company creates software that is used to build the chips inside many of the phones you’re holding up. As those chips get smaller and cheaper, your phones will get smaller, last longer on a single charge, and play music and video, all thanks to our technology working behind the scenes.”

Which introduction would be more effective in grabbing your attention? The second one, of course. It is free of jargon and, by answering the *one* question that matters, gives the audience a reason to listen.

Reporters are skilled at answering the one question for their readers. Pay attention to product descriptions in the *New York Times* or *USA Today*. Articles are written to be followed and understood. For example, on January 20, 2009, Cisco Systems announced that it planned a big push into the server market, a category dominated by IBM, HP, and Dell. The product would be a server with virtualization software. Now, virtualization is one of the most complicated concepts to explain. Wikipedia defines server virtualization as “a method of partitioning a physical server computer into multiple servers such that each has the appearance and capabilities of running on its own dedicated machine.”³ Got it? Didn’t think so. The *New York Times*’ Ashlee Vance took a different approach: “Virtualization products let companies run numerous business applications, rather than just one, on each physical server, allowing them to save electricity and get more out of their hardware purchases.”⁴

The difference, of course, is that Vance answered the one question on the minds of her readers—What does “virtualization” mean to me? In this case, she identified her audience as investors, IT decision makers, and business leaders who would care about such things.