

Americans recall personal impacts of Jobs' vision

October 7 2011, By BROOKE DONALD , Associated Press



This photo provided by Tekserve shows the memorial tribute erected to Steve Jobs in the window of the Tekserve store on 23rd St., in New York Thursday, Oct 6, 2011, the day after Job's death. The photo was taken on an Apple iPhone 4 by an employee of the independently owned store that sells and services Apple products. (AP Photo/Tekserve, Michael Truskowski)

(AP) -- Steve Jobs urged people to think different, and wowed them when his own different thinking put thousands of songs in their pockets, the power of the Internet at their fingertips and a whole world of possibilities in the palm of their hands.

For many, his vision resulted in more than another gadget. The tools inspired careers, opened doors for communication and fueled a new economy.

As Jobs admirers pay tribute to the computer wizard, the signs of his influence can be seen everywhere: A farmer in Arkansas monitors crops from the field on his [iPhone](#). A North Carolina father develops an app that helps him communicate with his disabled son. A [Silicon Valley](#) technology worker uses an Apple program to disseminate lectures to people across the globe.

Brent Izutsu, the manager of Stanford on [iTunes U](#), fondly recalls Jobs' stirring 2005 commencement address to Stanford University graduates.

"In his commencement address, which I've watched many times, Jobs mentioned you might as well do what you love because you have to do that for most of your life," Izutsu said. "Well, I guess that's what I'm doing every day. And that's thanks to him. It makes you feel good."

The [Associated Press](#) interviewed people across the country to see how their lives were affected by Jobs, the answers reveal his vast influence as a technology pioneer, an employer and an [innovator](#).

APPLE IN THE EARLY DAYS

Jonathan Knowles describes the effect Jobs had on his life with one word: dominoes.

"One thing touched off something else and that touched off something else," Knowles said.

The first domino was the first Macintosh. Its ease of use and simple design hooked him, and that was when Knowles turned away from the biological sciences and to computer science.

Knowles was on the faculty at the Claremont Colleges when Apple Inc. recruited him 20 years ago. He moved to the [San Francisco Bay area](#) and more dominoes kept falling. He met his wife, and is now deeply involved in his community.

He worked for Apple for eight years in project management and consulting and ultimately worked closely with Jobs for about two years. He said while the technology drew him in, it was Jobs' passion that kept him engaged.

"I can't be the only one, of course, who credits Jobs with so much," Knowles said.

"It was his drive that made it happen and inspired me," Knowles added. "I'm just some guy out there in the world who sees this computer that he forced through with a Henry Ford-type attitude. He knew what people wanted even if they didn't. He knew what was possible."

INSPIRING CREATIVITY

Rene Lee says if not for Jobs, he might well be in engineering school now. The 26-year-old, who is studying at the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, says while he was choosing his course of study in the early 2000s, Apple was just coming back after a slump.

"If it hadn't been for their success, it would have been a lot harder to convince my parents that art and design is a viable career choice," Lee

said.

Lee was fortunate to work for Jobs during an internship last summer. He never met the man whom he says had a "huge impact" on his life, but his vision and presence were felt in everything that was worked on.

"Apple is a great example of how creativity can set you apart," Lee said. "Technology is not enough. It's all in how you humanize the technology."

A VITAL CONNECTION TO DISABLED SON

For Paul Pauca, admiration for Apple innovations goes beyond technology. They enabled him to help his disabled son.

Pauca, a computer science professor at Wake Forest University, and some of his students developed a \$10 app for the iPad and iPhone last year called VerbalVictor. It helps his young son, Victor, and others with severe disabilities communicate.

The program was designed after the Paucas had a series of disappointments with specialized devices intended for people with disabilities.

Pauca's son, Victor, was born with a rare genetic disease shared only by about 50 other people in the U.S. It delays speech, among other skills.

The app allows his parents to snap pictures and record phrases to go with them, which in turn become "buttons" on the touch screen. An example would be a picture of a playground paired with the phrase "I want to go out and play,"

"If it wasn't for [Steve Jobs](#), this wouldn't be possible," Pauca said. "For people with disabilities, the iPad, the iPhone, the App Store - it was really a revolution."

His son now brings an iPod Touch and iPad to school every day so he can communicate with the teachers and fellow students at his school.

APPLES IN COTTON FIELDS

Nathan Reed and his friends who farm in eastern Arkansas consider two brands golden: John Deere and Apple.

Reed, 31, grows cotton and soybeans on about 6,000 acres in Marianna, Ark., in the Mississippi River Delta. He purchased his first iPhone more than two years ago, and almost all the farmers he knows also have iPhones.

Reed uses the phone to check storage bins to see if his soybeans are too wet or too dry. He can watch the temperature whether he's in Marianna or out of the country. "The old method was to guess and turn your fans on and off when you thought you needed to," Reed said.

Reed uses the Field Notes app to monitor how much pesticide is used on each crop. And he reads farm news and market reports while standing in his fields. That's where he saw an alert about Jobs' death.

Reed said he and other farmers trust Jobs' creations in the same way most trust John Deere for combines and tractors.

"His products touch a very large majority of people in the world on a daily basis," Reed said. "It's pretty amazing that one guy was able to do

all that."

APPLE ALL AROUND

On Wednesday night, as much of the world was learning about Jobs' death, Katy Culver was sitting in an emergency room with her son, who had a severely broken arm. She looked at the technology around her and was struck by the degree to which Jobs had impacted her life.

A hospital specialist was lifting her son's spirits by helping him play Angry Birds on an iPad with his good arm. Doctors appeared to be reviewing X-rays on a MacBook. And Culver used her iPhone to alert friends and family.

"It just hit me in that moment, how much his visionary technologies have changed my life - the way I communicate with family and friends, the way I work with my students, the way I relate to my kids," said Culver, a journalism professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Culver recalled being impressed after her introduction to a Macintosh computer in 1991 when she became a teaching assistant at UW-Madison. She was especially fascinated by the computer mouse.

"I remember remarking, 'Wow, this is a much better way to use a computer,'" she said. "Apple technologies have touched every part of my life. As a parent, my work life, everything from humor to surgery, my world is so different because of Apple."

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