

# Cook has deep shoes to fill at Jobs-less Apple

October 6 2011, by Glenn Chapman

---



Apple CEO Tim Cook during an event introducing the new iPhone 4s at the company's headquarters in Cupertino, California, on October 4. The death of visionary Steve Jobs has left huge shoes to fill at Apple, with agile competitors mounting a continuous assault on the company's hit iPhones, iPads and other groundbreaking products.

The death of visionary Steve Jobs has left huge shoes to fill at Apple, with agile competitors mounting a continuous assault on the company's hit iPhones, iPads and other groundbreaking products.

Analysts said that for the short term, new chief executive [Tim Cook](#) has inherited a strong company with a powerful product line and has the skills to keep it going -- though there remain questions over his ability to match Jobs's acumen at picking winners in the consumer electronics market.

"Steve is too big a personality and too amazing of a businessman for him not to be missed," Gartner analyst Van Baker said, just hours before Jobs' death was announced.

"But the wheels aren't going to come off; a lot of Steve's qualities are embedded in the [Apple](#) culture."

The company's share price fell, and then rebounded, after the death of Jobs on Wednesday, which came after a long fight with pancreatic cancer and his handing over the reins to Cook in August.

It was up 1.1 percent to \$382.13 in midday trade on Thursday, as tech industry experts renewed votes of confidence in the company's ability to beat back challengers.

"We believe Tim Cook is well-qualified for his new role as CEO and has at his disposal a deep and talented executive team in the areas of [supply chain management](#), hardware/software design and product marketing," said Canaccord analyst Michael Walkley.

The list of market-stunning products tied to Jobs, who co-founded Apple in 1976, is long: [Mac computers](#), iPods, iPhones, [iPads](#), and the operating systems behind them that while not as widely used as rival Microsoft's, are revered as high-performance devices worth the premium prices usually charged.

Independent Silicon Valley analyst Rob Enderle called Jobs "the ultimate product tester."

"Everything went through him," Enderle said hours before his death. "As more products come out over time, they will have less of his handprint on them."

Jobs garnered regular standing ovations at conferences where he introduced them, including the latest version of the iPad in March this year and the iCloud cloud computing service in June.

Thirteen-year Apple veteran Cook, by comparison, underwhelmed in his launch of a new iPhone Tuesday: many fans believed there would be an all-new fifth generation version, but it turned out to be a modified iPhone 4, dubbed the 4s, and the company's shares were sold off.

But analysts said the smartphone was a strong improvement and should fly off the shelves, and gave Cook a solid grade.

Canaccord's Walkley said the model features important hardware upgrades, including a much faster processor and better camera, and improved antenna.

Overall for Apple, new capabilities in the operating system and the iCloud "will generate strong sales of iPhone 4S and increased (operating system) ecosystem stickiness to generate future recurring device sales," he said.

"I don't think Apple's lost their mojo at all," Gartner's Baker told AFP after the iPhone 4s launch.

"All of this brouhaha will blow over, probably about the time they see people are buying a gazillion of the iPhones," he continued.

"In our view, iCloud has just gotten started," said tech analyst Shaw Wu of Sterne Agee.

"And the iPhone and iPad are still relatively early in their adoption curve. And there are still untapped markets like broadcast television and streaming video."

But company management experts have long identified Jobs with a rare skill of picking the products and product attributes that consumers will want, and over the longer term, the company's future could rest on replicating that talent.

Cook, whom Jobs hand-picked to succeed him, acknowledged as much on Wednesday.

"Apple has lost a visionary and creative genius, and the world has lost an amazing human being," he said.

"Steve leaves behind a company that only he could have built, and his spirit will forever be the foundation of Apple."

Enderle, the [Silicon Valley](#) analyst, said: "Steve was the face of Apple and was an evangelical product marketer."

"It is like a church following a beloved minister; that is not an easily transferrable skill set."

But with extremely agile competitors getting out powerful rivals to Apple products to the market more and more quickly, Cook's skills are also essential to Apple's success.

He has worked behind the scenes outsourcing manufacturing and coordinating distribution to ensure new iPods, iPhones, iPads and Macintosh computers do not grow stale in warehouses.

He is also credited with shrewdly negotiating deals for components that kept down costs and fattened profit margins.

"I am confident that Apple can move forward under Tim Cook and his executive team and that Apple will continue to be one of the most

important technology companies in the world," analyst Tim Bjarin of Creative Strategies said.

(c) 2011 AFP

Citation: Cook has deep shoes to fill at Jobs-less Apple (2011, October 6) retrieved 5 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-10-cook-deep-jobs-less-apple.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.