

How to sell your Ideas - The Steve Jobs Way (Oct 10)

By Carmine Gallo

On January 27 of this year Steve Jobs introduced yet another Apple innovation, concluding the presentation by summing up the product in one sentence: *Our most advanced technology in a magical and revolutionary device at an unbelievable price.* He had just unveiled the iPad, giving the audience a full tour of the tablet computer's capabilities: video, music, games, email, newspapers, books etc.

And just as he does for every new product, Jobs offered his audience a one sentence Twitter-friendly description that positions the product exactly as Apple wants the world to see it.

If you missed the presentation, no need to worry. Apple immediately posted the video link to its Web site, and released a press release at the conclusion of the presentation. Its headline: Apple introduces iPad, a magical and revolutionary device at an unbelievable price. If you missed the press release, the home page of the Apple Web site carried a photograph of the iPad alongside text which read: iPad is here, a magical and revolutionary product at an unbelievable price.

If you missed the presentation, the press release, and the Web site, Apple had one more platform from which to reach you—the Apple stores. The entrance of each store had a poster with a photo of the iPad. Alongside the photograph, the poster read: a magical and revolutionary product at an unbelievable price.

Apple's positioning of the product was ubiquitous and unmistakable.

Multi-media penetration

Conduct an Internet search for the keywords iPad + "magical and revolutionary" and you will find that it returns nearly nine million links! And no, most of those links do not take you back to the Apple web site. A CNN headline blared, "Apple unveils the magical iPad." A ZDNet headline read, "Jobs was right: iPad is magical and revolutionary." A popular blogger wrote, "3 reasons iPad is magical and revolutionary."

Apple had made the product description so concise, compelling and consistent, it had been picked up by thousands of analysts, reporters, and customers who were searching for a way to talk about the new device.

The iPad's presentation and marketing messages proved once again that Steve Jobs is the world's greatest corporate storyteller. For more than three decades, he has turned the product launch into an art form. Although Jobs' slides are elegantly designed, his presentations go far beyond the slide-show. They are meant to inform, educate, and entertain.

What role does communication play in the introducing of an innovative product, like the iPad? Plenty. You can have the greatest idea in the world, but if you can't convince anybody, it doesn't matter. Storytelling has always mattered to Steve Jobs. He "thinks differently" about how to present his message to customers, investors, and customers.

3 Ways to Sell Innovation

Here are three techniques you can incorporate today to sell your innovation the Steve Jobs way:

1) Strive for visual simplicity. There are no bullet points in a Steve Jobs presentation. There are photographs and images, and some text. But no bullet points. This is called *Picture Superiority*: People remember more information when the ideas are presented as words and pictures rather than words alone.

Of course none of this guarantees that your product will be a break-out hit, but if you cannot communicate the vision behind your idea, product, or company, you're unlikely to even get out the gate.

2) Create a Twitter-friendly headline. Steve Jobs always introduces a new product by offering a description that can easily fit within a 140-character Twitter post. For example, the iPad is a "magical and

revolutionary product.” The MacBook Air is “the world’s thinnest notebook.” The original iPod was “1,000 songs in your pocket.”

If you can’t describe your idea or product in 140 characters or less, go back to the drawing board.

3) Introduce an antagonist. Every great story has a hero and a villain. The same is true for a Steve Jobs presentation. “Netbooks” played the villain in the iPad introduction. Jobs showed how a particular product, Netbooks, did not adequately address the needs of a growing mobile consumer. Mac’s new product, its tablet, would solve the issues. Jobs crafted the narrative. Netbooks played the part of the villain; the iPad was introduced as the conquering hero.

Editor's note: This article is based on Carmine Gallo’s newly-released book, *The Innovation Secrets of Steve Jobs: Insanely Different Principles for Breakthrough Success*

About the Author:

Carmine Gallo is a communications coach for some of the world’s most admired brands. His new book, *The Innovation Secrets of Steve Jobs*, has been recently released by McGraw-Hill. Learn more by visiting <http://carminegallo.com/stevejobsinnovation/>