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## Wozniak on What Went Wrong at Apple

If [Apple](#) were the Beatles, Steve Jobs would have been Paul McCartney, the commercializer and pop icon. Steve Wozniak would have been a cross between John Lennon and Ringo Starr - a combination poet and teddy bear.

It was Jobs's garage that Apple started in, but it was Wozniak's computer.

Wozniak read my [last HotWired piece](#), and not surprisingly, he had comments.

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From: Steve Wozniak  
Re: Apple Is a Lousy Lover

I concur strongly but not wholeheartedly with your Apple comments.

Mike Markkula organized Apple as a marketing-driven company. And Steve Jobs spoke out for buying the current technologies of the world and adding value by piecing them together to create complete, finished computers.

So Apple is not the company I had hoped it would be.

I always thought that a major player in the personal computer business, with its label on the products, would be composed of top engineers and multiple labs full of scientists developing new devices out of physics and chemistry. I only worked for HP and Apple. HP had lots of such labs. In fact, they had chip manufacturing plants in each division around 1976 for a technological edge. HP was known inside and out as an engineering-oriented company.

It seemed to me in recent years that new software diverted to the PC because of market share. You try to put the cause more on alienation of developers. Have you worked with executives of producers of major software titles who had full choice to choose which platforms to develop for? My experience tells me that they go for market share. But Apple had a lot of very dedicated fans who saw how right and good the Mac OS was, and they would never switch. Extreme loyalty was perhaps Apple's strongest strength.

I feel that Apple has hurt and alienated both the loyal developers and loyal users. The developer who finds his platform and libraries and development language yanked back-and-forth finally gives up the loyalty. The user who buys a PowerBook full of red stickers that say "Ready for PowerPC upgrade" (I leave mine on) finds that the computer is dropped from Apple's line before the upgrade is even available.

You fall in love with one model of Mac and convince yourself what a great computer you have, and half a year later, it's obsolete and uncertain to work with the niftiest apps of the future. Customer loyalty fades.

I think Apple lost a lot in the Microsoft lawsuit. Apple should have sued Microsoft for \*not\* copying the Mac as closely as possible. Had we gone to Microsoft and said "do anything the way we've already found is good, for 25 cents" the result might have been a commonality as beneficial to Apple as Microsoft. When you're comfortable with one OS because of all your skills, it's scary to change. Were the two platforms very similar, the comfort feeling wouldn't trap Mac users or PC users to their familiar machines.

John Sculley and others were outspoken as to the importance of Apple reaping great rewards by keeping everything proprietary, with examples of how US companies licensed away the world to the Japanese. But the result is a totally owned and protected OS that leads to loyal users because it's hard to step out of it into an OS that's very different. So Mac users are trapped into Macs as long as the Mac is very different from the alternatives.

I feel most sorry that the best quality people are not solidly in the Mac camp anymore.

About me: I'm a private evangelist for the school district in Los Gatos, where I live. I had two goals in life, to be an engineer and to teach fifth grade. For several years, I've been teaching computers to not only teachers but also to fifth through eighth graders.

Steve Wozniak

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Cooooooooooooo!

Thanks, Steve!

## A Worldwide Trance!

Windows 95 is a worldwide trance. The reporters write about other reporters. The next day, there is some news. [The Wall Street Journal](#) reports that first-day sales for Windows 95 are US\$700 million. So it's a financial trance, too.

Apple and IBM run ads on 24 August. I only heard about them, didn't see them. Bill heard about them, too. In the press conference, he announces that IBM has licensed Windows 95. "The licensing program for Win95 is now complete." He smiles. What a difference from the way Bill viewed IBM in 1990 when Windows 3.0 rolled out.

Surprisingly, Bill had praise for Apple and renewed his commitment to continuing to develop for the Macintosh. "Apple views us as a competitor, but we don't see them that way."

I believe if it weren't for Bill's personal commitment to the Macintosh, Microsoft would immediately cut off all development for the Mac. The company is very resource-constrained, and the Macintosh is tangential to its primary need - growth. There's only so much growth available in the Mac market, and Microsoft is advancing quickly elsewhere, notably in the commercialization of the Internet. All the programming juice going to the Mac platform could be

applied to its battle with [Netscape](#) for the standard for the evolution of the Web, or to building content and tools for its new alliance with NBC or investments in other media.

Microsoft execs tell us that Microsoft is more than Bill Gates, and it is. But he's holding up the Macintosh at a time when it's surprising that he is. Don't miss this, and factor it into your thinking.

It's a bit of a mystery to me.



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P.S. Steve has a [Web site](#), running on a Mac, of course.

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