

Wired UK December cover, Steve Jobs and future foreseeing

[Disclaimer: I don't get a penny out of this, I'm in no way - unfortunately - associated with Wired magazine]



Wired covers are usually compelling, pretty much like its content. Cover stories have been so inspiring over the years (to me and some others out there...). Wired covers are somehow iconic.

Wired UK December issue sports a cover that the subject would have been pleased with: an essential silhouette of **Steve Jobs**, as much Zen as we can think of (and maybe he would agree with).

An icon tribute to another icon.

The cover story, beginning from page 109, isn't actually an article: instead it's a compendium of several articles ranging from 1994 to almost yesterday where Wired columnist reported, attacked, celebrated, speculated and wrote cherish love letter to Apple and, of course, to Steve altogether. Sometimes they were right, sometimes wrong - others completely missing the Apple point of view (and Apple was f***ing right).

My pick? The June 1997 **101 ways to save Apple** *James Daly* wrote an open letter to Apple.

[...]In the movie Independence Day, a PowerBook saves the earth from destruction. Now it's time to return the favor. Unfortunately, even devoted Mac addicts must admit that you look a little beleaguered these days: a confusing product line, little inspiration from the top, software developers fleeing. But who wants to live in a world without you? Not us. So we surveyed a cross section of hardcore Mac fans and came up with 101 ways to get you back on the path to salvation.

[...]

13. Exploit every Wintel user's secret fear that some day they're going to be thrown into a black screen with a blinking C-prompt. Advertise the fact that Mac users never have to rewrite autoexec.bat or sys.ini files. [Damn right!]

[...]

14. Do something creative with the design of the box and separate yourselves from the pack. The original Macs stood out because of their innovative look. Repeat that. Get the folks at Porsche to design a box. Or Giorgio Giugiaro. Or Philippe Starck. We'd all feel better about shelling out the bucks for a Power Mac 9600 if we could get a tower with leopard spots. [Leopard spots? □ Jonathan Ive help us!]

15. Dump (or outsource) the Newton, eMate, digital cameras, and scanners.

[...]

19. Get rid of the cables. Go wireless. [Airport anyone?]

[...]

25. Portables, portables, portables. Pick the best-of-breed Wintel in each of the portable categories and then better it. Wintel has a fantastic range.

[...]

31. Build a PDA for less than \$250 that actually does something: a) cellular email b) 56-channel TV c) Internet phone. [This was great in 1997! Just 10 years ahead of the iPhone!]

[...]

34. Port the OS to the Intel platform, with its huge amount of investment in hardware, software, training, and experience. Don't ignore it; co-opt it. Operating systems are dependent on installed base; that is your biggest hurdle now. It is not the head-to-head, feature-set comparison between Windows and Mac OS.

[...]

48. Get Ben & Jerry's to name a flavor after you. Suggestion: Apple Silicon Chip Supreme. [Still to be done...]

[...]

50. Give Steve Jobs as much authority as he wants in new product development. Let Gil Amelio stick to operations. There's no excitement at the top, and Apple's customers want to feel like they've joined a computer revolution. Even if Jobs fails, he'll do it with guns a-blazin', and we'll be spared this slow water torture that Amelio has subjected us to.

[...]

54. Sell off the laser printer business. Create an auction between HP and Lexmark International. Get Japanese companies into the act. Sell to one that's already making money in the printer business or to one that makes related products. That way, the buyer is getting increased market share.

[...]

64. Team up with Sony, which wants to get into the computer business in a big way - think Sony MacMan.

65. Roll out the Mac Plus again as a hip retro machine. Make it really, really

uncool to use whizzy, leading-edge PCs. [No great effort in doing this but... remember the "I'm a Mac" TV ad]

[...]

70. *Simplify your PC product line. Reduce the number of Apple motherboards and the number of distinct Apple system models.*

[...]

85. *Quit making each Mac in a platform-specific case, with platform-specific parts. Make one case for desktop systems and another for laptops. The case, chassis, and all that stuff needs to be as upgradable as the system software used to be.*

[...]

89. *Create a chemical that cleans the Mac's pale gray plastic - they look cruddy after a year, and normal solutions either don't work or seem like they'll corrode the machine.* [That's why aluminum makes sense! My vintage Apple //s and Macs look bleached]

[...]

90. *Design a desktop model - call it La Dolce Vita - with a built-in cappuccino maker (featuring anything but Starbuck's - Washington's other great homogenizer).*

[...]

93. *Develop a way to program that requires no scripting or coding.*

[...]

97. *Have Pixar make 3001, A Space Odyssey, with HAL replaced by a Mac.*

[...]

101. *Don't worry. You'll survive. It's Netscape we should really worry about.* [Netscape? Oh yes, I recall I've been using it...]

Seen from 2011 perspective, these suggestion may sound funny, inappropriate or totally weird. Some aren't.

Steve Jobs has taken one way or the other the right way, and the best of these were fulfilled - sometimes Apple went even beyond!

Great lesson from the past, great lesson from Steve.

[Via [Wired UK](#)]