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Steve Revealing The iPhone

iPhone's Premature Announcement Could Have Been a Mistake

Jobs blew it with the iPhone Keynote

Though the January announcement of the iPhone (due in June) has surely brought Apple tons of free publicity (\$400 million worth, if quantified), it might have also done some damage to the company. Mike Elgan wrote for Computerworld a piece called 'How Steve Jobs blew his iPhone keynote. Premature announcement hurts Apple'. In the article, Elgan said that the iPhone keynote, though "brilliantly and powerfully delivered", was a huge mistake. "Steve Jobs blew it." He thinks Jobs took a wrong turn when he decided to make public so many details, so early before the actual launch. "Apple's famous formula, successfully applied to dozens of iPod models, Macs and operating system rollouts, keeps details secret until products are ready to ship", said the editor. Considering how groundbreaking and innovative iPhone is, this was perhaps the worst time to reveal technical details. The author says he has six reasons to believe the iPhone keynote was a mistake: buyer expectations were raised too high, Wall Street expectations as well, competitors were given a head start, Apple TV's hype was undermined, the iPod was put at risk, and negotiations with Cisco on the trademark were compromised. He makes a fair point, I might add. But what is Jobs to do if not create controversy? "I think Apple's CEO made a big mistake. A June unveiling that coincided with the actual product launch would have kept customers' and Wall Street expectations in line; concealed product details from competitors; given Apple TV the full spotlight when it ships; kept iPod sales robust; and helped Apple gracefully negotiate the rights to use the iPhone name. In short, it would have been the traditional Apple home run," concludes the Computerworld editor. Ah well, brilliant market stunt or huge mistake, the keynote cannot be undone. The truth may lie somewhere in the middle, perhaps it would have been best if Jobs had postponed the announcement, at least until April, even March. But if he had done so, who would have ruined Vista's great opening? Let's take a minute and think about that!