

Sometimes it just takes one product – one very special product – for a company to make it big. In Apple's case, the release of the iPod in 2001 helped the company regain its former glory. While making the company hip again, the iPod delivered billions in revenues.

In the 1980s, with its flagship Macintosh computer, the company was flying high. Yet competition from IBM and low-cost computer makers ate away at Apple's market share. Later, as cheap PCs running Microsoft's software became popular, Apple slid even further.

The return of company founder Steve Jobs in the late 1990s was the beginning of Apple's turnaround. Its new iMac computers became a big hit. Yet that was nothing compared to the success of the tiny iPod.

The first iPod was an easy-to-use digital music player. It was not a new concept, but the look and features of Apple's offering made it more attractive than other devices. The first iPod could store 1,000 songs, a huge amount at the time. And, its modern design and soft white color turned the music player into a fashion statement.