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Apple Inc. is an American multinational corporation with a focus on designing and manufacturing consumer electronics and software products. It was established in Cupertino, California on April 1, 1976 by Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak and Ronald Wayne, and incorporated on January 3, 1977. The company's hardware products include the Macintosh line of personal computers, the iPod line of portable media players, the iPad line of tablets, and the iPhone line of mobile phones. Apple's software products include the OS X operating system, the iTunes media browser, and the iLife suite of multimedia and creativity software.

As of 2008, Apple Inc had acquired twenty-one companies, purchased a stake in two companies, and made five divestments; most of them were software companies. Apple had not released the financial details for most of these mergers and acquisitions. Apple's businessphilosophyis to acquire small companies that can be easily integrated into existing company projects. [4] For example, Apple acquired Emagic and its professionalmusicsoftware, Logic Pro, in 2002. The acquisition led to the creation of the digital audio workstation software, GarageBand, now part of the iLife software suite.

The company made its first acquisition on March 2, 1988 when it purchased Network Innovations. It has also made five divestments, all in the 1990s, in which parts of the company are sold to another company. The company's largest acquisition was the purchase of NeXT in 1996 for US$400 million. In the 2000s, Apple made the most acquisitions in a single year in 2002, with six. In the 2010s, so far the most acquisitions in a single year is 2013, with 10. Of the companies that Apple has acquired, 37 were based in the US.