Palm Pilot

When the portable personal digital assistant (PDA) came along, Palm took advantage of a similar opening. Having started as a software company providing application software for PDA hardware makers, the Palm engineers were always frustrated by the inability of the hardware people to understand what was really critical for a user of a "palm-top" device, such as: starting up from the push of one button; bringing up each application program by pushing exactly one button; and making it easy to enter text into the machine. They invented a new way to write the alphabet, and, surprisingly, people were willing to learn it.

Palm decided, reluctantly, that the only way to produce a product that worked they way they envisioned it was to design the hardware themselves. Palm became a very successful supplier of PDAs in spite of being originally focused on a software business.

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