

## **Spectacularly incorrect predictions made by smart(?) people**

*The Americans have need of the telephone, but we do not. We have plenty of messenger boys.*

—Sir William Preece, chief engineer, British Post Office, 1876

*When the Paris Exhibition closes, electric light will close with it and no more will be heard of it.*

—Erasmus Wilson, Oxford professor, 1878

*Fooling around with alternating current (AC) is just a waste of time. Nobody will use it, ever.*

—Thomas Edison, 1889

*Flight by machines heavier than air is impractical and insignificant, if not utterly impossible.*

—Simon Newcomb, mathematician and astronomer, 1902.

*The cinema is little more than a fad. It's canned drama.*

*What audiences really want to see is flesh and blood on the stage.*

—Charlie Chaplin, 1916

*Within the next two decades autos will be made with folding wings.*

—Eddie Rickenbacker, pilot, 1924

*Talking films are a very interesting invention,  
but I do not believe they will remain long in fashion.*

—Louis-Jean Lumière, inventor of the cinematograph, 1929.

*A rocket will never be able to leave the Earth's atmosphere.*

— New York Times, 1936.

*I think there is a world market for maybe five computers.*

—Thomas Watson, chairman of IBM, 1943

*Television won't be able to hold on to any market it captures after the first six months.  
People will soon get tired of staring at a plywood box every night.*

—Darryl Zanuck, 20th Century Fox, 1946

*There is practically no chance communications space satellites will be used  
to provide better telephone, telegraph, television or radio service inside the United States.*

—T.A.M. Craven, FCC commissioner, 1961

*Remote shopping, while entirely feasible, will flop.*

— TIME, 1966

*(continues)*

*There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home.*

—Ken Olson, president Digital Equipment Corp, 1977

*The Internet will soon go spectacularly supernova and in 1996 catastrophically collapse.*

—Robert Metcalfe, founder of 3Com & inventor of Ethernet, 1995

*Apple [is] a chaotic mess without a strategic vision and certainly no future.*

—TIME, February 5, 1996

*By 2005 or so, it will become clear that the Internet's impact on the economy has been no greater than the fax machine's.*

—Paul Krugman, economist, 1998.

*The subscription model of buying music is bankrupt.*

—Steve Jobs, 2003

*Two years from now, spam will be solved.*

—Bill Gates. at the World Economic Forum, 2004

*Everyone's always asking me when Apple will come out with a cell phone. My answer is, 'Probably never.'*

—David Pogue, The New York Times, 2006

*There's no chance that the iPhone is going to get any significant market share.*

—Steve Ballmer, Microsoft CEO, 2007

## Sources

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