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The Breakthroughs of 1922 & 1923

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The Tech Blog

By Peter H. Diamandis, MD

The Breakthroughs of 1922 & 1923

How many “breakthroughs” were there throughout all of 1922?

Answer: 7

How about “breakthroughs” in all of 1923?

Answer: 12

Yeah, innovation was that sloooow 100 years ago.

Every year at [my private Abundance360 Summit](#), I review the most profound breakthroughs that have occurred during the past 12 months in areas like Computation, Sensors, Networks, Material Sciences, AI, Robotics, 3D Printing, Biotech, Quantum Technologies, Augmented and Virtual Reality, the Metaverse, and Blockchain.

The breadth of innovations today is truly awe-inspiring and literally unfathomable.

At the end of each year's Summit, I take a moment to look back at breakthroughs from 100 years ago to understand just how fast the innovation cycle has accelerated.

Every year, my team and I scrub the patents issued a century back and search the news headlines proclaiming key discoveries and inventions for that year. And every year I'm blown away by how slow the development of technology used to be.

Let's dive in ...

Innovation and Breakthroughs in 1922 and 1923

In 1922, I only found seven. Not seven per day, or seven per minute (which I imagine is where the rate of innovation is today) but seven in total. By the way, in 2022 there were 278,000 patent applications filed globally.

What were those seven incredible innovations?

1. The **first water skis** were demonstrated using wooden boards and a clothesline.
2. The first manually retractable, **convertible car hardtop** was invented.
3. The **electric blender** was invented for making malts and milkshakes.
4. The **radial arm saw** was invented to cut and shape long pieces of stock material.
5. The **use of insulin for the first time in a person** to treat diabetes.
6. **Vitamin E** was discovered.
7. The Australians invented **Vegemite**.

In 1923, we saw a bit of an uptick, bringing the number of major inventions from 7 to 12.

1. Jacob Schick invented the **first electric shaver**.
2. Clarence Birdseye invented **frozen food**.
3. **Sound-on-film technology** (Phonofilm) is invented.
4. Vladimir Kosma Zworykin invented the
5. Firestone unveiled the **first production balloon tire**.
6. Garrett Morgan patented the **first traffic signal** with a warning light.
7. **Insulin was mass produced** and readily available for the treatment of diabetes.

8. **Neon lights** were brought to the U.S. from Paris—Claude Leon begins selling them in L.A.
9. Calvin Coolidge became the **first President to address the nation on broadcast radio**.
10. The metal **Hafnium** was discovered in Copenhagen.
11. **Airway beacons replaced bonfires** to guide flying pilots.
12. Walter Dandy performed the first **hemispherectomy** on a patient with a brain tumor at Johns Hopkins. And the patient survived!

Although all these innovations are important and contributed to our continuing progress as a species and a global society, the level of innovation 100 years pales in comparison to the exponential growth of today.

When you have an Abundance Mindset, you realize that many of our fears are both irrational and triggered by the news media's desire to command our attention and activate our amygdala.

Further, you realize that every year brings more and more opportunity, and technology is a force that is constantly transforming things once that were scarce into greater and greater abundance.

That's the focus of the next few blogs in this *Scaling Abundance* series: how increasing exponential technologies are digitizing, dematerializing, demonetizing, and democratizing products and services and making extraordinary capabilities available to 8 billion people on Earth, driving increasing abundance for humanity.

Why This Matters

Today we probably have more achievements *per hour* than we experienced in all of 1923.

We are truly living during the most extraordinary time in human history. And yet, in the *next 10 years* humanity will experience more progress than we've had in the last century.

So, what will life look like in 2033?

That's not far away!

Does that scare you or excite you?

Later in this series, we'll look in detail at how Metatrends—from AI achieving human-level intelligence to longevity and biotech breakthroughs increasing the human healthspan—will shape our world during the coming decade.

In our next blog, we'll begin looking at what I call “the basics of abundance,” starting with a fascinating story about how technology has created abundance for what has historically been one of the most precious and scarce resources in the world: diamonds.

My Playbook for Healthy Living

How I'm adding healthy years to my life...

I get a lot of questions about what I'm doing to extend my healthspan, so I wrote a book about it: *Peter's Longevity Practices*.

It's FREE and you can access it here:

www.diamandis.com/longevity.

Everything is in there: diet, exercise, sleep, diagnostics, meds & supplements, and of course—mindset.

I discuss topics just like this on my podcast. Here's a conversation I recently enjoyed:



A Statement From Peter:

My goal with this newsletter is to inspire leaders to play BIG. If that's you, thank you for being here. If you know someone who can use this, please [share it](#). Together, we can uplift humanity.

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