

FROM CAVEMEN TO CYBERNAUTS The Top Three Inventions that Made Us Smart, Smarter, and... The Smartest!

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3.4 MILLION inventions were filed for patents in just 2022, WIPO says. But there seem to be only three extraordinary inventions that define our today!!

Picture this: It's 7 AM and you wake up to say "Hey Google, Good Morning!"

Without even rolling out of your bed, your voice assistant greets you, tells you the latest news, gives you the weather forecast and even plays your favorite morning jam. The futuristic inventions are here for us. But are they the greatest?

When we are able to talk to our friends at the other corner of the world, WhatsApp gets the praise. When we are able to learn about anything with a simple search, Google gets the love. When we are able to get something delivered the same day at our doorsteps, Amazon gets lauded. But what's behind all these great innovations?

The stories of the top three inventions go back. Way back in our history textbooks...

Imagine yourself traveling back in time to Mesopotamia. It's 3500 BC and you are walking through a bustling market, filled with traders and merchants haggling over goods. Suddenly, you hear a loud rumble in the distance, growing louder and louder until it's deafening. As you turn around, you see a massive cart rolling towards you, pulled by two strong bulls. The cart is loaded with goods, and it's moving with ease, unlike anything you've ever seen before. How?

The Wheel.

A game-changer for transportation because of which we could now move things over longer distances without breaking our backs (or the bull's). You might say, "There's no way that a piece of wood is the greatest invention!" but you couldn't be further from the truth.

The Wheel made possible the invention of something even better, the waterwheel. The waterwheel made the creation of mechanical power possible. Now, we could make machines that did our heavy menial work for the first time. That's the beginning of

innovation - the beginning of automation! What are inventions for if not for making our lives simpler by delegating the work we had to do to a machine?

Soon after the waterwheel followed the invention of clocks, steam-engines, turbines... All inventions were possible because we humans invented a way of "innovating" through the Wheel, making it the Original Greatest Invention!

Fast forward to the 15th century, and we see the arrival of the Printing Press by Johannes Gutenberg.

Picture this: You are a skilled worker in Greece in 1410 and want to learn about Aristotle because your worker friends told you that he was a wise man from your town. How much do you think you would have to pay for a book that taught you about Aristotle? A day's wage? A week's wage? A month's wage? Nope, nope, and nope.

You would have to pay your three to four month wage to get your hands on a SINGLE book!!

The snail paced book production (if even copying by hand is considered 'production'!) was replaced by mass production of written materials because of the Printing Press. With the new way of knowledge distribution, it wasn't just the deep pocketed aristocrats who could be knowledgeable but even you and I! Knowledge was cheaper and more accessible and that revolutionized human societies leading to all kinds of intellectual revolutions. Again, why is it so great? Because the press fundamentally improved how humans innovated. Gone were the days when only the rich could invent because access to knowledge made the inventions of everything that followed easier for anyone!

As more and more machines were invented, the next five centuries seemed to be all about better and faster machines but nothing out of this world.

Until 1989...

Enter Sir Tim Berners Lee of CERN.

This man pioneered the modern day Internet by inventing the World Wide Web (WWW). The impact of the Internet is so profound that if a man from the 80s steps into the

present day, he will be shocked to his bones seeing that the street Joe can see, hear and talk to someone who is sitting at the other end of the world!

A global network of communication and information exchange that facilitated unimaginable levels of access to information and knowledge. How were our lives changed?

Our work, our education, our entertainment and our social interaction, all of it transformed as the Internet facilitated the development of smarter machines - the Technologies. The Smartphone, Social Media, and Cloud Computing brought more ease into our lives than anything we have ever seen - all possible because of the Internet.

Our communities are no longer tied to our surroundings but have exploded to every corner of the world. The globalization of the world economy and the spread of democracy and human rights has enabled people around the world to connect and collaborate in ways that were previously just dreamlike.

That's what the greatest inventions we have ever created do - they make our present look like a futuristic science fiction movie scene!



The three inventions 'inventing' our world - The globally interconnected Internet glides us smoothly into the future because of the Wheel and the Printing Press

Credit: Aryan Khedkar - created using OpenAI's DALL-E.

These are the revolutionary innovations that serve as a testament to human genius. It's difficult to rank them in the order of importance because they all changed the world in their uniquely different ways. But if there was one thing we learned from this dive into the past, it would be this: Inventions make us understand the immense human potential that lies within all of us. And with this awareness, we can gather the strength to look at the future with hope.

These inventions have not only simplified our lives but have revolutionized the way we communicate, learn, and think. As we continue to advance in technology and innovation, it's important to remember and acknowledge these inventions that paved the way for our modern-day utopia. The future holds limitless possibilities, and we can only imagine what groundbreaking inventions will emerge in the coming years, but we can be sure that they will build upon the foundations laid by these three inventions.