

Elon Musk: Innovator and Tech Guru

The 21st century is all about innovation. Technology is progressing at an unprecedented rate and the way we live is changing along with it. When historians look back on the early 21st century, they will identify a handful of people who embodied the supremacy of technology. Elon Musk will undoubtedly feature prominently on this list.



Global Citizen

Many people are surprised to learn that Elon Musk was born and raised in Pretoria, South Africa. He had a difficult childhood, with his parents separating when he was nine years old. As an adult, Elon has become estranged from his father. He moved to Canada when he was 17 and then to the United States of America. Currently, he sits quite high on a number of global rankings. His net worth, currently around 93 billion dollars, makes him the world's 5th richest person. Forbes rated him the most innovative leader of 2019. And his time as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Tesla makes him the longest standing CEO of an automotive company.

Tesla, Inc.

This automotive company is perhaps what most people associate with Elon Musk. It's an interesting quirk of history that one of his greatest achievements would involve a company named after someone as eccentric and brilliant as him. Tesla Incorporated was founded in 2003 and named for Nikola Tesla, the Serbian inventor and scientist who contributed more than anyone else to the development of electrical technology. Like Musk, Tesla was no ordinary man. It's fitting that his name should be attached to a company that makes electric cars. Tesla, Inc. is rapidly changing how we think about transport and energy use. Who knows – by the time you are old enough to learn to drive, it may well be in an electrical vehicle!



SpaceX

But Musk's most interesting project – outlandish or prophetic, depending on your point of view – is space exploration. In

2002, he founded Space Exploration Technologies Corporation (SpaceX) to pursue the vision of making space travel cheaper and perhaps even colonizing Mars. In May 2020, SpaceX sent a manned craft into orbit and docked it at the International Space Station (ISS). Whether or not humans end up farming on Mars, Elon Musk has revived an entire generation's enthusiasm for space travel. Great things tend to happen when people have their eyes focused upward. Who knows what the future might bring?

X Æ A-12

Much like Nikola Tesla, Elon Musk doesn't leave his eccentricity at the office. He recently named his youngest child "X Æ A-12". The pronunciation is something like "eks ash A twelve". The first letter is simply the letter "X" and the second one, which is a combination of "a" and "e", is actually a letter in several Scandinavian languages. In those languages, it is referred to as "ash". The "A-12" refers to the Lockheed A-12 "archangel", which is a military aircraft. Publicity stunt? Maybe. But there's no doubt that Elon Musk represents our age, in which tradition and stability are giving way to innovation and uncertainty. We are certainly living in interesting times.

© *Edublox*- Overcoming learning barriers