

Neon lights



Edison invented an incandescent light bulb (electric light bulb) so that humans would not have to live in the dark. However, humans were not pleased with the basic, simple functions of the light bulbs. They kept on experimenting by innovating the basic bulb, using new technologies so that the light bulbs would have decorative features. Georges Claude, a French physicist (1870-1960), was the first person to apply an electric discharge to a sealed tube of neon gas to create a lamp. After many attempts of continuous experimenting and testing, Claude finally managed to produce the first generation of neon lights in 1902.

In 1910, the first neon light was publically introduced at the Paris Motor Show. It unfortunately could only produce red neon light as other colours could not be produced by the gas. Seeing this, Fonseque, a business-minded advertising agent, had an idea to make some improvements to the neon light. He persuaded Georges to transfer the patent of his invention of the neon light to him. After a series of experiments and invention, Fonseque was able to make improvements to the neon light. The neon light was innovated mainly for the advertising industry. In 1912, the first neon signage was displayed at Boulevard Montmartre.

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A large number of tourists were attracted to the improved neon light as it resembled a shining star in the dark and was dazzling. Tourists were able to see “Le Palace Coiffeur” (Barber Hotel) from afar. This style of advertising toppled the traditional way of advertising as it was able to make a lot of customers pay attention and enjoy the advertisements. FONSEQUE was, therefore, well known for his outstanding and unique ideas in advertising.

Subsequently, neon lights became more common, and after continuous improvements, the monochromatic problem of the neon light was overcome. Scientists experimented and replaced other gasses inside the glass tubes to produce neon lights in various colours. Today, due to all the improvements in this invention, modern neon lights have become one of the most popular advertising and marketing tool that has helped businesses to be noticed.



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Food for Thought:

- ☐ Problems and demands can lead to innovation and invention.
- ☐ In accordance with the demands of the market, people will continue to innovate products in order to create more popular, practical and efficient products and services.
- ☐ Adequate scientific and technological information is important to conduct research and experiments effectively which could lead to the invention of new products.

