

Guglielmo Marconi

Guglielmo Marconi was born in Italy in 1874. As a child and a young man, he showed an interest in science, especially electricity.

As a young man, he attended a technical school called the Livorno Technical Institute. While studying there, he found out about experiments of Heinrich Hertz, which proved the existence of radio waves. He also read about the transfer of Morse code messages, which are electric pulses sent along wires. Not long after, he became fascinated with the idea of wireless communication.

He started conducting experiments of his own, bent on turning these pieces of research into useful technology. He took over the attic in his family's home and set up a lab there. Soon, he was sending and receiving Morse code. His reach became larger and larger: first he was able to send the signals across the room, then down the hall, then across the fields outside. By 1895 he was able to send a message a mile away.

He wanted to sell his idea, so he first asked the Italian government to buy it from him. However, they ignored his requests. In search of a place that would accept and make use of his invention, he traveled to Britain to introduce the people there to his work.

He began giving demonstrations of his new method of communication in Britain. After seeing what it could do, the Post Office became interested in his invention as a way of sending messages and granted him a patent. As the years followed, he still kept making improvements to his device and demonstrating it for the public, sending messages over larger and larger distances, until he was even able to send them "ship to shore." In 1901, he had a personal victory when he was able to send a message –the letter S – across the Atlantic Ocean from England to Canada.

As the years went on, he continued to make adjustments to his invention. In 1907 he started the first commercial trans-Atlantic radio service. His work was celebrated by the public once again in the days after the Titanic disaster: The crew on the Titanic sent messages to nearby ships using Marconi's system, proving the importance of his accomplishments.

Marconi didn't invent radio, but he showed the world just how much the technology could do. Today, wireless technology is used all over our homes, schools and businesses! Marconi proved that wireless communication was not only possible, but that it could do more than people ever imagined.



Marconi's story shows how important it is to work hard! Instead of giving up after the Italian government refused his invention, he tried again with Britain and found success there, and he never stopped making improvements to his methods. Write a paragraph about a time when you faced an obstacle and had to start over. What would have happened if you gave up?

