

From the desk of David Simpson

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“All truth passes through three stages. First it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident.”

- Arthur Shopenhauer (February 22, 1788 – September 21, 1860)
German philosopher

Perhaps there is some truth to the idea that Shopenhauer’s work has been described as “philosophical pessimism.” However, history suggests he may not be wrong. Consider the following:

- The telephone was initially viewed as a “toy with no commercial value” and took almost 80 years to become mainstream.
- Electric lightbulb. Critics labeled the electric lightbulb as too fragile and dangerous for a house – even though before the lightbulb, homes were lit with highly flammable fire-based sources, including oil and kerosene.
- The airplane. When the Wright brothers flew the first airplane in 1903, sceptics immediately declared the airplane as unsafe with no practical application. In that same year, 1903, the New York Times published an editorial that declared it would take between one million and ten million years before human flight was possible. The Wright brothers achieved powered flight 69 days after the article was published.

So many inventions begin, indeed, just as Shopenhauer said, with doubt, scepticism and mockery. The moral of this quote – make sure that when you are coming out with new, leading-edge products, consider assigning such an endeavour to people who can handle the up-front derision!

Perform better!

