“Computers in the future may weigh no more than 1.5 tons.” From “Popular Mechanics,” on the relentless march of science, 1949.

“I think there is a world market for maybe 5 computers.” Thomas Watson, Chairman of IBM, 1943.

“There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home.” Ken Olson, President, Chairman, and Founder of Digital Equipment Corp., 1977.

“This ‘telephone’ has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication. The device is inherently of no value to us.” Western Union internal memo, 1876.

“The wireless music box has no imaginable commercial value. Who would pay for a message sent to nobody in particular?” David Sarnoff’s associates’ response to his urgings to invest in the radio, circa 1920.

“The concept is interesting and well-formed, but in order to earn better than a ‘C,’ the idea must be feasible.” Yale University management professor in response to Fred Smith’s paper proposing reliable overnight delivery service. Smith went on to found Federal Express Corp.


“I’m just glad it’ll be Clark Gable who’s falling on his face and not Gary Cooper.” Gary Cooper, as he turned down the lead role in “Gone With the Wind.”

“A cookie store is a bad idea. Besides, the market research reports say Americans likes crispy cookies, not soft and chewy cookies like you make.” Response to Debbi Fields’ idea of starting Mrs. Fields’ Cookies.

“We don’t like their sound and guitar music is on the way out.” Decca Recording Company, rejecting the Beatles, 1962.

“Heavier-than-air flying machines are impossible.” Lord Kelvin, President, Royal Society, 1895.

“Everything than can be invented has been invented.” Charles H. Duell, Commissioner, U.S. Office of Patents, 1899.

“640K ought to be enough for anybody.” Bill Gates, 1981.