

*"Genius is 1 percent
inspiration and
99 percent perspiration."*

—Thomas Alva Edison

Thomas Alva EDISON

1847-1931

AMERICAN INVENTOR AND BUSINESSMAN

Edison created the first long-lasting, practical electric light bulb, in parallel with Joseph Swan in UK, and developed one of the first systems for electric power generation and distribution for larger groups.

Edison had a greater entrepreneurial vision than other solo inventors of his time; he never allowed failures to derail his plans: "I have not failed; I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work." His other inventions include the alkaline battery, the phonograph, and motion pictures. Edison received AAES' John Fritz Medal in 1908, and in 1928 he received the Congressional Gold Medal, recognizing his work in the field of electricity and its applications. Life magazine (USA), in a special double issue in 1997, placed Edison first in the list of the "100 Most Important People in the Last 1000 Years", noting that the light bulb he promoted "lit up the world".

SPIE
www.SPIE.org/IYL



Image courtesy of
The Spark Museum
of Electrical Invention,
Bellingham, Washington



INTERNATIONAL
YEAR OF LIGHT
2011