

Elon Musk Biography

A short bit about Elon Musk

Elon Reeve Musk is a South African-born, American entrepreneur and businessman. Born in 1971 he founded X.com in 1999 (which later became PayPal), SpaceX in 2002 and Tesla Motors in 2003. Musk became a multimillionaire in his late 20s when he sold his first start-up company, Zip2.

Musk became famous in May 2012, when SpaceX launched a first commercial rocket that sent supplies to the International Space Station. He bolstered his portfolio with the purchase of SolarCity in 2016, and proved himself as a leader of industry by taking on an advisory role in the early days of President Donald Trump's administration.

Elon Musk's Early Days and Education

At the age of 10, he developed an interest in computing. He taught himself how to program and by the age of 12 he sold the code of the game called "*Blastar*", written in BASIC, to a magazine for 500\$.

At age 17, in 1989, Musk moved to Canada and attended Queen's University, while also avoiding mandatory service in the South African military. Musk obtained his Canadian citizenship same year, since he thought it would be easier to obtain American citizenship via that path.

In 1992, Musk left Canada to study business and physics at the University of Pennsylvania. He graduated with an undergraduate degree in economics and stayed for a second bachelor's degree in physics.

After leaving Pennsylvania, Musk move to study in Stanford University in California and wanted to pursue PhD in energy physics. However, his move was timed perfectly with the Internet boom, and so he dropped out of Stanford just after 2 days of his start, launching his first company, Zip2 Corporation in 1995. Musk became a U.S. citizen in 2002.

Elon Musk in Industry

This is the part which explains why Elon Musk is someone who inspires me.

Elon Musk's industry adventures started with Zip2 corporation, which he established with his brother in 1995. It was an online city guide, which was providing content for other websites. It was successful enough to be acquired by Compaq Computer Corporation in 1999, netting \$307 million in cash and \$34 million is stocks.

He didn't stop on that, however. He used the money to co-found X.com, which was an online financial services company. X.com later changed to PayPal, and was acquired by eBay for \$1.5 billion in stock. That netted Elon his first billion.

With enough money to support his ideas, he founded his 3rd company in 2002 called SpaceX, focused on building spacecraft for commercial space travel. By 2008 SpaceX managed to establish itself and got their first contract from NASA. After that in 2012 they launched their Falcon 9 rocket to International Space Station and it was a huge success. Since then, SpaceX, with Elon Musk as its head managed to revolutionize the spacecraft industry with multiple successful milestones achieved, regardless of some minor setbacks on the way.

He also managed to make his “*Starlink*” project a reality, even though everyone said that it’s impossible or unfeasible. It’s not finalized yet, but with launch of his first 60 satellites to the earth’s orbit, he showed that he is serious with his plans and project, no matter how unreal they sound.

He is also a hope for Mars colonization and if we look at the advancements that SpaceX shows, it seems like something possible.

Soon after establishing SpaceX, he co-founded Tesla Motors in 2003. The company mission is to produce affordable, mass-market electric cars as well as sources of renewable energy. Musk oversees all product development, engineering – including software, and designs of his company products.

Just after five years they unveiled their first product – the roadster, which raised them over \$226 million.

Next models of Tesla were also very successful. Model S was honored as Car of the Year by “*Motor Trend*” magazine.

In 2017 Tesla also surpassed General Motors as the most valuable U.S car maker.

Model 3 that was launched in March 2019, has put the company through some serious tests. Elon announced in 2017 that Tesla will produce 5000 Model 3 cars by December 2017. After pushing that goal and continuous delays, he took the control into his own hands and was overseeing the efforts personally. To reorganize management structure he had to lay off 9% of Tesla’s workforce but as a result, it reached its goals and even superseded them. They even shifted to all-online sales and started offering free returns as well.

In 2016 Elon Musk acquired “*SolarCity*” in effort to promote and advance sustainable and renewable energy, for both wider consumer base and for Tesla motors.

In 2017 he founded “*The Boring Company*”, with intention to build tunnels in order to reduce traffic on the streets and started a test dig under the SpaceX property in Los Angeles. Other than that, company is also working on any side projects or inventions that Elon Musk wants to work on.

In addition to numerous successful companies Elon Musk also has a number of big projects and inventions he is working on.

One of them is Hyperloop, of which concept was released in 2013. It’s a network of low-pressure tubes that would propel pods at speeds reaching 1200 km/h. Since 2017 there’s a yearly competition held at the SpaceX facility.

Musk is also a co-chair of nonprofit research company “*OpenAI*”, which mission is advancing artificial intelligence for common benefit. He is also contributing to a venture called “*Neuralink*”, which hopes to bring implants that can help people merge with software.

His “The Boring Company” also invented consumer grade flamethrower, which got immediately sold out, netting the company a solid funding for further developments

In addition to that, he founded Musk foundation, which is a non-profit dedicated to space exploration and the discovery of renewable energy sources.

Summary

After starting out as a software engineer and progressing into entrepreneur, Elon Musk always followed his ideas, regardless of public opinion or critics saying that something is impossible. With his smart decisions he managed to establish multiple successful companies, which are also partially sustaining each other, so he can make his projects and ideas a reality. That’s why I think he is truly an inspiring person.