

THOMAS EDISON

On the night of 21 October 1931, millions of Americans **(0)** part in a coast-to-coast ceremony to commemorate the passing of a great man. Lights **(1)** in homes and offices from New York to California. The ceremony **(2)** the death of an inventor – indeed, to many people, the most important inventor of **(3)** time: Thomas Alva Edison.

Few inventors have **(4)** an impact as great as his on everyday life. While most of his 1,000-plus inventions were devices we no **(5)** use, many of the things he invented played a crucial **(6)** in the development of modern technology, simply by showing what was possible. And one should never **(7)** how amazing some of Edison's inventions were.

In so many ways, Edison is the perfect example of an inventor, by which I **(8)** not just someone who **(9)** up clever gadgets, but someone whose products transform the lives of millions. He possessed the key characteristics that an inventor needs to **(10)** a success of inventions. Sheer determination is certainly one of them. Edison famously tried thousands of materials while working **(11)** a new type of battery, reacting to failure by cheerfully **(12)** to his colleagues: 'Well, **(13)** we know 8,000 things that don't work.' Knowing when to take no **(14)** of experts is also important. Edison's proposal for electric lighting circuitry was **(15)** with total disbelief by eminent scientists, until he lit up whole streets with his lights.