



Tandberg's passion for innovation

In the early 1900s, refrigeration was unobtainable to most. That is until Electrolux brought the luxury of refrigeration to every home.

In 1924, Electrolux decided to put all their assets into purchasing the patent for refrigeration technology from two young engineers, Baltzar von Platen and Carl Munters. After signing the papers Axel Wenner-Gren showed up at John Tandberg's door:

"What if I told you that you could have a refrigerator that didn't require ice blocks or running water and that kept your food cool, fresh and clean?" Wenner-Gren said.

"I would ask you where I could get one," replied Tandberg.

"You invent it," Wenner-Gren answered.

Taking the challenge

Tandberg took the position as head of the chemical lab at Electrolux with the mission to create the refrigerator of the future but this task was not without some obstacles. Von Platen and Munters supplied a list of challenges that they hadn't been able to solve such as corrosion, leaks, unreliable temperatures, and explosions. Tandberg knew he had to recreate and improve this technology, so he pulled together a team of talented engineers and scientists from around the world to help him do it.

Once the team was gathered, he explained their goal: "Thanks to the breakthrough of absorption refrigeration we know that you can create cold through heat with water. But not every household has running water and every household from Asia to America will need a refrigeration machine. That is why we are going to cool with air, because we all have access to that."

The birth of cool

In a year the Electrolux development team brought a more effective and safe refrigeration machine to market, one that they would continue to improve and redesign. By 1931, the Electrolux team created the L1, the first air cooled refrigerator, an innovation that made refrigerators clean, reliable and accessible to every home. And just five years later Electrolux had sold their millionth refrigerator – they had done it; they had brought refrigeration home.