

TOM DICKSON – Blendtec Founder BIO

Over the past 40 years, Blendtec® founder Tom Dickson has built numerous successful companies based on cutting-edge solutions and a passion for innovation. While he's best known for his high-speed blenders, Tom's history of creating advanced products began long before Blendtec.

As an engineer and inventor, Tom grew up putting big engines in little things. His challenges with ADHD and dyslexia, however, forced him to work harder to get through school. He eventually received a Bachelor of Manufacturing Engineering from Brigham Young University in 1971. Tom credits his schooling experiences for instilling his strong work ethic that continues to this day.

Tom's entrepreneurial spirit took flight in 1975 at age 29. After observing the outcome of sending hard wheat through a vacuum, Tom produced The Kitchen Mill™. This eight-pound mill produced flour twice as fast and twice as fine as its 60-pound predecessor, the stone mill, and revolutionized the home grain milling industry.

The innovations didn't stop with one success. As an inventor, Tom's drive to simplify people's lives led him to design the Mix n' Blend, an all-in-one kitchen machine with a mixer and built-in blender. This machine mixed four times as much dough as its closest competitor, and the blender outperformed most commercial blenders of the time.

Tom further improved the Mix n' Blend to create the safest "Total Blender." Since the early 90s, when smoothie shops expressed a need for high-power blenders, Tom has continued to improve on his invention. Today, the Blendtec line has expanded into 13 residential and commercial models that are used in businesses and homes in over 90 countries.

In 2001, Tom invented his famous five-sided WildSide™ blending jar, which revolutionized the commercial blending industry by "blending twice the work in half the time." The WildSide jar was immediately requested by major businesses including Starbucks™ and Jamba Juice™. Other companies took note as well, and Blendtec's largest competitor, Vita-Mix™, copied the patented jar design. In 2005, Blendtec took Vita-Mix™ to court for patent infringement. A US District Court Judge found "willful infringement" by Vita-Mix™ of Blendtec's WildSide patented design, and awarded Blendtec the largest judgment for damages to date in Utah history for a patent-related case. This seemingly simple but groundbreaking invention—and ensuing victory—became one of Tom's greatest career accomplishments.

In 2006, the first five *Will It Blend?*™ videos (all made on a \$50 budget) appeared on YouTube, where Tom was seen blending iPhones, rake handles, marbles, and other seemingly un-blendable items in his famous Blendtec blenders. The response was phenomenal. After just six days and six million views, Tom became a media sensation, appearing on *The TONIGHT Show with Jay Leno*, *The TODAY Show*, *The Discovery Channel*, *The History Channel* and many others. The series won a number of awards, including a CLIO award, and is still considered one of the most successful viral marketing campaigns in history.

Over the years, Tom has been credited for creating a number of blending firsts, including the first self-serve smoothie machine, one-touch preprogrammed settings, and the quietest high-powered commercial blender available. Blendtec has over 500 employees, designing, manufacturing and assembling the Blendtec blenders in the USA. Blendtec constantly strives to make a difference by creating more jobs and bringing quality manufacturing back to the USA.

Today, Tom is still actively involved in the day-to-day operations at Blendtec in his roles as founder and chief engineer. He is a prominent figure in his community and recently donated toward the construction of The Museum of Natural Curiosity, a \$28.5 million hands-on children's science museum in Utah. As recognition and appreciation for his contribution, the museum's education arm will be named The Dickson Academy of Curiosity.

