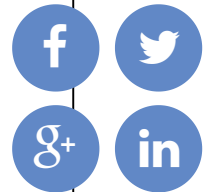# SCIENCENODE™

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HPC and big data in the 1950s, or how a British company selling tea and cakes owned the world's first office computer

How a British teashop helped create the first office computer I T…

[▶ YouTube video placeholder]

Video courtesy Science Museum, London, UK.

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[The Science Museum](#) in London, UK, has opened a new permanent gallery celebrating more than 200 years of innovation in communication and information technologies. '[Information Age: Six Networks That Changed Our World](#)' was inaugurated on 24 October by [Queen Elizabeth II](#), who marked the occasion by posting her first message to the social networking website Twitter. Using the account [@BritishMonarchy](#), she tweeted: "It is a pleasure to open the Information Age exhibition today at the [@ScienceMuseum](#) and I hope people will enjoy visiting. Elizabeth R."

The free gallery boasts a wide range of objects that have shaped today's society, including the computer used by Sir Tim Berners-Lee as the world's first web server at [CERN](#). Find out more about this computer, which CERN has loaned to the Science Museum, [here](#).

The Science Museum has also commissioned a series of fascinating videos to mark the launch of the gallery. 'The computer that changed our world' (above) explains how J. Lyons and Co., a British firm best known for its popular chain of tea shops, came to own the world's first computer used for commercial business applications. The LEO I (Lyons Electronic Office I) computer had a mercury-based memory system, boasted a clock speed of 500 kilohertz, and was capable of storing a whopping 2 kilobytes of information!

More videos can be found on the Science Museum's YouTube channel.

- Andrew Purcell

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