



NEWS RELEASE

In memory of John Curry, CBE: A Visionary Leader in Electronics and Tennis

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Everyone at discoverIE was deeply saddened by the news that John Curry, CBE, founder of Acal, the precursor to discoverIE Group and former Chairman of the All England Lawn Tennis Club died on Saturday 19 October 2024 at the age of 86. John leaves a strong legacy, playing a key role in the evolution of the UK electronics industry while fostering the growth of one of the most prestigious sporting institutions in the world.

John spent the first ten years of his life in Burma and India, before attending King's College School in Wimbledon as a boarder, ultimately becoming Head Boy. He went on to read Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) at St. Edmund Hall College, Oxford, while captaining the tennis team and also receiving a Blue in Rugby. From there he went to Harvard, where he was awarded an MBA with high distinction. He qualified as a chartered accountant.

John's career in the electronics industry began in 1966 as Finance Director of Unitech, a company founded by his older brother, Peter. Unitech helped to shape the industrial electronics landscape in the UK through the 1960s to the 1990s. Its investments helped to establish companies that became household names in the UK and international electronics sector of the time. Among notable examples was Unitech's early investment in Coutant, a pioneer in switched mode power supplies, which evolved into TDK Lambda, and which is now one of the world's leading power supply manufacturers. Another defining moment came with the acquisition of Walmore in 1971, which introduced an as yet unknown semiconductor start-up company, Intel, to the UK, setting the stage for a significant relationship between the tech giant and the European market.

In 1986, John created Acal to build a pan-European technology distribution company, leading to its public listing in 1993. Over two decades, Acal grew through acquisitions to become a leading niche distributor in the UK and Europe. Although John stepped down after a stroke in 2005, his influence and support of the business remained.



Outside the electronics world, John's lifelong passion for tennis led to a significant second career, culminating in his Chairmanship of the All England Lawn Tennis Club, home of Wimbledon. His contributions to the development of the club whilst retaining that which is special about it, will be remembered as warmly as his achievements in business.

It is hard to overstate the significance that John, alongside his brother Peter, had on the emerging UK electronics industry. From fostering the growth of tech start-ups to laying the foundation for modern distribution networks, numerous companies today can trace their roots back to the Curry brothers.

John remained an engaged, supportive shareholder in discoverIE, the company that emerged from Acal. At discoverIE he will be remembered as fiercely bright, challenging, connecting brilliantly with people and with a great sense of humour.

More widely, John Curry will be remembered as someone who played a leading role in developing the emerging UK electronics industry whilst simultaneously leading the All England Tennis Club forward.

John is survived by his wife Anne, three sons and a daughter.