

A Brief History of Television and Film

1895 First public demonstration of motion pictures.

1945



The Blue Network, part of NBC, officially becomes the **ABC network**. A 1941 FCC ruling required RCA to divest itself of one of its two networks; NBC Blue was sold in 1943 to Edward Noble for \$8 million, and becomes ABC in 1945.

1951



"I Love Lucy," a half-hour filmed TV sitcom, is born. The show, unlike the live TV productions typical of the time, ranks No. 1 in the nation for four of its first six full seasons. It is sponsored by **Philip Morris**.

1953

Color broadcasting officially arrives in the U.S. on Dec. 17, when FCC approves modified version of an RCA system.

1960



The most popular shows of the year include "Gunsmoke" and "Wagon Train." Audience share figures regularly exceed 50% for many of the most popular entries in prime time.

1963



On Aug. 28, Dr. Martin Luther King delivers his "I have a dream" speech as millions watch on TV.

On Nov. 22, President Kennedy is shot by a sniper in downtown Dallas, and TV coverage of the assassination and the funeral grip the nation and the world for four days. Shortly thereafter, Jack Ruby shoots accused presidential assassin Lee Harvey Oswald on an **NBC live broadcast** as the latter is being transported by law officials.

Instant replay adds a new dimension to televised sports when it's featured in a telecast of an Army-Navy football game. In 1964, it becomes a standard technique and goes on to become controversial in the NFL.

1965



Color TV booms as NBC leads the way and begins to use the phrase "**The Full Color Network**". By year's end, 96% of NBC's nighttime schedule is broadcast in color, along with all major programs, sports events and specials.

On July 20, astronaut Neil Armstrong takes mankind's first step on the moon as millions of U.S. viewers watch the historic event live on network TV.

1979 **ESPN, a total sports network**, makes its debut on cable. It becomes the largest and most successful basic cable channel, carried by virtually every cable system, and reaches more than 57 million households.

1980



MTV: Music Television makes its debut in August.

1984



Superstar Michael Jackson makes a highly publicized Pepsi-Cola commercial, and during a shoot his hair accidentally catches fire, requiring surgery to his scalp. The campaign, is considered the forerunner of **big-budget celebrity ads**.

1987

In April, 20th Century Fox owner Rupert Murdoch launches Fox Broadcasting Co.

1994

The Winter Olympics sets ratings records, becoming the most-watched event in TV history with 204 million U.S. viewers, or 83% of the country. Ratings are boosted by the controversy surrounding the women's figure skating competition; prior to the Olympics, U.S. figure skater Tonya Harding was involved in an attack on teammate Nancy Kerrigan.



Football legend and actor O.J. Simpson is arrested as the primary suspect in the brutal murders of his former wife Nicole Brown-Simpson and her friend Ronald Goldman. The incident throws the media into overdrive, as **95 million viewers** watch at least some part of Mr. Simpson's freeway chase in June.

1996

Digital satellite dishes that are only 18 inches in diameter hit the market. They become the biggest selling electronic item in history next to the VCR.

1997

Mini DV is introduced as a new, higher definition, digital recording format. Perfect copies can be made from them without losing any quality.

DVD players are made available in the US

2006



Blu-Ray DVD's are released in the middle of the year. A single-layer **Blu-ray** disc, which is roughly the same size as a DVD, can hold up to 27 GB of data - that's more than two hours of high-definition video or about 13 hours of standard video.

2008

Blu-ray Seems to Win over HD Disks as Wal-Mart, Target, Netflix & Best Buy Stores commit to the Blue-ray format. Most Blu-ray players now also "Upconvert" which means that a regular DVD played on a Blu-ray system will almost have the definition of a hi-def disc.