

## TIMELINE

### Major Events in the History of Mass Communications

*This timeline shows the growing importance of mass communication in increasingly compressed historical time periods. It is not an all-inclusive timeline. It is intended to provide an historical perspective and the basis for further study of the rapid development of modern media.*

#### **3000 B.C. +: Early Innovations**

- 3300 B. C. Egyptians perfect hieroglyphics
- 1500 B. C. Semites devise the alphabet;
- 1000 B. C. Egyptian papyrus, early form of paper
  - 60 B. C. *Acta Diurna* [Day's Events], forerunner of the newspaper
- 1041 A. D. Printing by means of separate, movable characters in China
- 1446 A. D. Johannes Gutenberg introduces moveable type printing press in Germany
- 1468 A. D. William Caxton produces a book in England with the first printed advertisement
- 1500s Printing books and pamphlets increases

#### **1600 – 1800: Colonial Era and Early Republic Years**

- 1609 First newspapers in Europe
- 1638 Puritans establish Cambridge Press
- 1690 Ben Harris prints first Colonial newspaper [*Publick Occurrences, Both Foreign and Domestic*] in Boston
- 1721 James Franklin exercises the privilege of editorial independence (*The New England Courant*)
- 1729 Ben Franklin prints money after calling for paper currency [*A Modest Inquiry into the Nature and Necessity of a Paper Currency*]
- 1731 Ben Franklin founds first public library
- 1732 *Poor Richard's Almanack* helps create popular culture in America
- 1741 Andrew Bradford prints *American Magazine*
- 1798 Sedition Act

#### **1800 – 1900: Telegraph Era and the Start of the Industrial Revolution**

- 1821 National magazines [*The Saturday Evening Post*]
- 1827 First African American newspaper [*Freedom's Journal*]
- 1828 Sara Josepha Hale, women's magazine pioneer [*Ladies' Magazine*]
- 1836 William McGuffey begins writing reading textbooks
- 1841 Horace Greeley introduces the editorial page
- 1844 First telegraph line set by Samuel Morse
- 1852 Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* becomes the first blockbuster in U.S. book publishing
- 1857 James Buchanan's Inauguration, first photographed
- 1858 First transatlantic cable
- 1865 Abraham Lincoln's assassination is reported by telegraph and print
- 1876 Alexander Graham Bell invents the telephone
- 1877 Thomas Edison invents the phonograph
- 1879 Congress gives discount postal rates to magazines
- 1880s Yellow journalism causes Joseph Pulitzer to establish criteria for journalism and literature through the Pulitzer Prize
- 1887 Nellie Bly joins Pulitzer's newspaper *New York World* as a reporter
- 1885 George Eastman invents photographic film
- 1894 Guglielmo Marconi invents the radio

- 1895 Congress establishes the Government Printing Office
- 1899 Gilbert Grosvenor introduces photographs in *National Geographic*

**Early 1900s: Industrial Revolution Era and Golden Ages of Radio, TV, and Movies**

- 1902 Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* series launches small, easy to handle children's books
- 1905 Robert S. Abbott founds *Chicago Defender*, African-American newspaper
- 1914 U.S.-based Spanish paper [*El Diario-La Prensa*] debuts
- 1914 Congress creates the Federal Trade Commission to prevent unfair advertising
- 1919 D. W. Griffith, Charlie Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford create United Artists
- 1920s Joseph Maxwell introduces electrical microphones
- 1923 Henry Luce and Briton Hadden launch *Time*, first newsmagazine
- 1923 First radio network linkup carries the World Series
- 1925 Calvin Coolidge's Inauguration, first on radio
- 1927 Charles Lindbergh's ticker-tape parade in NYC is filmed on 8mm news reel
- 1927 *The Jazz Singer*, first talkie
- 1927 William Paley creates CBS from a 16-affiliate radio network
- 1927 First TV transmission by Philo Farnsworth
- 1931 Case of *Near v. Minnesota*
- 1932 Walt Disney produces first full-color movie [*Flowers and Trees*]
- 1935 Franklin Delano Roosevelt debuts Fireside Chats on radio
- 1935 Swing Band recordings play constantly on the radio
- 1935 George Gallup founds Institute of American Public Opinion
- 1937 Walt Disney produces the first animated feature [*Snow White*]
- 1940s Margaret Bourke-White, celebrated photojournalist for Henry Luce's Magazines (*Life, Time, Fortune*)
- 1940s Audiotape is developed in Germany
- 1940s Community antenna television system, early cable
- 1940s Digital technology, early Internet technology
- 1940s A. C. Nielsen conducts listener survey
- 1941 Pearl Harbor attack is reported by radio
- 1944 First large automatic digital computer is built at Harvard
- 1947 CBS and NBC begin first newscasts
- 1949 Harry Truman's Inauguration, first televised
- 1950s Black-and-white television becomes part of the average American home
- 1951 Edward R. Murrow, pioneers television news
- 1953 Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation at Westminster Abbey ushers in the Television Age around the world
- 1953 *I Love Lucy*, 71.7% of viewers watch the episode of Little Ricky's birth
- 1955 Dwight David Eisenhower, televises press conference
- 1956 Elvis Presley receives his first Gold Record (*over 1 million sold*)
- 1954 Color TV system is approved by the FCC
- 1959 Ray Charles pioneers soul-jazz that crosses over to pop recordings

**1960s: Cold War Decade**

- 1960s Rise of professional books
- 1960s Marshall McLuhan writes best sellers on mass media theory
- 1960s Rise of FM radio
- 1960s Stereo recordings and playback equipment is introduced
- 1960 Olympic Games are the first televised
- 1961 John Fitzgerald Kennedy, debuts live press conferences
- 1962 J.C.R. Licklider proposes concept of Internet
- 1963 John Kennedy's assassination is reported by television
- 1963 Katherine Graham assumes presidency of *The Washington Post*
- 1963 Barbara Walters becomes female anchor of the *Today Show*
- 1963 Audiocassettes are introduced
- 1964 The Beatles perform in the U.S. and take rock music global
- 1964 Diana Ross & The Supremes pioneer the Motown Sound that redefines America as multi-cultural to the world Freedom of Information Act
- 1966 Telstar I satellite telephone and TV signals
- 1967 Congress creates the Corporation for Public Broadcasting
- 1968 *60 Minutes* debuts
- 1969 Tinker v. Des Moines, U. S. Supreme Court decision
- 1969 Neil Armstrong's walk on the Moon is televised in color globally
- 1969 DOD's ARPAnet, predecessor of the Internet
- 1969 *Sesame Street* debuts

**1970s: Social Issues Decade**

- 1970s TV sitcoms address social issues
- 1970s Email is developed
- 1970 *Monday Night Football* debuts on television
- 1971 Microprocessor is developed
- 1971 *New York Times* publishes the *Pentagon Papers*
- 1974 Vinton Cerf and Bob Kahn, "founding fathers" of the Internet
- 1975 Bill Gates and Paul Allen, co-founders of Microsoft
- 1975 VCRs are introduced
- 1975 HBO is uplinked to satellite
- 1976 Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak, co-founders of Apple Computer, Inc.
- 1976 Cable is broadcast by Ted Turner
- 1976 Ed Bradley, first African-American White House television correspondent
- 1977 VHS-format videocassettes

**1980s: Cable Television Decade**

- 1980s Color television replaces black-and-white in American homes
- 1980s Fiber-optic cable
- 1980s Hypertext links to Web
- 1980 First online newspaper [*Columbus Dispatch*]
- 1980 CNN, first 24-hour news station, debuts
- 1981 IBM PC is introduced
- 1981 Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer's wedding, pulls in an estimated global TV audience of 750 million
- 1981 MTV debuts
- 1982 *USA Today* debuts
- 1982 CDs are introduced
- 1983 *M\*A\*S\*H\** finale, 77% of all viewers tune in

- 1983 *Thriller* redefines the concept of music video on MTV
- 1984 *The Cosby Show*, African-American family sitcom, debuts
- 1985 *Microsoft Windows* is launched
- 1985 Gloria Estefan & Miami Sound Machine become America's leading Latin recording artists
- 1986 MCI Mail, first commercial email service
- 1986 *Bethel v. Fraser*, U.S. Supreme Court decision
- 1988 *Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier*, U. S. Supreme Court decision
- 1989 Compaq laptop computer is launched

### **1990s: Digital Decade**

- 1990s Rise of talk radio
- 1990s Rise of independent film
- 1991 Sir Timothy John Berners-Lee invents the World Wide Web
- 1991 Web expands online news and information
- 1993 Marc Andreessen creates predecessor to Netscape browser
- 1994 Direct Broadcast Satellite service is launched
- 1995 *Microsoft Internet Explorer* is launched
- 1995 Amazon.com launches online shopping
- 1997 William Jefferson Clinton's Inauguration is live on the Internet
- 1997 DVDs replace VHS format
- 1997 *Titanic* records global box office sales of \$1.8 billion
- 1997 First news blogs are introduced
- 1997 Diana, Princess of Wales, uses the paparazzi to spotlight worthy causes around the world
- 1998 J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series is translated into many languages, sells to a world-wide mass market, and launches a continuous series of blockbuster movies
- 1998 *Beussink v. Woodland R-IV School District*, U.S. District Court decision

### **2000+: Age of Media Convergence**

- 2000s Rise of cell phone use and cellular technology
- 2001 9/11 Attacks are reported immediately through multimedia
- 2001 iPod and MP3 format compressed digital files debut
- 2001 Dominance of newspaper chains and media conglomerates
- 2001 Instant message services
- 2002 TV standard changes to digital
- 2002 Satellite radio is launched
- 2002 *American Idol* begins its first season
- 2003 iTunes online music store
- 2003 TiVo, video on demand, debuts
- 2004 24-hour coverage of the Olympic Games from Athens
- 2004 Broadband is in half of American homes
- 2005 Bruce Springsteen releases album on DualDisc (*CD/DVD*)
- 2005 U2, best-selling global superstar Irish band
- 2005 Google Library Book Project, digitization of books
- 2006 Google Video Pilot Project, digitization of National Archives films
- 2006 Citizen journalists record events on cellular cameras and technology
- 2007 *Morse v. Frederick*, U. S. Supreme Court decision
- 2007 Presidential debates on YouTube