

High Definition Television Encyclopedia Article

High Definition Television

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High Definition Television

High-definition television, or HDTV, provides five times the visual information detail, 10 times the color information, and more than double the resolution as a standard television. In addition, HDTV features a sound quality equivalent to that provided on a digital compact disc. Development of HDTV dates as far back as 1884, when Paul Nipkow patented his Nipkow Disc. The Nipkow Disc produced a picture containing 18 scan lines. Corporations such as RCA, Philco and Farnsworth latched onto his invention and eventually developed the standard television set. Even as the use of the standard television became commonplace in the 1940s, however, these and other corporations continued their research on HDTV. During this time, much of the research was dedicated to military uses for HDTV. Two airborne television systems, code-named "Block" and "Ring" were developed during World War II. After the war, the innovations, including higher resolution, advanced camera tubes and greater transmission distances, were incorporated into entertainment television.

After World War II, many Japanese companies became interested in the further development of HDTV. The most aggressive of these companies has been the Sony Corporation, which between 1975 and the early 1990s had invested \$300 million toward development of its high-definition video systems (HDVS), which was intended to, and today does, rival 35mm as a film production option. HDTV has continued to evolve through the 1990s and current systems utilize 1125 scan lines. It is estimated that by the year 2008 all television broadcasts could be in HDTV format and standard television signals may become obsolete.