The Television Industry
Definition of Television

The word Television means Seeing at a Distance. Its roots date back as far as 1817
Television Time Line

- 1817--Swedish Scientist Jon Berzelius discovered the selenium, a sulfur-like chemical conducted electricity depending on how much light was shone upon it
- 1873--A Irish telegraph operator, Joseph May, exposed a selenium resitor to light and sent a signal across the ocean on the Atlantic Telegraph cable.
• 1847---Italian scientist Abbe Caselli managed to send drawings Italy to Paris by wire. The result was crude but seeing at a distance now meant seeing by electricity.

• Various other scientists contributed to the technological advancements of television making it truly global in scope
The battle over the true inventor of Television

- Although a number of scientists contributed to the development of television, two names are dominant over the claim “Inventor of Television”
- Vladimir Zworykin and Philo Farnsworth
Zworykin and Farnsworth

- In 1923, Zworykin introduced his iconoscope which was used to essentially was the first commercially usable television pick-up tube.
- In 1927, Farnsworth introduced a hand-blown tube he called a image dissector. It picked up the image of a glass tube and transmitted it.
The battle for the invention of television was fueled by another Russian Immigrant, David Sarnoff of RCA who backed Zworykin financially. RCA’s publicity machine convinced the public that Zworykin invented television. However, a patent case was won by Farnsworth and RCA had to pay royalties to Farnsworth for his invention.
Radio gets into Television

- At first, it was not clear what the market for television was.
- At first, television was viewed as a threat to movies rather than a additional distribution channel.
- In 1948, the U.S. Supreme Court decision in U.S. v. Paramount broke the vertical integration structure.
Vertical Integration

- Essentially, Vertical Integration meant that Studios successfully kept movies off television because of the financial link between the studios and the theater chains.
- It was only a matter of time until the deep pockets of television could get movies to fill the growing demand of television programming.
The American public first saw television in 1939 at the RCA Pavilion in the New York World’s Fair. Far-sighted radio industry leaders such as Sarnoff recognized the potential popularity of putting pictures to radio broadcasts. NBC and CBS each received a license to begin commercial broadcasting from their experimental stations in New York.
Early growing pains.

• One of the major difficulties of early television was that it came about in the pre-air conditioning days where lights often raised studio temperatures as high as 100 degrees.

• In fact, the 1940 Republican convention in Philadelphia requested that television be removed from the convention.
More difficulties

- Another difficulty was convincing the public to buy televisions.
- Sets often cost the same as buying a car so the majority were found in bars as a way of attracting customers to watch baseball and football games.
- The medium catered to the wealthy who could afford a set.
World War II and its impact

- The Federal Communication Commission had hardly begun to issue licenses to television stations when it imposed a freeze on television development.
- Research and production were needed for the war effort, creating radar systems and other electronic devices.
* During WWII only six experimental stations broadcast programs occasionally to no more than 10,000 sets in the country.
* However, newspapers and magazines carried stories about television’s promise.
* When the war ended, the pent-up demand for television was ready to explode.
Demand for Commercial Television

- Factory production for television sets went from 6,000 in 1946 to 1,160,000 in 1948
- The number of sets in homes rose to almost 10 million by 1950—with 7 inch or 10 inch screens
The fight for standards

- The battle between RCA and CBS over color standards kept television in a monochrome world.
- The government imposed a freeze on licenses between 1948-1952 to rework the national television spectrum and provide more local television stations. This gave rise to the UHF stations channels 14-69.
Despite the freeze in station licenses, television technology continued to advance and by 1951 coaxial cables and microwave signals sent network programs coast to coast.
VHF and UHF

- Very High Frequency stations (channels 2-13) proved a financial bonanza from the start.
- In fact, British media baron Lord Thomson said, “a license to broadcast is a license to print money”
UHF struggles

• However, the Ultra High Frequency stations struggled financially, first because the early sets lacked UHF dials.
• The 1964 FCC rule requiring the UHF dial failed to require the precisely tuned click dials used for VHF stations.
• Not until the advent of cable did many UHF stations become profitable.
Pre-War Standards

- The FCC decided to let television develop according to pre-war standards, unlike Europe which waited until improved postwar standards could improve the clarity.
- The result was the National Television System Committee (NTSC) imposed the 525 lines refreshed 60 times per second.
- European standards of 625 lines offered better quality.
HDTV and the Wave of the Future

• In the 1990s, a new system, High Definition Television, presented the possibility of cinema like screens.
• HDTV pictures allow for 10xs the color information along with compact-disk sound quality.
• The new system may also replace the current film distribution system.
In the 1920s neighbors gathered around the first radio sets. By the 1940s and 50s, they gathered around neighbors’ television sets.
The genres of television and the power of the new medium.

- Soap Operas
- News and Information
- Sitcoms
- Children’s Programming
- Talk Shows and Infotainment
- The socialization or de-socialization