

“Hong Kong Pop 60+” Exhibition

Audio Tour Script

Free-standing television set **Early 1970s**

This is a free-standing Hitachi TV, dating from the early 1970s. It still used the old-style dial to select TV channels.

In the 1970s, Japanese household appliances dominated the Hong Kong market. Hitachi, National, Toshiba, Sanyo and Mitsubishi were all popular Japanese brands of household appliances in Hong Kong. The decade saw TV become popular in Hong Kong, as people began to “spice up dinner with TV”. To prevent children from over-indulging in TV and abandoning their studies, the TVs were equipped with a magic key, enabling parents to control their children’s TV viewing time.

In 1957, Rediffusion Television commenced operations, which marked the beginning of Hong Kong’s television era. Initially, Rediffusion Television only provided a monochrome channel; subscribers were required to pay an installation fee, rental fee, monthly service fee and government license fee to watch TV programmes. Therefore, in the 1950s and 1960s, watching TV programmes at home was expensive and unaffordable for ordinary people.

In 1967, Television Broadcasts Limited commenced operations, ushering in wireless and colour TV broadcasting for Hong Kong people – which meant that as long as users had colour TV sets, they could watch TV programmes and movies produced in colour, with no need to pay installation fees and monthly service fees. In this way, colour TV entered the Hong Kong market.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Hong Kong’s economy took off and people’s purchasing power increased. Many people were willing to spend money on entertainment and leisure. Even so, with a price of HK\$2,000 to HK\$4,000, a colour TV was still an expensive item for most people. As a result, companies providing TV rental services sprang into existence.

In order to improve the quality of television images, many people also used television signal receivers called “Fish Bone Antennae”. In those years, fish bone antennae covered public rooftops, becoming a very familiar sight for a generation of Hong Kong people.

In 1974, the government decided that television was no longer a luxury, and the license fee for owning a television was abolished. By the end of 1979, about 91% of all households in Hong Kong already owned televisions, and the number of colour

televisions increased to 68% of the total number of televisions. In the following decades, the development of Hong Kong's television industry has surged, becoming integral to the lives of Hong Kong people of all ages. Many well-known classic TV series have not only left precious memories for the people of Hong Kong, but also added colourful entertainment to Chinese people all over the world.