



Switched On

WHILE TELEVISION was invented in the 1920s, it wasn't until the 1940s in the US and Europe that television sets started to become affordable in the home. They comprised large cabinets housing tiny screens, the picture was black and white, channels (not that there *were* many) were changed by clunking a dial round, and fathers spent an inordinate amount of time adjusting the aerial a few millimetres this way or that to strive for a decent picture.

Then... While the first American TV show was broadcast in 1930, TVs did not really come to Hong Kong until the 1950s, and even then few homes had their own sets. Instead, people would go to their local shop and pay five cents to watch TV for hours. It soon became a focal gathering point in the neighbourhood. Hong Kong's first free-to-air television broadcaster, Rediffusion Television (renamed Asia Television) was launched in 1957 and it was joined in 1967 by Television Broadcast Limited (TVB), which soon made itself popular by airing mass appeal shows such as *Enjoy Yourself Tonight*.

Now... After colour in 1953, developments in the wonderful world of TV came thick and fast. Cabinets got smaller and screens larger, channels sprouted and in came remote controls and surround sound. Home entertainment took on a new turn with the advent of the video player, DVDs and Blu-ray. TV sets changed from cumbersome boxes to flat screens – though the size of the screen itself turned monumental – and wall-mounted. The latest must-have is 3D television. Forget about those clunky 3D effects you used to get in 1950s movies such as *It Came from Outer Space*. New technology in 3D has made jaw-dropping wonders like *Avatar* possible, and now that technology is available in the home... reality TV indeed! 📺



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