

Title:

Recording Through Time

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Summary:

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Article Body:

Today, listening to music on compact disks and audio tapes is no novelty. Did we however think how the music got there? Recording music involves the storing of performances for later listening. This is what the musical bands and great singers do. Then, record labels like virgin records and Sony convert them into high quality tapes or cd's for our pleasure in cars or where ever we go.

The first recording principal came about through a Swiss watch maker in 1796 when he proposed the first musical box. Then came the phonograph in 1877 by Edison. He constructed a cylinder with soft material like led or tinfoil. A stylus drew grooves across this material and through the depth of the grooves and calculated air pressure the recording was determined.

In 1896 however, Valdemar Poulsen demonstrated magnetic recording. In this process of recording sound, a tape is kept moving under a recording head. The head transfers electronic signals corresponding to the sound on to the tape. The play back head then re reads these tapes and recognizes the signals hence playing them back.

Magnetic recordings were however not popular and were inefficient in the beginning. People preferred Phonograph to Magnetic records. For example, in 1932 the BBC used a tape recorder. It was a huge machine using steel tapes. The tape

had to be rotated at the speed of 90 meters under the different head, which meant that a huge amount of tape was required. Approximately tapes as long as 3 Kilometers weighing 25 KG were used.

However as the time passed, tape recorders became better. With the help of the Germans, a working tape recorder was finally demonstrated in 1938. After this, multi track recording was introduced. Les Paul, helped in this field. In this form of recording, multiple tracks can be housed on one tape.

All the great things were not happenings only in the magnetic recording field. In 1927 the JAZZ singer astounded people by being one of the first movies to use sound techniques. From now on, the process of recording sound on optical film began in earnest. The Jazz singer had used a process known as the vidaphone.

It was now time for the digital recorders. Introduced in the late 1970's, these soon became popular. Soon, multi track recorders with stationary heads were being manufactured. The rotating head technology was used to record sound on to video tapes then in use. As time moved on, compact disks became more and more popular.

Using complex electronic techniques, these provided higher quality and far superior sound. Using Laser for recording purposes, they were a new revolution displacing tape recorders and gramophones, which had come out in the 1960's.

However, the wheel moved and we had the MP3 player which allowed us to download and listen to hundreds of songs from one simple and tiny portable device. Today, ipods are the order of the day, allowing you to carry and listen to thousands of songs in your pocket where ever you are.

The journey of recording music is fascinating and filled with great happenings. Today recording is used for storing music, books and great speeches. It has become an integral part of our lives. We don't think of it when we flip the cd into our computers or cd players about the long struggle this technology had to make before it was in this state.