



Making Waves: 75 Years of Radio Technology Celebrating the U.S. National Science Foundation

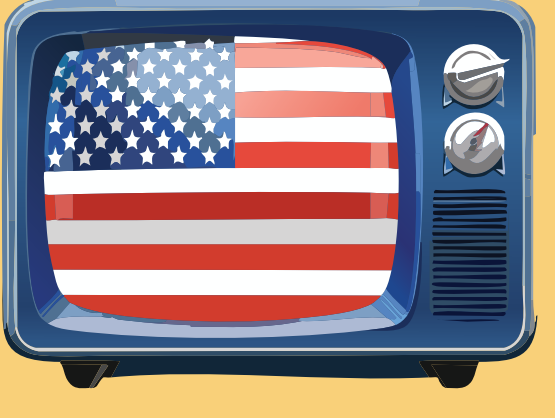
1950s




1950 President Truman signed the law creating the National Science Foundation and its governing board.



1954 Color TVs became publicly available from RCA while NBC began regular color broadcasts.



1958 The U.S. launched Explorer 1, the first satellite to report a major space discovery through radio.



1960s



1961 FM radio's first official stereo broadcast in the U.S., bringing richer sound to listeners nationwide.




1963 The Arecibo Observatory opened in Puerto Rico, advancing radio astronomy and deep-space signal research.




1969 Over 600 million people watched live TV from the Moon, thanks to radio signals transmitted by Apollo 11.




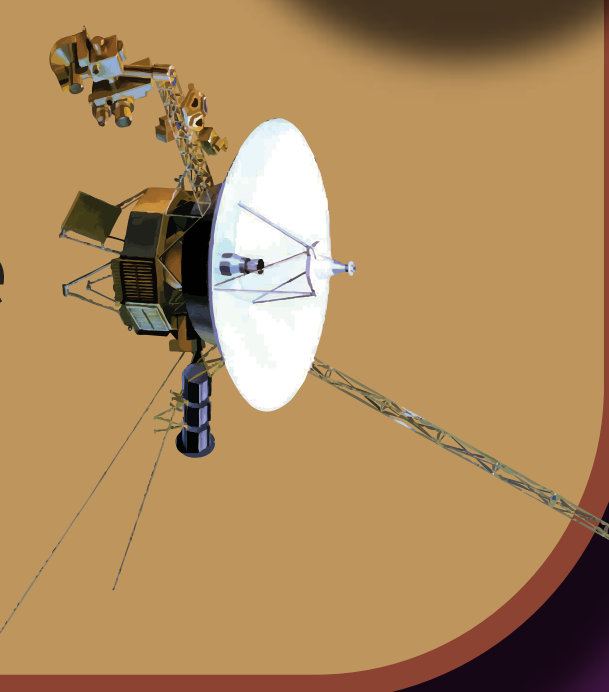
1970s




1973 Motorola made the first handheld mobile phone call, marking a leap in wireless communication.




1977 Launched in 1977, NASA's Voyager probes began sending radio signals across the solar system and beyond.




1980s




1983 Columbia led the move from ground stations to near-global satellite communications in space.



1984 Atari's bold move to wireless game controllers was short-lived, ending after a year due to high costs and interference issues.



1988 Motorola's MicroTAC flipped open a new chapter in mobile phones that could fit in your pocket.



1990s



1992 2G brought a digital leap in phones, replacing analog calls and delivering the world's first text: Merry Christmas.




1994 Named after a Viking king, Bluetooth launched as a short-range radio link for devices to connect wirelessly.



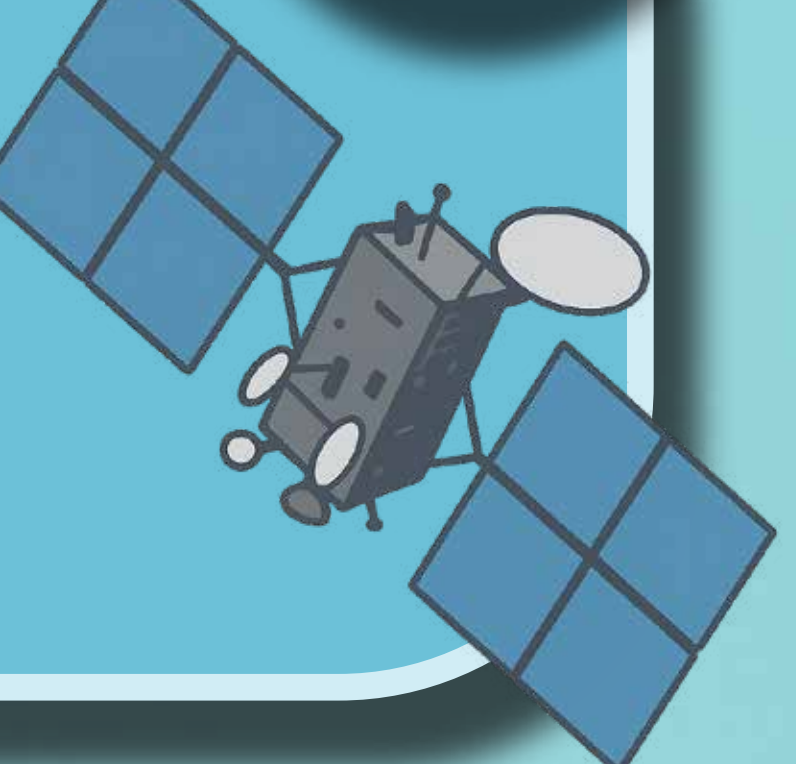
1999 Powered by the faster new 802.11b standard, Wi-Fi left the lab and brought wireless internet home.



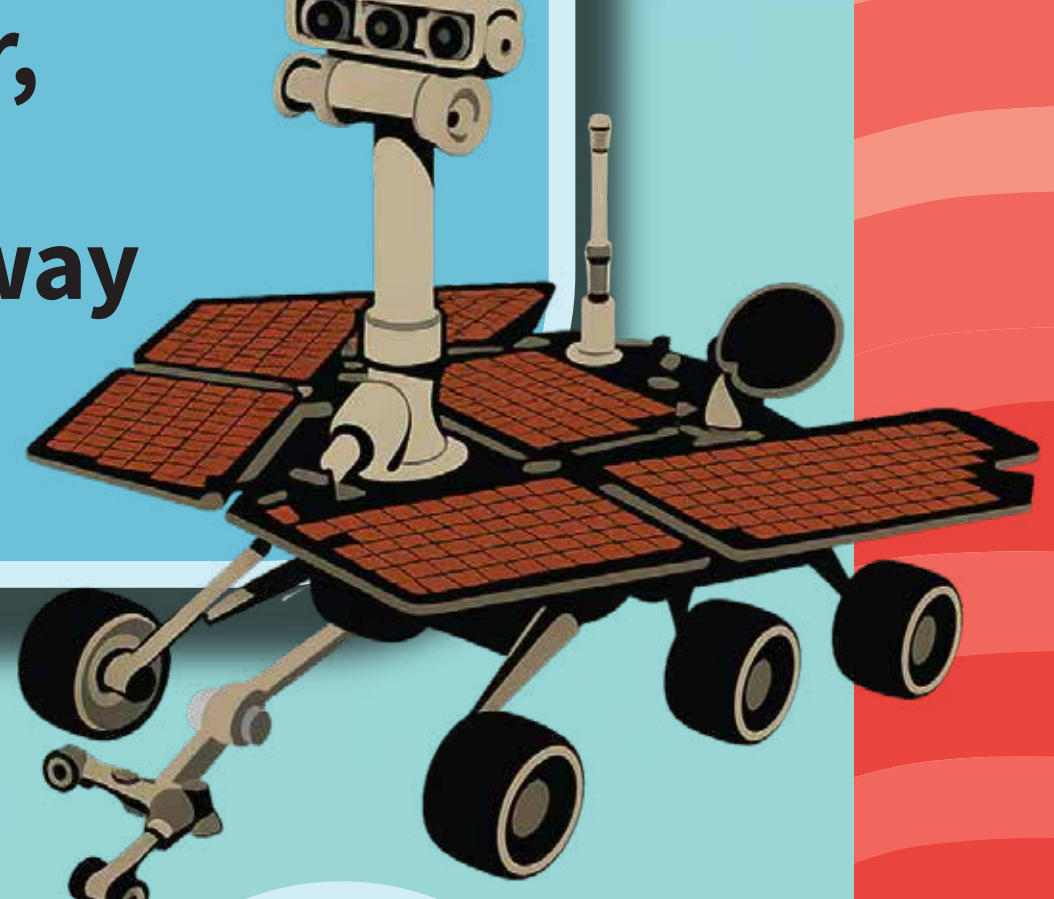
2000s




2001 XM and Sirius brought the first satellite radio to U.S. drivers, with real-time broadcasts from space.




2004 Spirit and Opportunity Mars rovers used relay radios to an orbiter, staying light and pioneering a new way to talk to Earth.




2007 Apple launched the iPhone and made Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, and cellular radios core to the user experience like no phone before it.




2010s




2010 4G LTE improved cellular radio speed, unlocking streaming, sharing, and real-time navigation.




2015 The Internet of Things took off as LoRa radio linked low-power sensors tracking air, water, weather, and movement.




2019 Apple introduced ultra-wideband radio to phones, pinpointing nearby connected objects more precisely than GPS.



2020s



2023 AI showed it could manage the radio spectrum, helping public and private users share the crowded airwaves.



2025 NSF 75 YEARS OF DISCOVERY & INNOVATION

