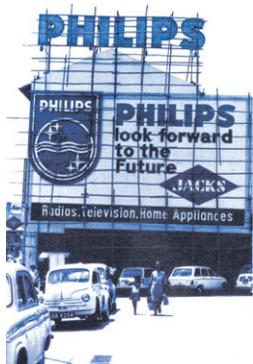


# Philips – from televisions to healthcare

When Dutch multinational Philips set up in Singapore in 1951, the firm had just four staff and focused on importing and selling lighting products, radios and gramophones. The company now employs 900 staff at the Philips Apac Centre in Toa Payoh, focusing on innovation and digital healthcare services. Singapore is now the company's regional headquarters for Asean and Pacific. The Straits Times traces the evolution of one of Singapore's earliest foreign investors.



**1951**

- The first Philips products, like lights, radios and gramophones, arrived in Singapore and were marketed through an agent.



**1970s**

- Construction of Philips factories in Toa Payoh and Jurong.
- The factory at Toa Payoh began making colour televisions, stereos, and cassette recorders among other products.
- The Jurong facility housed the domestic appliance factory and assembled products such as irons, hair dryers, and coffee makers.



**1980s**

- Increasing automation at the Philips factories as computers and robotic arms were introduced.
- Big projects for Philips Singapore included a contract to provide interior and exterior lights for Raffles City Tower, and lighting design for both the Neptune Orient Lines and Monetary Authority of Singapore buildings.
- By 1984, Philips Singapore was among the top five Philips television production centres in the world and the largest colour television manufacturing centre outside Europe.



**2016**

- Philips undergoes a structural change and officially splits into two companies – one dealing in healthcare and technology and the other in lighting.
- The company officially opens the six-storey Philips Apac Centre at the former Philips site in Lorong 1 Toa Payoh. All staff previously housed in the four buildings on the Philips complex are moved into this one facility. The centre focuses mainly on innovation and digital healthcare services. It contains facilities such as a GarmentCare Innovation and Test Lab, where the conceptualising, development and testing of Philips' ironing products take place, as well as a Health Continuum Space which simulates the whole healthcare experience in a mock hospital.
- Mr Fabian Wong becomes Philips' first Singaporean chief executive in 17 years. He is in charge of the health-tech company comprising the healthcare and consumer lifestyle businesses.

**1960s**

- Philips started renting factory space in Singapore to assemble televisions and radios from kits. These included black and white Tinyvision television sets.

**1977**

- The Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore placed an order with Philips to develop and construct a \$18.5 million air traffic control system for the new Changi Airport.
- The system could operate 300 flight plans and monitor 250 aircraft simultaneously.



**1990s**

- Mr Victor Loh becomes Philips' first local chairman and managing director. He joined the company in 1974 when its Singapore operations were generating a modest annual turnover of \$100 million. When he retired from Philips in 1999, turnover had reached \$4 billion. Mr Loh went on to become Singapore's non-resident ambassador to Poland.

- Philips was also involved in designing lighting for the Night Safari.
- Within the decade, many of Philips' key international units moved to Singapore.
- The fourth and last block at Philips' Toa Payoh complex was opened in 1997.

**1996**

- Singapore became Philips' Asia Pacific headquarters.

**2010**

- Philips closes its last Singapore manufacturing facility in Jurong, which used to produce irons.

**2013**

- Philips sells its lifestyle entertainment business, including audio, video, multimedia and accessories, to Funai Electric Co.