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A Chronology of Dolby Laboratories
May 1965-May 1998
A Chronology of Dolby Laboratories

1965
May 1965
Dolby Laboratories founded in London SW6 by Ray M. Dolby, American physicist, with staff of four.

Summer 1965
Development of prototype audio and video noise reduction systems.

November 1965
Dolby A-type noise reduction system for professional music recording demonstrated to Decca Record Company, London.

1966
January 1966
After system tests, Decca orders first nine A301 professional noise reduction units.

April 1966
First production A301 units delivered to Decca at £700 ($2,000) each.

May 1966
First commercial recording session employing Dolby A-type, Vladimir Ashkenazy playing Mozart piano concertos.

November 1966
First LP from master tapes made with Dolby A-type released by Decca (London Records in the U.S.), Solti conducting Mahler's Symphony No. 2 (SET 3256).

Winter 1966-67
Introduction of A-type NR in U.S. with first sales to CBS, RCA, MCA, Vanguard, and several independents. Increased coverage of Dolby NR by audio and music industry press.

April 1967
Liaison with first consumer hi-fi manufacturer, Henry Kloss of KLH in Cambridge, MA, to explore possibility of simplified noise reduction circuitry for home equipment. Negotiations begun on licensing Dolby noise reduction for consumer applications. Distinction made between A-type (professional) and B-type (consumer) systems.

October 1967
Further production facilities added in London SW8.

1967-68
B-type noise reduction developed.

October 1967
New York office established for U.S. distribution of professional Dolby equipment.

1968
November 1968
Move to London premises at 346 Clapham Road, SW9. Dramatic increase in orders for Model A301, due to price reduction from £700 to £560 resulting from improved production facilities.

1969
May 1969
First commercial recording session employing Dolby B-type, KLH Model 40 open-reel tape recorder, released in U.S. under first license agreement (exclusive until 1970).

November 1968
Investigation of high-performance Compact Cassette by combining Dolby B-type noise reduction with quality cassette recorders. Concept demonstrated to high fidelity industry using optimized Harman-Kardon CAD-4 recorder and Dolby M od e l 5 0 5 B-type noise reduction unit developed for demonstration purposes.

1969-69
Increased need for Dolby A-type as recording industry's switch to multitrack formats results in higher noise levels. By year's end, majority of London pop music studios equipped with Dolby noise reduction. By 1972, 42 16-track recorders in London alone equipped on all tracks.

October 1969

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1970-72
Extensive travels by Dolby staff in U.S., Europe, and Japan to introduce high fidelity cassette concept to more consumer equipment and tape manufacturers.

February 1970
First add-on consumer Dolby B-type noise reduction unit, Model 100, introduced by second Dolby licensee, Advent Corporation.

June 1970
Introduction of Dolby Model 320, B-type unit for encoding pre-recorded cassettes. Extensive work begun with Ampex Stereo Tapes in the U.S. and Decca in the U.K. to produce pre-recorded cassettes encoded with B-type noise reduction.

Summer 1970
Arrival in the U.S. of first high fidelity cassette recorders incorporating Dolby B-type (Advent, Fisher, and Harman-Kardon), all manufactured in Japan by third Dolby licensee, Nakamichi.

September 1970
Launch of second-generation Dolby A-type units, Model 360 Series, with identical characteristics to Model A301 but in smaller format better suited to multitrack installations.

May 1971
Agreement negotiated with Signetics for development of first Dolby B-type IC.

June 1971
First experimental FM broadcasts using Dolby Model 320 B-type encoder unit, by WFMT in Chicago.

Summer 1971
Increased licensing activities result in 30 licensees by end of year, including Sony, Matsushita, and JVC.

December 1971
A Clockwork Orange, first film to use Dolby noise reduction on all pre-mixes and masters, released (with conventional optical soundtrack).

February 1972
Introduction of Dolby Model 364 cinema unit for decoding mono optical soundtracks encoded with A-type noise reduction. Distributed outside U.S. by Rank Film Equipment.

March 1972
Full-time FM broadcasts encoded with Dolby B-type noise reduction begun in New York by WQXR.

Summer 1972
Results of using Dolby A-type with experimental 16 mm stereo optical soundtrack format reported by Eastman Kodak.

September 1972
Dolby M Series multitrack A-type units introduced at AES convention in New York.

January 1973
Samples of first B-type IC, Signetics NE545, sent to licensees for evaluation.

June 1973

September 1973
Dolby M model E2 Cinema Equalizer introduced for use in theatres to complement A-type noise reduction techniques for film soundtracks.

October 1973
Philips, inventor of Compact Cassette, signs license agreement.

February 1974
Dolby FM system combining B-type noise reduction and 25 microsecond pre-emphasis demonstrated to Federal Communication Commission (FCC).

May 1974
Callan, first film with optical soundtrack (mono) encoded with A-type noise reduction, shown at Cannes film festival.

June 1974
25 microsecond Dolby FM broadcasts approved for U.S. by FCC.
Beginning with this Scientific and Engineering Award in 1979, Dolby Laboratories’ contributions to film sound have been recognized six times by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

July 1974
First 35 mm stereo optical recorder commissioned by Dolby Laboratories at EMI Elstree Studios, England. Milestone in development of stereo variable area (SVA) soundtrack format now widely associated with Dolby Laboratories’ involvement with film sound.

October 1974
Dolby Models 330 and 334 introduced for pre-recorded cassette duplication and Dolby FM broadcasting.

November 1974
35 mm Dolby Stereo optical soundtrack format introduced at SMPTE convention in Toronto using specially re-mixed section of Stardust. Advantages include performance comparable to older 35 mm magnetic process at considerably less cost to producers, distributors, and exhibitors.

February 1975
Dolby CP100 Cinema Processor introduced for reproduction of Dolby Stereo magnetic and optical soundtracks. First units installed for London premiere of film Tommy in M arch.

August 1975
100 U.S. stations broadcasting in Dolby FM.

September 1975
First feature film for general release with Dolby Stereo optical soundtrack, Lisztomania, completed.

October 1975
Dolby FM broadcasting approved for Canada by Canadian Department of Communications.

January 1976
New headquarters in San Francisco opened; original New York facility closed. London continues with manufacturing and international sales, while San Francisco handles company administration, research and development, new market development, licensing, and North American sales. Dolby applications engineers permanently located in Hollywood and New York.

Spring 1976
Second 35 mm stereo optical recorder commissioned in Hollywood by Dolby Laboratories and RCA.

First 35 mm Dolby Stereo optical film with encoded surround effects, A Star Is Born, released.

October 1976
Introduction of Dolby CP50 Cinema Processor, economical theatre unit for reproduction of 35 mm Dolby Stereo optical releases.

January 1977
Establishment of Dolby Laboratories Licensing Corporation with responsibility for all licensing activities.

May 1977
Opening of Star Wars in 46 U.S. theatres equipped for Dolby Stereo, plus release of Close Encounters of the Third Kind later in year, greatly increase public awareness of Dolby Stereo and trigger further theatre installations.

December 1977
Twelve films released with Dolby Stereo soundtracks in 1977, bringing to 30 number of films with A-type encoded soundtracks.

April 1978
Star Wars (1977) is first of 18 films in a row with Dolby encoded soundtracks to win Academy Award® for Best Achievement in Sound.

December 1978
Superman, 50th film with soundtracks encoded with Dolby A-type NR, opens simultaneously in over 200 theatres; also used in first experiments with 70 mm stereo surround.

April 1979
Dolby Laboratories receives Scientific and Engineering Award for “improved film sound recording and reproduction system” from Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

June 1979
Dolby HX headroom extension for cassette recording introduced to audio industry at Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Chicago.

July 1979
Manufacturers of VHS video recorders licensed to incorporate B-type noise reduction in video cassette machines.

Summer 1979
Introduction of Dolby Cat. No. 55 compact A-type module for general design applications in Dolby noise reduction units.

September 1979
Hair, first Dolby Stereo film dubbed in a language other than English, released in Germany.
First continental Dolby Stereo mix, Don Giovanni, completed in France.

**Autumn 1979**

Number of professional tracks equipped with Dolby A-type noise reduction surpasses 50,000.

First stereo VHS video cassette recorder with Dolby B-type noise reduction introduced by JVC in Japan.

**November 1979**

A pellotype N ow is first Dolby Stereo 70 mm film exhibited commercially with stereo surround (in 15 theatres).

**January 1980**

First cassette deck incorporating Dolby HX introduced by Harman-Kardon at CES in Las Vegas.

**April 1980**

Dolby Cat. No. 155 introduced, first in series of A-type noise reduction modules for inclusion within professional 1" C-format video recorders.

**May 1980**

First installations of Dolby CP200 Cinema Processor, comprehensive theatre unit incorporating for the first time Optical Bass Extension and format programming.

**Autumn 1980**

Dolby C-type noise reduction introduced to licensees; 24 companies announce plans for equipped products. Six models exhibited at Tokyo Audio Fair in October.

**December 1980 to March 1981**

Dolby C-type demonstrated to audio press in U.S., U.K., and Germany. First product with C-type, Sony TC-FX6C cassette deck, reaches Japanese market.

**April 1981**

Dolby Cat. N o. 221, two-channel A-type audio noise reduction module for Sony BVH 1100 and 1000 professional VTRs, introduced at National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) convention.

**Spring 1981**

Cassette duplicators in the U.S., Japan, and Europe supplied with new Dolby Cat. No. 219 C-type encoder modules for evaluation.

**June 1981**

Thirty-four products with Dolby C-type exhibited by licensees at CES in Chicago. First headphone portable cassette player with Dolby B-type introduced by Infinity.

**Autumn 1981**

Number of Dolby C-type processors manufactured surpasses one million, only nine months after introduction of first product with C-type noise reduction.

**October 1981**

Dolby SP Series professional noise reduction unit introduced at Los Angeles SMPTE and New York AES conventions.

**January 1982**

First consumer cassette deck with Dolby HX Pro headroom extension introduced at Winter CES by Harman-Kardon.

**April 1982**

Dolby Cat. N o. 226, two-channel audio noise reduction module for Ampex VPR-2 and M arconi M R-2 professional VTRs, introduced at NAB convention.
Investigation underway of delta modulation techniques for storage and transmission of high-quality audio.

**July 1982**
Introduction of first low-voltage B-type IC by Rohm Corporation facilitates incorporation of Dolby B-type noise reduction in headphone portable cassette players.

First high-speed cassette duplication equipment incorporating Dolby H X Pro announced by Electrosound.

Betacam ENG/EFP equipment with Dolby C-type noise reduction on VTR soundtracks introduced by Sony.

**November 1982**
Dolby demonstration film, *listen . . .*, introduced at SMPTE convention.

**December 1982**
First licensed decoder with Dolby Surround circuitry introduced by Surround Sound Inc.

**March 1983**
Paper detailing investigation into delta modulation for audio storage and transmission presented at AES convention in Eindhoven.

**April 1983**
Dolby Cat. No. 234, two-channel noise reduction module for Sony BV 2000 professional VTR, introduced at NAB convention.

San Francisco manufacturing facility opened.

**May 1983**
Introduction of Dolby Model 372, portable two-channel professional A-type noise reduction unit.

Ray Dolby becomes chairman of Dolby Laboratories, appointing Bill Jasper company president.

**June 1983**
Capitol Records releases first prerecorded cassettes produced with Dolby H X Pro.

**February 1984**
Production of Dolby Cat. No. 248, Dolby H X Pro module for Otari MTR-10/12 series cassette mastering recorder.

**March 1984**
Dolby Soundlink ADM, later known as Dolby AC-1, adopted by General Instrument for direct broadcast satellite and cable television applications.

First headphone portable cassette units with Dolby C-type introduced, Sony WM-D2C and WM-D6C.

**April 1984**
Dolby Model 380, two-channel noise reduction unit for Ampex VPR-3/RCA TH-900 professional VTRs, and Cat. No. 235 interface module for Ampex VPR-80/RCA TH-400, introduced at NAB.

**May 1984**
Release of 500th Dolby Stereo film, *The Karate Kid*.

*Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* released with more than 1,500 Dolby Stereo prints in U.S. alone.

**September 1984**
Australian Broadcasting Corporation adopts Dolby AC-1 for direct broadcast satellite use beginning in 1985.

**January 1985**
Second MTV channel, VH-1, begins operation in U.S. using Dolby AC-1 for satellite distribution.

**February 1985**
Dolby CP55 35 mm cinema processor with automated features introduced at ShoWest in Las Vegas.

**March 1985**
First AC-1 encoding unit, Dolby DP80, manufactured in San Francisco.

**Summer 1985**
First video disc and cassette software issued with Dolby Surround trademark.

**October 1985**
Dolby-AC-1 incorporated into AUSSAT 1, Australia’s direct broadcast satellite.

Cost-effective Dolby XP Series multitrack A-type noise reduction unit introduced at AES in New York.

**January 1986**
San Francisco finance and administration, engineering, licensing and manufacturing consolidated in refurbished warehouse at 100 Potrero Avenue, San Francisco.

Twelve products with Dolby Surround decoding introduced at CES in Las Vegas.

**March 1986**
Dolby SR (spectral recording) introduced at AES in Montreux. Dolby Cat. Nos. 280 (single-track) and 431 (multitrack) modules shown.
Spring 1986
Dolby SR introduced in U.S., U.K., Germany and Japan.

July 1986
Dolby London adds new factory on Union Road, Clapham.

August 1986
Number of professional tracks equipped with Dolby A-type surpasses 100,000.

September 1986
Studer introduces A-820 multitrack audio tape recorder with SR or A-type built-in.

Autumn 1986
First delivery of Dolby Cat. No. 280 SR modules.

Dolby Stereo SR 35 mm optical format demonstrated to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

October 1986
Agreements completed with first three consumer licensees in People’s Republic of China.

November 1986
Release of 1000th Dolby Stereo film, Heartbreak Ridge

January 1987
First Dolby Pro Logic directional enhancement surround decoder shown at CES.

CBS broadcasts Super Bowl XXI in Dolby Surround.

March 1987
Sony BVH-3000 C-format VTR with switchable SR/ A-type OEM module introduced at NAB.

Spring 1987
Production quantities of Cat. No. 431 SR modules manufactured.

Joint effort with Graham Patten Systems to supply Australian independent TV stations with video/ audio distribution system incorporating DP85s.

May 1987

Concord Records releases the first commercial recording prepared with Dolby SR, the 1987 Dave Brubeck Quartet’s Blue Rondo.

July 1987
First Dolby Stereo SR films released, Innerspace and Robocop.

March 1988
Opening of San Francisco facility’s Presentation Studio; includes theatre for film and concert presentation, projection room, and audio control/ recording room.

Otari introduces MTR 100A multitrack recorder with switchable SR/ A-type OEM module at AES in Paris.

April 1988
Dolby Laboratories receives Academy Award for Technical Achievement for Dolby Cat. No. 43 playback-only background noise suppressor.

October 1988
Introduction of Dolby Model 363, low-cost 1U two-channel unit incorporating Cat. No. 300 switchable SR/ A-type modules.

November 1988
Studer introduces revised A-820 multitrack audio recorder using Dolby Cat. No. 300 modules.

December 1988
Sanyo releases LA2770, first Dolby Pro Logic IC.

March 1989
Ray Dolby and Ioan Allen awarded Oscars® for “continuing contributions to motion picture sound through the research and development programs of Dolby Laboratories” by Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

June 1989
Ray Dolby wins Emmy for “outstanding achievement in engineering development for audio noise reduction systems for professional television tape recorders” by National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

June 1989
Dolby Model 400, software controlled SR/ A-type unit, introduced at APRS, London.

First consumer product to incorporate Dolby Time Link digital delay introduced.

September 1989
Ray Dolby wins Emmy for “outstanding achievement in engineering development for audio noise reduction systems for professional television tape recorders” by National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

First Dolby Surround music-only recording, The Home Video Album, released on CD and audio cassette by RCA Victor.
October 1989
Dolby S-type, new consumer noise reduction system derived from Dolby SR, demonstrated to Far Eastern licensees and press in Tokyo.

Dolby Model 500 Series AC-2 digital codecs, and software-controlled Dolby MT Series multitrack SR/A-type unit, introduced at AES in New York.

November 1989
Dolby S-type demonstrated to European licensees and press in London.

January 1990
Dolby S-type demonstrated to U.S. press at CES in Las Vegas. Five licensees exhibit prototype consumer products incorporating new system.

April 1990
Dolby 3 Stereo for stereo television sets introduced.

June 1990
Release of 100th Dolby Stereo SR film, RoboCop 2.

August 1990
Demonstration in San Francisco of advanced NTSC television system combining Dolby AC-2 stereo digital audio and Faroudja Research Enterprises’ SuperNTSC video.

Sanyo releases LV1000, first IC incorporating Dolby Time Link digital delay.

September 1990
Dolby Model 422 B/C/S encoder introduced at AES.

November 1990
First 1" 24-track recorders with Dolby S-type, Tascam M SR-24S and Fostex G24S, introduced.

December 1990
First production cassette decks with Dolby S-type shipped, Harman-Kardon TD 4600 and TD 4800.


February 1991
Development of Dolby Digital, with compatible SR • D 35 mm prints providing both digital and analog optical soundtracks, announced at ShoWest in Las Vegas. New format is first application of Dolby AC-3 multichannel digital audio coding.

April 1991

Skywalker Sound begins using Dolby AC-2 digital coding to transmit high-quality audio over T1 link between facilities in Marin County and Los Angeles.

August 1991
Introduction of Dolby CP65 Cinema Processor for playback of all 35 mm analog optical formats and interface with new Dolby Digital format.

September 1991
Dolby DP5500 Series DSTL™ system, world’s first all-digital studio-to-transmitter link, demonstrated at NAB Radio ‘91 in San Francisco.

First STACE Award, in memory of Dolby Laboratories’ long-time National Sales Administrator Stacey Rehm, presented by Theater Equipment Association to Sam Feldman of National Amusements, honoring “commitment to advancement of technology in film exhibition.”

October 1991
Dolby 430 Series background noise suppressor, based on modified version of Dolby SR, introduced.

December 1991
TV2 Denmark is first European broadcaster to produce Dolby Surround programming regularly, beginning with Victor Borge New Year’s Eve concert.

January 1992
Lower-cost A-type/SR multitrack unit, Dolby SRP Series, announced.

April 1992
Dolby DP90, all-new AC-1 encoder, introduced at NAB convention in Las Vegas.

May 1992
First Dolby DSTL system installed at WWXK FM, Providence, RI.
June 1992

Dolby Model 740 Spectral Processor, new type of dynamic equalizer, introduced at APRS in London.

Granada Television becomes first UK broadcaster to produce original Dolby Surround programming.

July 1992
BMG Classics announces all new pre-recorded audio cassettes to utilize Dolby S-type beginning in October.

NBC uses Model 430 background noise suppressor for location broadcasts of Summer Olympic Games in Barcelona.

August 1992
Zoran Corp. to develop Dolby AC-3 ICs for implementing consumer format based on Dolby Digital film format.

January 1993
Dolby European headquarters relocated from London to new facility in Wootton Bassett, Wiltshire.

Stalingrad, first non-U.S. Dolby Digital production, opens in ten theatres equipped for Dolby Digital playback in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland.

February 1993
WEA announces all new prerecorded audio cassettes to utilize Dolby S-type beginning in summer.

March 1993
World's first Dolby Surround video game, King Arthur’s World, released in Europe.

April 1993
HRH The Princess Royal (Princess Anne) officially opens Dolby Laboratories’ new European headquarters at Wootton Bassett.

May 1993
First French Dolby Digital productions, Ma Saison Préférée and Toxic Affair, screened at Cannes Festival.

August 1993
First 35 mm soundhead capable of reading both analog and Dolby Digital optical tracks introduced by Cinemeccanica.

September 1993

Autumn 1993
Premier Television in Germany is first European satellite broadcaster to transmit live sports programs in Dolby Surround.

October 1993
Digital HDTV Grand Alliance selects Dolby AC-3 to provide digital surround sound for U.S. HDTV system.

First rock recording mixed in Dolby Surround, “Pictures at an Exhibition,” released on Emerson, Lake & Palmer CD The Return of the Manticore.

November 1993
First ISDN transmission utilizing Dolby AC-2 coding (Burbank, CA to London).

January 1994
First shipments of DA20 adapter and Cat. No. 700 soundhead, streamlined second-generation hardware for playback of Dolby Digital films.

Dolby DSTL™ digital studio-transmitter link with twice the power of the original model introduced.

March 1994
Dolby Fax™ for linking worldwide facilities with digital audio begins U.S. sales.

DP521 and DP522 AC-3 digital encoders and decoders introduced.

May 1994
First Direct Broadcast Satellite service with Dolby AC-3 digital audio, DMX for Business, begins.

France Supervision launches Dolby Surround programming with broadcast of Roland Garros tennis championship.

August 1994
Fox Network begins broadcasting entire NFL season in Dolby Surround.

Hollywood Film Division relocates to expanded facilities at 3375 Barham Boulevard, Los Angeles.

October 1994
Model DP523, two-channel digital audio encoder supporting AC-2 and AC-3 at as many as four data rates, introduced.
November 1994
Interview with the Vampire is 100th Dolby Digital release. More than 120 foreign language versions of Dolby Digital titles released to date.

Screening room completed at European headquarters in Wootton Bassett.

January 1995
First Dolby Digital consumer products and laser discs utilizing Dolby AC-3 announced at CES.

Toshiba and Time Warner demonstrate prototype DVD with Dolby Digital AC-3 audio.

February 1995

BBC broadcasts first radio production in Dolby Surround (Bomber, BBC Radio 4).

March 1995
West Coast Live becomes first live U.S. radio show regularly broadcast in Dolby Surround.

New U.S. manufacturing facility opens in Brisbane, CA, near San Francisco.

Speed (1994) first film with Dolby Digital soundtrack and 18th consecutive film in a Dolby format to win Academy Award for Best Achievement in Sound.

Spring 1995
20th Century Fox announces all future releases to be in Dolby Digital.

DP524 two-channel digital decoder supporting both AC-2 and AC-3 introduced; offers bit rates from 56 to 384 kb/s.

June 1995

July 1995
Paramount chooses Dolby Digital as primary release format.

September 1995
Warner Bros. announces that all future titles will be in Dolby Digital.

October 1995
Record 3,500 analog and 2,100 digital cinema processors sold in fiscal 1995.

CP500 digital cinema processor introduced at ShowEast in Atlantic City, combining playback electronics for both analog and digital Dolby encoded soundtracks.

November 1995
FCC’s ATSAC recommends adoption of ATSC digital TV system with Dolby AC-3 audio as U.S. digital TV standard.

Introduction of licensing program for Dolby Surround Multimedia.

First MGM/UA Dolby Digital release, Goldeneye.

December 1995
Dolby Digital prints struck worldwide in 1995 estimated at 400,000; 40,000 in circulation globally at any given time.

Dolby Digital AC-3 audio mandatory for NTSC countries, optional elsewhere, in final DVD specifications.

January 1996
Lower-cost CP45 analog cinema processor introduced at 2nd annual CineAsia convention in Singapore.

21 consumer products with Dolby Digital decoding shown at CES; Las Vegas; 11 manufacturers display DVD-Video products.

February 1996
Theatres worldwide equipped for Dolby Digital playback top 4,000; released and announced Dolby Digital film titles surpass 400.

March 1996
Dolby Laboratories receives Scientific and Technical Award from Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for Dolby Digital film sound system.

April 1996
Dolby and Microsoft sign letter of intent to jointly develop PC surround sound technologies and specifications supporting use of Dolby Digital AC-3 and Dolby Surround Pro Logic.

Dolby and Digidesign® announce joint effort to ensure interface between upcoming Dolby Drive and ProTools® and AudioVision workstations; Dolby also to develop Dolby Surround encoder/decoder Plug-in.

May 1996
Dolby Drive, all-digital, disk-based replacement for classic 35 mm mag film soundtrack dubber, previewed at AES Convention, Copenhagen.
New DP503 encoder featuring Dolby AC-2, Dolby AC-3 and MPEG-1 LII coding also previewed at AES convention.

June 1996
First cinema multiplex in Latin America with Dolby Digital on all screens, Cinemex Loreto, opens in Mexico City.

NBC broadcasts opening and closing ceremonies of 1996 Olympic Games in Dolby Surround.

September 1996
100th laser disc with 5.1-channel Dolby Digital audio, Twister, released.

Fall TV season opens in U.S. with 13 new shows produced in Dolby Surround, bringing current total to more than 50.

First European NTSC laser disc in Dolby Digital, French-language version of Judge Dredd, released.

October 1996
Record 3,500 Dolby Digital processors sold in fiscal 1996 ending September 30.

500th Dolby Digital theatrical film, Shine, screened at ShowEast, Atlantic City.

November 1996
Dolby Surround Tools TDM Plug-Ins for Digidesign Pro Tools workstations demonstrated at AES Convention, Los Angeles.

Dolby Net, low bit-rate version of Dolby Digital, introduced for low-bandwidth applications such as real-time streaming Internet audio.

First DVD-Video players delivered to retailers in Japan.

December 1996

January 1997
First automobile surround-sound system with Dolby Pro Logic introduced by Volvo at Detroit Motor Show.

Virtual Dolby Surround and Virtual Dolby Digital, enabling surround-sound effect from PCs with just two speakers, introduced at CES, Las Vegas.

February 1997
First combination laser disc/ DVD-Video players delivered to U.S. retailers.

March 1997
The English Patient (1996), released exclusively in Dolby Digital, wins Academy Award for Best Achievement in Sound.

First PAL DVD-Video with 5.1-channel Dolby Digital soundtrack, German-language version of 12 Monkeys, released in Europe.

First software Dolby Digital decoder using MMX™ technology announced by Intel.

First DVD-only video players delivered to U.S. retailers.

April 1997
Dolby DP562 reference decoder with 5.1-channel Dolby Digital and digitally implemented 4-channel Pro Logic decoding introduced at NAB Convention, Las Vegas.

First DVD-Video disc titles go on sale in seven U.S. markets.

May 1997
Ray Dolby named by President Clinton as recipient of National Medal of Technology.

Dolby Digital is only digital format played at the Cannes Film Festival, including opening and closing films, The Fifth Element and Absolute Power.

June 1997
Dolby DP561B Dolby Digital encoder introduced featuring lower cost and compliance with European CE specifications for RF emissions and susceptibility.

July 1997
Dolby DP561B Dolby Digital encoder introduced featuring lower cost and compliance with European CE specifications for RF emissions and susceptibility.


British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) presents Special Technical Award to Dolby Laboratories “for outstanding achievement in film sound.”

August 1997
Ray Dolby named recipient of American Electronics Association’s Medal of Achievement.
September 1997
Dolby DP567 two-channel Dolby Digital encoder introduced at AES Convention, New York.

November 1997
Canada and South Korea adopt ATSC digital broadcast TV system with Dolby Digital audio.

December 1997
Dolby Digital classified as mandatory audio coding for PAL/SECAM DVD-Video discs, same as NTSC discs, enabling worldwide release of discs with only Dolby Digital soundtracks.

January 1998
Number of Dolby cinema sound processors sold surpasses 50,000 worldwide.

February 1998
Dolby engineers Kirk Handley, Ray Meluch, Scott Robinson, Wilson Allen and John Neary presented with Scientific and Technical Awards by Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences for design, development and implementation of Dolby CP500 Digital Cinema Processor.

Ioan Allen receives B.J. Sturdivant Award given annually at ShoWest film exhibitors’ convention to “an individual who throughout their career has demonstrated a dedication to the exhibition industry and its causes.”

March 1998
More theatres worldwide (13,037) equipped for Dolby Digital than any other digital film sound format.

May 1998
DIRECTV announces first broadcasts with Dolby Digital 5.1-channel audio, DDS transmissions of Dolby Digital feature films commencing July 1.

Number of theatres equipped for Dolby Digital tops 14,000 worldwide.

1,380 feature films with Dolby Digital soundtracks, plus 1,700 foreign-language versions, released or announced to date.