Company history and milestones

The Seiko Epson Corporation was established in 1942 as Daiwa Kogyo Ltd., a manufacturer of watch parts, in Suwa, Nagano where it still has its headquarters. In 1943, Daini Seikosha Co. Ltd. (currently Seiko Instruments) established a factory in Suwa to manufacture Seiko watches with Daiwa Kogyo Ltd. In 1959, Daiwa Kogyo merged with Daini Seikosha’s Suwa plant to form Suwa Seikosha Co. Ltd., whose focus was on manufacturing watches. It established a subsidiary company, Shinshu Seiki Co. Ltd. in 1961 to supply precision parts for Seiko watches.

Seiko was selected as official time keeper for the Tokyo Olympic Games in 1964 for which it produced a printing timer to be used for the events. Shinshu Seiki Co. Ltd. developed an electronic printer as part of the timer and went on from there to create the world’s first digital printer, the EP-101, which was launched in September 1968. The Epson brand was established in June 1975, after the next generation of the EP-101 was developed and released to the public. The name “Epson” expressed the wish that the Company would continue to produce many successful “sons” of the EP-101. In July 1982, Shinshu Seiki Co. Ltd. officially became the Epson Corporation and in November 1985 it merged with the Suwa Seikosha Co. Ltd. to form the Seiko Epson Corporation.

Today, the Seiko Epson Corporation has more than 68,000 employees in 96 group companies around the world.

Below are the key milestones in the history of the corporation:

1942 – Daiwa Kogyo Ltd. (the predecessor of Seiko Epson Corporation) is established in Suwa, Nagano, Japan. The company later helped to clean the heavily polluted Lake Suwa and made a commitment to ensuring that it remained unpolluted in the future.

1959 – Daiwa Kogyo Ltd. and the Suwa Plant of Daini Seikosha Co. Ltd. (now Seiko Instruments, Inc.) merge under the name of Suwa Seikosha Co. Ltd.

1961 – Shinshu Seiki Co. Ltd. (name changed to Epson Corporation in 1982), a subsidiary of Suwa Seikosha Co. Ltd., is established.

1964 – Seiko is selected as the official timekeeper for the Olympic Games in Tokyo.

The Crystal Chronometer QC – 951, the world’s first portable, high accuracy, battery operated quartz timer, and the printing timer both play important roles in the event.

1968 – The EP-101, the world’s smallest and first digital printer, is launched.

1969 – The world’s first analog quartz watch, the Seiko Quartz Astron 35SQ, goes on sale.
1975 – The Epson brand is established following the creation of Epson America Inc., the first overseas sales subsidiary.

1984 – SQ-2000, the first commercial Epson inkjet printer goes on sale worldwide.

1985 – Suwa Seikosha Co. Ltd. and Epson Corporation merge to establish Seiko Epson Corporation.

1988 – 1st Environmental Benchmark Year: Begins CFC free initiatives and establishes organization to phase out CFCs.

1989 – VPJ-700, Epson’s first compact, full-colour liquid crystal video projector is launched.

1990 – Epson Europe B.V., Epson’s European regional headquarters for EMEA, is established in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

1992 – Complete elimination of specific CFCs from production processes is achieved at all factories and affiliates in Japan. Epson receives the 1992 Stratospheric Ozone Protection Award from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

1993 – Complete elimination of specific CFCs from all production processes, worldwide, is achieved.

1994 – The Epson Stylus Color, the world’s first 720 dpi color inkjet printer, is launched.


1997 – Epson receives EPA Award: Best-of-the Best Stratospheric Ozone Protection Award.

1998 – Seiko is chosen as the official timekeeper for the Olympic Winter Games in Nagano.

1998 – 2nd Environmental Benchmark Year: Establishes General Environmental Policy and Epson Recycling Centre.

1999 – Epson becomes one of the first companies to voluntarily collect and recycle used information equipment (printers, scanners, projectors, POS systems etc) from corporate customers.

1999 – Epson releases its first sustainability report.

2000 – Epson ecology label is launched.

2001 – ISO 14001 Certification is obtained for Environmental Management Systems at all the Company’s business sites around the world.

2002 – Epson receives the Corporate Innovation Recognition Award from the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Inc. (IEEE).

2002 – Partial elimination of lead in solders, electrode parts and materials for metal parts, is achieved as a result of the work of its Lead Free Promotion Committee.

2003 – Epson is listed on the first section of the Tokyo Stock Exchange.

2004 – Zero emissions (Level 1 - the 100% recycling of all waste generated from business activities) achieved at all Epson companies in Japan and Epson manufacturing companies outside Japan.

2004 – Epson joins the UN Global Compact which outlines ten universal principles, focused on respect for human rights, labour, the environment and prevention of corruption, which members must incorporate into their business practices.
2004 – Seiko Quartz Astron 35SQ, the world’s first quartz watch receives the IEEE milestone award.

2007 – Epson works with the World Wildlife Fund to create its paper procurement policy that takes into consideration the social, economic, and environmental sustainability of the forests where the wood for its paper production is sourced.

2008 – 3rd Environmental Benchmark Year: Seiko Epson Corporation launches its environmental targets and its 2050 Long-Term Environmental Strategy.

2009 – In response to shifting global trends, Epson unveiled SE15, a long-range vision that crystallizes the company’s vision for the year 2015. At the same time, the company also established the SE15 Mid-Range Business Plan (FY2009 – FY2011), a detailed three-year action plan to put it on track to achieving the goals of SE15.

2009 – Epson introduced its own eco labels to communicate the environmental features of its products and services to customers in a simple and straightforward way.

2010 – Epson established its SE15 Mid-Term Environmental Policy.

2010 – Epson revised the SEC Green Purchasing Standard for Production Materials to encompass latest legislative and regulatory requirements. Epson has also been driving product substance assurance efforts to provide customers peace of mind when using its products.

2010 – Epson launches the L100 and L200 high-capacity, continuous ink tank system inkjet printers.

2010 – Epson becomes an official partner of Manchester United Football Club.

2011 – Epson introduces its first-generation of transparent multi-media, mobile viewers.


2012 – Epson launches Workforce Pro Series inkjet printers.

2012 – Epson launches the Moverio BT-100 the company’s first see-through mobile viewer.

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