



The Telecommunications History Group, Inc.

Helping our communities understand how telecommunications changes our lives and our world

The Museum of Communications (Seattle)

The Seattle Museum contains exhibits from 1876, starting with a model of Alexander Graham Bell's first successful creation of a telephone, to the modern cell phone that we all take for granted today. Automated displays and special exhibits permit your hands-on participation. Our museum exhibits are unique and virtually all the equipment is currently operational. The Museum of Communications is visited by people from all over the world and may well be the best museum of its type in the world.

Telecommunications Timeline



To see detail, go to www.telcomhistory.org/vm/scienceTimeline.shtml

The timeline shows a history of the telephone and its related machinery--for instance, did you know the technology used to develop the telephone also spurred the development of computers and satellites? Examples of the working equipment on the museum are:

Telephone Sets--Telephone sets are the devices that subscribers call telephones. The museum has many representative models from a copy of Alexander Graham Bell's first telephone to videophones.



The museum has an exact replica of the telephone that spoke the words, "Mr. Watson, come here! I need you!" by Alexander Graham Bell, March 10, 1876. These are the first words that were ever spoken by telephone.



British Post Office Call Box Model K-6, first introduced in England in 1936

Your support enables our dedicated volunteers to continue to keep the vintage telephone equipment in The Museum of Communications in good working order and up-to-date.

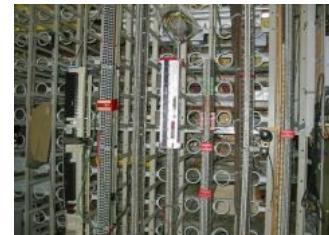
Central Office Equipment--In almost every neighborhood there is a windowless building that houses the switching system that connects your telephone to your neighbor's telephone or routes your call to another central office for long distance calls. This building is called the central office. The switching equipment is located on large frames in the central office. The museum has six operational switching systems of different vintages on display.



Master Test Frame for
#5 Crossbar Switch



Community Dial Office

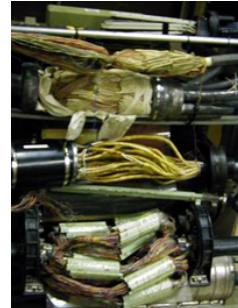


Main Distribution Frame

Outside Plant Equipment--The outside plant is the telephone equipment that is not inside the central office and those tools necessary to support it. This includes building terminals, telephone poles, splices and lineman's tools all of which are displayed in the museum.



Open wire lead is composed of telephone poles, crossarms, insulators and wire which are visible in this photograph.



Splices shown are a fiber optic splice, early paper and paper pulp splice, and cable splices.

The large cable at the bottom of this display was the largest cable used in the Bell System. It has 4200 pairs of wires inside—that's 8400 individual copper wires.

Western Electric displays--Western Electric was the manufacturing and supply unit of the Bell Telephone System. For one hundred years—from 1882 to the breakup of the Bell System in 1984—Western Electric manufactured millions of telephones, wire and cable and much more. The Seattle Museum of Communications not only has many artifacts showing the wide range of their products; we also have the documentation in many books that contain details and requirements for equipment installation and “in shop” repair functions.

Visit The Museum of Communications in the Georgetown neighborhood of Seattle at 7000 East Marginal Way South, Seattle, WA 98108. Hours are: Tuesdays from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and by appointment. Call 206-767-3012. Guided tours are provided by the volunteers or visit our Seattle Museum at www.telcomhistory.org/vm/exhibitsSeattle.shtml. There is no charge for admission to the museum, but donations are gratefully accepted. All of THG's facilities are handicapped accessible.