

The history of technology at the Olympic Games

776BC to 349AD

Architectural findings suggest that ancient Olympic Games used mechanical starting gates.



1896

After a 1,500-year hiatus initially imposed by Roman conquerors, the first modern Olympic Games were held in Athens, Greece, but little had changed in the techniques used to determine competition results.

1924

Technology begins to win a place at the Olympic Games with the event's first live radio broadcast.

1932

The stop-watch and photo finish were first used at the Olympic Games in Los Angeles, California.



1936

The Berlin Games were the first to be televised, with events broadcast throughout the Olympic village, as well as German public halls and theatres. Results were transmitted internationally via telex. Newsreel film was rushed abroad via zeppelins.

1956

Although live television coverage of the Olympic Games was available internationally for the first time, Europe and the US boycotted the sale of television rights to the Olympic Games. As a result, only six pre-recorded, half-hour programmes were accessible on a few independent channels in the U.S.

1960

Computer punch cards were used for tallying results at the Olympic Winter Games in Squaw Valley, California. The Olympic Games held later that year in Rome were the first to be fully televised.

1964

Results were stored on computers for the first time, marking the permanent application of computer technology to the Olympic Games.

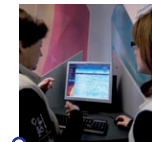


1996

In conjunction with the Olympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia, the first-ever Olympic Games website received 189 million hits.

1998

Growing consumer interest in the Internet drives the number of web hits to 634 million virtual visitors to the Olympic Winter Games in Nagano, Japan.



2000

With 10,651 athletes participating in 300 events, information technology was key to the running of the Olympic Games and web hits during the Olympic Games in Sydney escalated to 11.3 billion.



2002

While athletes from 77 nations competed in front of audiences of around 2.1 billion, a team from SchlumbergerSema, now Atos Origin, were hailed by Dr. Jacques Rogge, President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), as the 'unsung heroes behind the scenes'.

2004

Information technology is an intrinsic part of every Olympic Games and was crucial for the success of the Olympic Games in Athens, Greece – from secure accreditation to accurate split-second scoring and relaying the results in real-time across the globe.

2006

The Torino 2006 Olympic Winter Games are marked with the introduction of web-based applications to manage the 90,000 accreditations and train 20,000 volunteers.



2008

For the first time in Beijing, the Commentator Information System will be provided to media back in their home countries, enabling them to have remote access to the real-time competition data and statistics. INFO2008 will be provided over a wireless network to the media in the venues and will also incorporate leading search technologies.