

Henry Kloss, 72

By Joseph Palenchar
TWICE

Cambridge, Mass. — Henry Kloss, who marketed the first acoustic-suspension speaker and first large-screen projection television, died last Thursday of natural causes.

Kloss, 72, is credited with creating the consumer projection-TV business. He was also the founder of Advent and co-founder of Acoustic Research, KLH, Kloss Video, and Cambridge Sound Works. The brands of all the companies, except for Kloss Video, are still in use today.

In the early 1950s, he co-founded his first company, Acoustic Research, where he marketed the industry's first acoustic suspension speaker, the AR-1. It was the first speaker small enough to sit on a bookshelf yet capable of reproducing deep bass. While at AR, he also marketed what long-time business partner Tom DeVesto called the first affordable belt-drive turntable at \$99.

Kloss was the 'K' of KLH Research and Development, a speaker company he co-founded in 1957. There, he designed one of the first FM radios, the Model 8, said DeVesto. The compact mono FM table radio was critically acclaimed for its high fidelity and selectivity. It would serve as the basis for a pair of table radios that Kloss designed for Tivoli Audio, a partnership formed between Kloss and DeVesto in 2000.

While at Advent, Kloss also marketed the first Dolby B noise-reduction add-on for consumer reel-to-reel tape recorders and sold the first reel-to-reel recorder with built-in Dolby B noise reduction, said DeVesto.

A decade later in 1967, Kloss founded Advent, which in the early 1970s manufactured one of the most popular speakers in the U.S. In 1973, Advent became the first manufacturer of consumer projection television systems. While at Advent, Kloss began selling the first or second consumer cassette deck with Dolby B, either launching simultaneously with, or soon after, a model marketed by Dr. Sidney Harman, said DeVesto. Kloss, however, marketed the first Dolby B cassette deck with biasing for chromium dioxide tape, DeVesto said.

In 1977, Kloss co-founded Kloss Video Corp., where he invented the Novatron projection tube, which used mirror optics to improve the efficiency and performance of projection televisions.

Kloss launched his fourth venture; Cambridge Sound Works, in 1988 with DeVesto. The company, now a subsidiary of Creative Technology, manufactures more than 40 different models of home stereo, home theater and computer speakers.

In 2000, Kloss emerged from retirement to develop table radios for Tivoli Audio. Three more radios developed by Kloss will be introduced in the spring, DeVesto said.

In October 1997, Kloss received an Emmy Award from The National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences for 'Outstanding Achievement in Technological Advancement - Pioneering Development of 3-CRT Video Projectors. The award acknowledged his role in developing big-screen television. His launching of Cambridge SoundWorks in 1988 marked his return to audio after more than a decade of pioneering the now-established field of large-screen projection video.