

# The changing fortunes of KCTS

**1986**

Surplus  
**\$1,839,070**

KCTS moves off the University of Washington campus to 401 Mercer Ave. in Seattle Center.

Number of members:  
**102,245**

## KCTS' history from 1954-85

Dec. 7, 1954	1967	1972	1975
KCTS goes on the air, broadcasting from the University of Washington.	Congress passes the Public Broadcasting Act and KCTS becomes a member of the Public Broadcasting Service.	KCTS holds its first pledge drive with 10 phones. In its first year of on-air pledge drives, the station attracts 15,000 members.	Burnill Clark joins KCTS as assistant general manager and director of programming.

**1987**

Surplus  
**\$1,142,232**

Clark is named president. The Channel 9 license is transferred to KCTS Television from the University of Washington.

**1988**

Surplus  
**\$487,004**

KCTS produces the first of its Over series, with Over Washington.

**1989**

Surplus  
**\$1,358,998**



Burnill Clark stands in front of the station's new facilities at Seattle Center in 1986.

**1990**

Surplus  
**\$1,162,941**

**1991**

Surplus  
**\$1,610,109**

**1992**

Surplus  
**\$1,412,356**

Bill Nye receives \$250,000 National Science Foundation grant to produce pilot of children's science show.



THE SEATTLE TIMES

**1993**

Surplus  
**\$376,624**

**1994**

Surplus  
**\$1,268,032**

KCTS becomes first station in the country to acquire high definition television (HDTV).

KCTS announcer George Ray at a fund drive in 1993.

**1995**

Surplus  
**\$1,086,107**

"Bill Nye, the Science Guy" series launched in partnership with Disney. Disney pays for production costs but gets the right to market the show in other ways, including selling videos.



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**1996**

Deficit  
**-\$80,220**

KCTS spends thousands to develop new name: Via. Finds trademark conflicts, kills name.

**1997**

Deficit  
**-\$857,393**

Intris, replacement to the Via name, is developed. Chief financial officer Jude Rosenberg quits.

KCTS loses its channel number on Canadian cable station in Vancouver, seriously reducing income and subscribers from Canada.

Number of members peaks:  
**153,212**

**1998**

Deficit  
**-\$1,632,458**

Staff cuts 18 employees out of 250. Clark attributes the cuts to drop in Canadian subscribers.

"Chihuly Over Venice" airs Nov. 9, PBS' first nationally aired HDTV program.

A 1998 documentary showed Dale Chihuly glass sculptures floating in Venice canal.



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**1999**

Surplus  
**\$189,152**

KCTS begins digital broadcasting on April 1.

KCTS gets \$1 million grant from Commerce Department to fund transmitter for digital upgrades.

**2000**

Deficit  
**-\$770,609**

Three top station executives leave KCTS. Board Chairman Doug Beighle says the departures are not related to problems at the station.

Barry Mitzman, host of "Serious Money," quits after budget cuts.

Gates Foundation makes an \$11 million matching donation for digital conversion technology.

**2001**

Deficit  
**-\$3,415,916**

Kay Ingram, vice president of program development, resigns. Eight people laid off.

Anderson Consulting reviews KCTS budget process for free. The negative review cites a "lack of reality in the budgeting process."

Employees write to board to complain about Clark's management.

KCTS fails to pay \$2.8 million in dues to PBS.

**2002**

Deficit  
**-\$2,469,721**

KCTS' new adult science series, "The Eyes of Nye," runs into production and legal problems.

KCTS consultant Vanessa Greene tells CEO Burnill Clark he should retire for good of the station.

Clark approaches the city and Seattle Center officials to negotiate deferring rent of \$229,000 until 2006.

Number of members:  
**129,094**

**2003**

Corporation for Public Broadcasting withholds nearly \$750,000 in funding for KCTS because the station's financial reports are late.

All four Channel 9 stores are shuttered to save money.

Yesterday: Clark retires, effective Oct. 31. National productions scaled back and up to 35 layoffs are announced.

Sources: KCTS, Seattle Times staff research