Reporting business through the years

The Business Times has been there, through 38 years of bull and bear markets, boom-time and recessions, the euphoria and bursting of tech and property bubbles, conflicts and pandemics. So, as the newspaper embarks on its most extensive relaunch yet, here's a look back at how it has changed over the years:


BUSINESS TIMES
Looking at the other side of the CPF coin
Green light for H Par comeback
Hon to agencies: We need aid too

1976, Oct 1

The Business Times began life as Singapore's first financial daily and third daily English newspaper. Singapore's industrial development was well underway. This was a decade of momentous change for the global economy too, with the collapse of the Bretton Woods system in 1971 and the 1973 oil crisis which triggered a global recession.


Business Times
A bigger, brighter, better BT for our readers
MAS curbs foreign speculation on property
A dream so near and yet so far
Finance, business services lead

1990, March 1

It was not till 1990 that BT had its first makeover. By then, the paper had covered Singapore's first post-independence recession of 1985, the Pan-Electric crisis which forced both the Singapore and Kuala Lumpur stock markets to close for three days, and 1987's Black Monday stockmarket crash.

In a matter of months of this new look, BT's pages would be filled with news of yet another global downturn, after oil prices spiked in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.


BusinessTimes
4 S'pore groups team up to scour China's property sector
BT aims to be region's best
Residential property cases
Li Peng makes landmark visit to Shenzhen bourse

1993, Jan 5

As Singapore's economy started to diversify and companies moved up the value chain, BT marked a third milestone.

The paper expanded its focus on Asia, especially the fast-developing East Asian region. It also added weekly special sections on business IT and property and construction.


THE BUSINESS TIMES
Johore seen leading M'sian property slide
Kotjo: I'm no front-man

1995, Nov 1

In the middle of the 90s, BT received a dramatically different look with colour on the front page and bolder use of pictures and infographics. 1995 was the year that Barings Bank went bust, brought down by futures trader Nick Leeson.

In June 1995, BT became the first English-language newspaper in Asia to go online.


THE BUSINESS TIMES
Hong Leong takes over hard-hit Tsang & Ong
WHITE KNIGHT of PACIFIC CAN

1999, Sept 23

BT's next big change came as Asia's economies started to recover from the 1997 Asian financial crisis. But in 1999, the Clob saga was still raging. Malaysia had suspended trading of all counters on Clob, leaving 172,000 investors with frozen shares worth S$6.2b. And the dot-com bubble which eventually burst in 2000 and 2001, was slowly forming.


THE BUSINESS TIMES
Up to 8,100 civil service jobs to go over 3 years

2004, Sept 1

This was the year after the Sars virus outbreak hit Singapore and other Asian countries. But Singapore's economy was already on the mend, and would chalk up GDP growth of 9.5 per cent in 2004.

"A new generation of readers has emerged," editor Alvin Tay said, and the new BT set out to serve them better.


THE BUSINESS TIMES weekend
Downhill lie

2008, Sept 6

About a week before the collapse of Lehman Brothers, and the unfolding of the greatest global financial crisis since the Great Depression, BT launched a new compact-sized weekend edition with a handy pullout of lifestyle stories.

In 2012, BT gave its 17-year-old website a major revamp, and launched its first mobile apps.

BT Graphics: Teh Shi Ning & Simon Ang