

# TELEVISION

WHAT IT MEANS TO THE DEALER

**T**HERE cannot be any doubt about it—April 30, 1939, will go down into history as one of the most important dates in industry.

In fact, a hundred years from now April 30th, 1939 probably will be one of just two dates generally remembered in connection with radio history—the other being December 12, 1901, the day on which Marconi succeeded in spanning the Atlantic Ocean with radio waves.

The latter achievement was the foundation upon which has been built the great industry called RADIO—entertainment, manufacturing, communications, with all their ramifications. Now it is about to add another ramification—television—to its already prodigious progeny.

It is fitting that an industry which lives and thrives on the mysteries and marvels of a still-to-be-defined phenomenon of nature—electricity—should treat the industrial world of today to a man-made phenomena, namely a definitely pre-fixed birthday that will mark the commercial birth of a new and allied industry, sound the starting gun of a new competitive race over a new and still uncharted course.

That it will be an exciting race, a gruelling contest, is a foregone conclusion. But neither its length nor latitude can be definitely foretold, nor can anyone today estimate the exact extent of the technical, financial and commercial hurdles that have to be cleared before the new industry achieves a satisfactory degree of soundness and stability.

Any attempt to forecast or predict the ultimate future of television would be ill-advised and futile at this state of the art, but we, who are "in" on

RADIO and Television RETAILING, APRIL, 1939

*Actual  
1939  
Images*



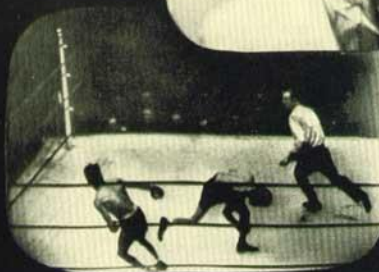
*World's Fair*



*Movie Queen*



*Prominent  
Radioman*



*Fight Photo*

the birth, surely may be pardoned if we follow the ancient custom of engaging in a bit of timely speculation, based on present knowledge, as to how the new baby is going to look, how it is going to thrive, what it is going to be like when it grows up.

It is in such spirit that **RADIO and Television RETAILING** presents this special insert on the subject of television.

The editors realize fully that the birth of commercial television on April 30th can bring immediate commercial advantages and profit to few of the many retailers, that its territorial penetration will grow slowly, that vast areas and millions of people may not for many years be within practical receiving range of television broadcasts.

But—the very existence of those highly important, definitely known limitations of the television art as of 1939 imposes the duty upon us to provide radio merchants everywhere with an accurate, unbiased, factual report of what is happening now, what may be expected to happen, how certain elements may combine to shape the future of radio and television.

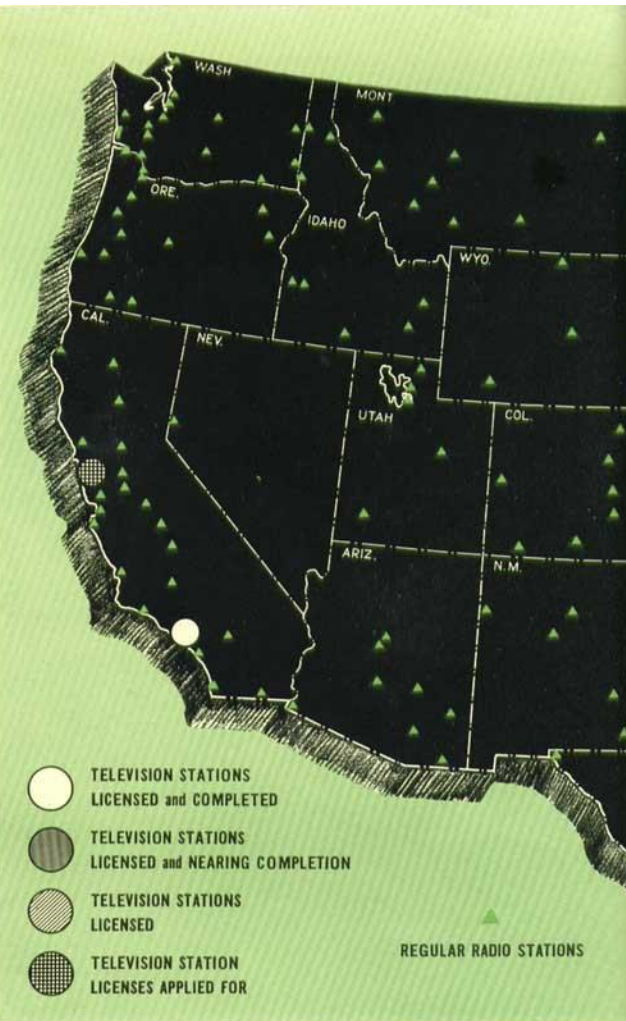
The material contained in this insert was designed to provide dealers everywhere with what they should, and in fact must know about television, regardless of whether they continue to sell radios and combinations exclusively because they are in the vast non-television territory of the United States or are located within those limited areas where television broadcasts are about to be inaugurated and so may expect to sell television receivers as well.

If the reading of this insert helps dealers in television broadcast areas to start the selling and servicing of video receivers on a sound, sane, practical basis and at the same time aids all dealers in both television and non-television territory to sell more and better **RADIO** receiving sets, its purposes will have been achieved.

O. FRED ROST

**T**HE most important single factor that all the retailers of radio sets in all of the United States should immediately realize is that the arrival of commercial television brings real cause for rejoicing.

No longer is television one of those mysterious creatures of science that was known to reside in the laboratories, that would at frequent intervals incite newspaper reporters to break out into columns of conjecture, that all too often caused promoters to smack their lips at its potentials for speculative profit and, what



is more important, that has periodically constituted a restraining influence among the radio-minded public and seriously retarded the sales of radio sets because of its very uncertainty.

On April 30th television will drop that mantle of mystery, and with it the tendency to exert those strange influences that the vagueness of public knowledge made possible.

From now on, television will be *in the open*, where the public can see how it works, can see what it will and will not do, can appraise its capacity, its state of perfection and its virtues. From now on, television will have to take its place with radio, phonographs, movies, as media of entertainment, and Mr. and Mrs. Consumer are going to be the final judges of its actual worth.

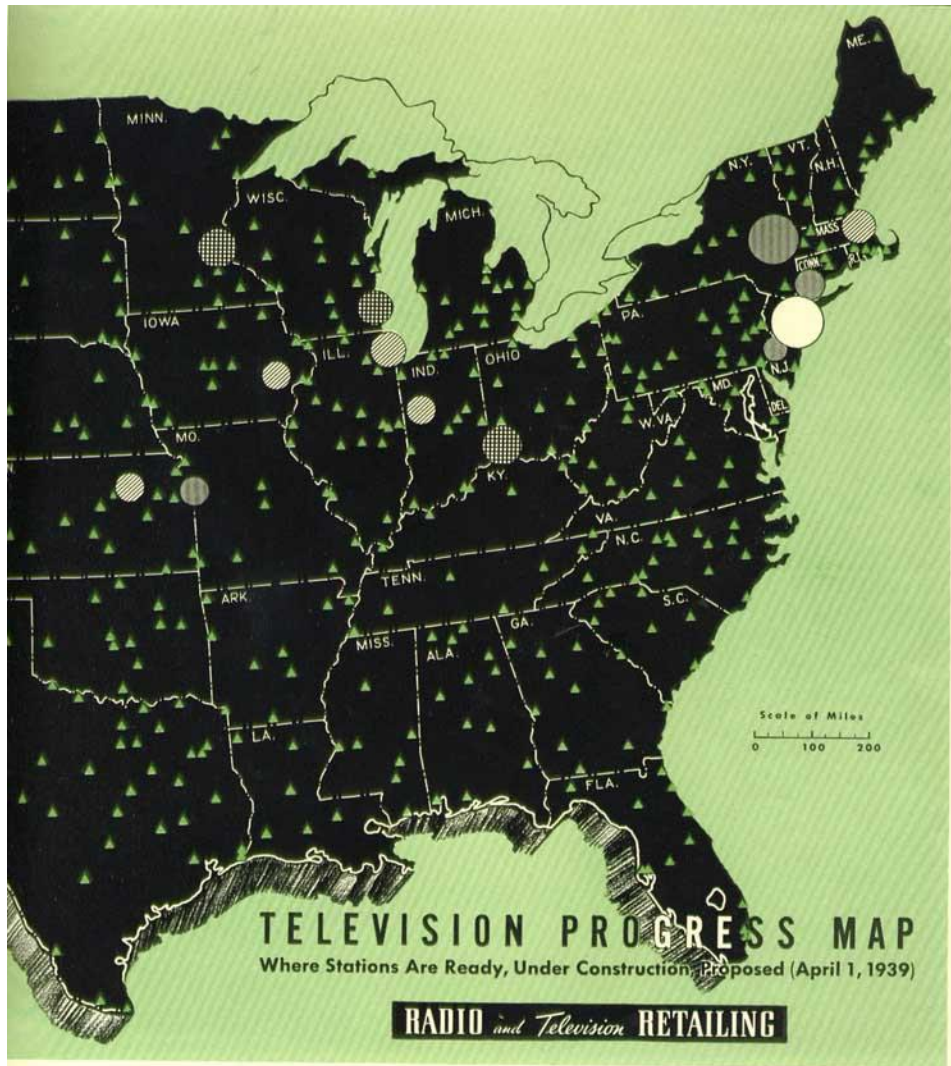
Thus the question of what the arrival

of television means to the radio dealer at this writing must still remain a matter of conjecture because first the public must have a chance to react—then the radio industry, and particularly the radio dealer, will be able to record such consumer reactions.

Certain it is that the current interest in television cannot be underestimated and it will be further stimulated nationally by the exhibits at the two world's fairs.

Obviously, sales of complete television receivers will be confined to territory that is within range of video broadcasts. Dealers who operate in such areas must expect to make some definite and indispensable investments if they wish to compete in this field. Demonstrating rooms must be installed and properly furnished, special aerials erected, steps taken to re-





duce or, if possible, eliminate outside interference. Sales and service personnel must make a thorough study, probably take a course of training.

The chances for making a profit on television sales depend on the dealer's location, equipment, aggressiveness and managerial ability.

In the New York area, where television programs will be initially available in wider variety and for longer periods than anywhere else, it should be possible for the wide-awake dealer to earn a profit even on his first year's operations, because here there is the greatest concentration of potential buyers.

In other territories, the dealer's opportunities for selling television sets will depend upon the length and character of available video programs, and on the number of people who are able or will-

ing to invest in a receiver, the usefulness of which can be measured definitely by the number of hours of broadcasting that occurs within its range.

In order that radio dealers, no matter where located, may appraise the immediate prospects for television broadcasts in their own neighborhood, the editors present herewith the first television progress map.

On this map is shown the present status of the entire United States from the standpoint of television broadcasts—based on up-to-the-minute reports from the Federal Communications Commission and manufacturers of transmitting equipment.

Careful study of this map will make it apparent that opportunities for selling television receivers in 1939 are confined to those radio dealers who are

located in certain clearly defined, and, from the standpoint of size, decidedly limited areas. In all the rest of the United States, radio dealers will serve themselves and the whole industry to greatest advantage if they continue to concentrate their sales effort on radio sets.

However, if such sales effort is to produce the maximum of sales and profits, every radio dealer must keep himself completely and constantly informed as to current progress and development in the television field, so that he will be able to talk to his customers with authority when the subject of television is mentioned.

Knowing all about television is the only way to sell television receivers. And from now on it will also be the surest way of selling radio sets.