

Biggest Color TV Campaign Under Way

Coast-to-Coast Drive by RCA-NBC

Stirs 25 Major Areas Toward Mass Market 'Breakthrough'

IN twenty-five major markets across the land, RCA's biggest push for color TV is on!

Sales and promotional efforts to make this the year of the big "breakthrough" for color television have already resulted in phenomenal increases in color set sales in several areas.

The aim of the most extensive color campaign ever planned is to achieve mass market status for color television during 1958, and extend it as quickly as possible into a nationwide service to the public.

This campaign has already attracted national attention, not only from thousands of dealers and distributors but from the man-in-the-home as well — in fact, millions of them, from coast to coast.

The great color promotion got under way in four cities — New York, Philadelphia, Detroit and San Francisco — in August. It swiftly spread out across the country and is now boosting color sales in such prime market areas as Baltimore, Washington, D. C., Harrisburg, Albany, Buffalo, Atlanta, Cleveland, Minneapolis, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, Peoria, Lansing, Davenport, Des Moines, and Los Angeles.

Stirring campaigns in these markets are patterned on the highly successful 40-day Milwaukee "Carnival of Color" held last April and May.

In New York and Philadelphia, efforts were concentrated on the World Series color telecasts.

Trade-In Program

In Detroit, a strong trade-in campaign was inaugurated by dealers and distributors. In the first few weeks sales of color TV sets zoomed upward over 100%.

In Cincinnati, Dayton, Columbus and Indianapolis, the Crosley Broadcasting Group is giving all-out support to the color drive. The only independent station in the country equipped to originate color TV live broadcasts, Crosley has cooperated with the RCA distributor and the local utility company in promoting color. A

whopping 45% of all RCA Victor TV sales in this area have been color sets since the drive started in Cincinnati.

In Pittsburgh, Los Angeles and Omaha, strong and aggressive efforts to promote color are showing a gratifying response in receiver sales. In Pittsburgh, dealer orders are running ahead of RCA's capacity to supply.

Of crucial importance to the big color campaign is the expanded color programming schedule announced by NBC for the new season. This expansion will amount to a 67% increase in color telecasting. It will average a full two hours daily and up to four and one half hours a day on weekends. And, almost all of these color shows will be on the air during the peak viewing hours.

Twenty-four big color specials have been scheduled for the fourth quarter of this year alone. These include the world series and the four top college football games.

Dealer Promotion

In June, an intensive indoctrination program, embodying a six-point promotion, was aimed at dealers and distributors to increase their color selling efforts. This presentation emphasized the importance of home demonstrations, telephone solicitations, and sales training, and also presented a general promotional program slanted to the dealer level.

Closely following this program, RCA Victor initiated its basic fall promotion plans for color television. Tailored especially for distributors and leading dealers, the planning kit spelled out in detail a complete range of color-selling ideas for dealers.

It included a sample agenda for a distributor-dealer meeting, with announcement letters, speeches for the meeting itself, registration blanks and follow-up letters; it listed customer give-away items, window displays, service information, sales contests, tie-in promotions, trade-in information, a suggested advertising schedule and many other promotional ideas.



Stars of the RCA closed-circuit presentation—Right group (l. to r.): John L. Burns, Martin F. Bennett, J. M. Williams and Robert A. Seidel. Left group: John Bricker, of Whirlpool-Seeger, D. H. Kunsman, J. P. Bannon and Allan B. Mills.

POINTS OF PROGRESS

- ▶ Dealer apathy to color TV has changed into enthusiastic eagerness to participate in the coming color boom.
- ▶ TV servicemen's reluctance, founded on the mistaken impression that color servicing is difficult and expensive, has been transformed into willing cooperation.
- ▶ Programming shortcomings, which had brought complaint from color set owners, have been eliminated by NBC's expanded programming plans for the coming season.
- ▶ The television industry as a whole, which in the past had established a notable record of opposition to color TV progress, now is undergoing a rapid change of attitude in favor of color TV.

Two-Hour TV Sendoff

The full force of the growing campaign was brought into focus on September 4 over the biggest closed-circuit telecast in television history. A stunning two-hour color presentation, the show was received enthu-

siastically by distributors and dealers, broadcasters and the press. It was a superb summing up, in one concise package, of the swiftly accelerating color drive.

The telecast was presented in two parts, the first describing RCA's color campaign plans for the coming season, the second detailing the National Broadcasting Company's expanded color program schedules.

Beamed to dealers and distributors in 90 cities across the country, the RCA show was the equivalent of a nationwide sales meeting. The dealer organization saw and heard top company executives outline the new merchandising, sales, advertising and service plans.

NBC's Fall Program Preview featured many of the stars scheduled to be seen regularly on color telecasts. A witty, sparkling show, it emphasized the heavy support NBC is giving the new color campaign. In addition to dealers and distributors, this part of the program was seen by NBC-TV's station affiliates, TV press writers, and agency representatives in more than 150 cities.

Martin F. Bennett, Vice President, Merchandising, acted as master of ceremonies in welcoming viewers to the RCA presentation.

In introducing the industry's biggest color campaign, John L. Burns, President of RCA, said: "The starting of anything new that is of real significance on the American scene has always called for vision, convictions, and persistent hard work."

"The Radio Corporation of America has put these into color television. In the area of investment, we spent one hundred million dollars so that color television will present a great future for all of us—and many of you have supported RCA's efforts with your own investments in color.

"We believe that all of our resources—Research and Development, Tube Manufacturing, Set Manufacturing and Service—will, by their combined efforts, develop color television into a household word and need. And we have invited the entire industry to join us in this endeavor.

"At the close of today's presentation you will be quite convinced that color is ready—that color is right—that color is here."

Robert A. Seidel, Executive Vice-President, Consumer Products, said there is now a tremendous and important market for color receivers that can be exploited by aggressive sales and advertising.

Mr. Seidel emphasized RCA's willingness to break new trails. "The role of pioneer," he said, "is not unusual to the Radio Corporation, or its distributors or dealers. Pioneering has always been a cornerstone in our structure. And, it has always paid off—in leadership, sales, profits and prestige—for dealers and distributors in every phase of home entertainment—'Victrolas', records, radio, black-and-white television, orthophonic high fidelity recordings and instruments, tape, and stereophonic sound. So it will in color. And, we are gaining ground rapidly.

"Consumers purchased three times as many color sets this year as last. Service Company installations are three times as great. Consumers can be sold ten times as many. And because color offers such unlimited promise—because the very profit future of your businesses, and ours, is dependent on color success, we solicit your skill, ingenuity, and wholehearted support. Together, let's MAKE IT HAPPEN!"

NBC Color Program Schedule

Robert W. Sarnoff, President of the National Broadcasting Company, in commenting on NBC's expanded color programming schedule said that the company had never gone into a season with such a "restyled program wardrobe."

"There will be," he said, "21 new nighttime shows, about 55 percent of our entire evening schedule.

"This season we've tried to make color TV available to the widest possible audience so we've built our color schedule around many key nighttime programs, with emphasis on periods when viewing is at its peak.

"And, we'll have color programming for an average of two hours daily."

The Merchandising Picture

In presenting the RCA merchandising story, Allan B. Mills, Merchandise Manager, RCA Victor Television Division, introduced the five new RCA Victor color models designed to supplement the excellent "700" series models.

These five models, selling at higher prices than the "700" series, incorporate important design improvements. These include a new chassis and color glass kinescope. The new chassis has been designed specifically to operate with the new color kinescope to establish the maximum in color television performance.

First of the new models, the Abington, is a table model that is housed in a metal cabinet and available in mahogany and lined oak grain finishes.

The Sanford is, in effect, a console, only slightly larger than a table model. Its brand-new styling is made possible by the use of a new speaker, measuring fourteen by three inches.

The Anderson is a new full console model featuring Panoramic Sound reproduction, with one six-by-nine and two three-and-one-half inch balanced speakers.

The Wentworth incorporates all the above features; it is housed in an all-wood cabinet with veneers and solids of the woods specified.

The Townsend is a lowboy console in genuine veneers and solid woods of walnut and oak.

Three of these new models, the Abington, the Sanford and the Anderson, together with three of the "700" series models, the Aldridge, the Westcott and the Lockhaven, constitute the V.I.P. lineup, the Very Important Products. These six models are expected to account for approximately 70% of total retail sales.

Advertising and Promotion

Describing RCA's comprehensive advertising and promotion plans for color TV, J. M. Williams, Manager, Advertising and Sales Promotion for the TV

New RCA Victor color receivers are (l. to r.) the Wentworth, the Anderson, the Sanford and the Abington.





Advances made in receiver design can be seen in comparing old Model "630-TS" with 1958 set, right.



The Abington, a table model, is the lowest-priced (\$550) of RCA Victor Mark Series color receivers.

Division, said that RCA was continuing its stepped up color activity right down the line — in addition to one of the strongest black-and-white campaigns the company has ever undertaken.

The advertising campaign got under way in September with four-color ads in *Life*, *TV Guide*, *The New Yorker*, *Sports Illustrated* and *Sporting News*, plugging the color TV broadcasts of the World Series. Tenscored World Series tags on the *Eddie Fisher* and *George Gobel Shows* were seen by an estimated fifteen million fans; the same tags were shown on *The Price Is Right* and *Tic Tac Dough*.

Color casts of football games this fall are being featured in dramatic split screen ads — "This Season in College Football, See the Difference Color TV Makes" — in *Sports Illustrated*, *The New Yorker* and *TV Guide*.

Potential color set buyers no longer have to worry about service problems, according to D. H. Kunstman, Vice President and Operations Manager of the RCA Service Company.

He stated that service demands on the part of color set owners are gratifyingly low. On courtesy calls to homes of contract holders, 91.8% of the set owners had no need for service and fully understood how to get the best reception.

Statistics showed that service call requirements on the current color sets are no greater than they were on the famous 630 TS black-and-white receiver, the set that touched off the television boom in 1946.

Sales

Those dealers who went in for heavy promotion of color receivers a year ago have made excellent progress in the sale of color sets, according to J. P. Bannon, General Sales Manager of the TV Division.

He pointed out that 25% of the RCA Victor color dealers have sold 65% of the RCA color receivers now in use. In 20% of the distributor areas, the dealers, as a group, sold 35% of their total TV sales volume in color TV sets. He said that the successful color dealers have also enjoyed an 11% increase in black-and-white sales.

Mr. Bannon emphasized three types of activities that bring dealers best results: Trade-in, home demonstration ads and telephone follow-up. Home demonstrations, he said, have averaged 60% in sales.

Summing up: "Color is ready — color is right — color is here!"

Speaking before the Advertising and Sales Executives Club of Montreal on October 2, Martin F. Bennett, Vice President, RCA Merchandising, said: "I do not think it is too soon for you to consider the future impact of the new medium on advertising. Certainly no one can afford to be color blind any longer in advertising." He pointed out that according to the Fowler Report on Industry in Canada, color TV will be introduced on a gradual basis, beginning probably in 1959.