

Admiral Chief Relates Blossoming of Color

By Ross D. Siragusa
[President, Admiral Corp.]

COLOR television has taken great strides since the present compatibility standards established by the industry's National Television Standards committee were approved by the Federal Communications commission in December, 1953.

Two days after the color TV standards were announced, Admiral introduced a 15 inch color set that was the culmination of five years' research and development by engineers working in the company's laboratories in Chicago and Palo Alto, Cal. This color receiver was offered in an unorthodox cabinet and carried a suggested list price of \$1,175.

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Today's color television receivers are marketed in attrac-

tive cabinets featuring the same furniture styling found in black and white models. They provide a 21 inch picture and are priced from \$500 up.

Like their black and white counterparts, the new color receivers have picture tubes with the safety glass bonded directly to the front of the tube. This feature reduces glare and reflection and increases picture contrast. It also permits the manufacturer to slim down the cabinet.

The improved dependability of color TV is evidenced by the current lower cost of service policies. Owners of color sets report that their service experience is no greater than with black and white receivers. Our own service records confirm this.

Families with color TV receivers are the best salesmen for this medium. Their favorable comments to friends are most effective.

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The second major factor in selling color TV is station programming. There has been a steadily increasing amount of programming in color by the NBC television network in recent years. Several independent stations also have devoted considerable attention to color programming. WGN-TV has performed a commendable public and industry service by its own expansion of color programs.

With more than 50 million black and white sets and fewer than 500,000 color receivers in



ROSS D. SIRAGUSA
... Cites color TV advances

use thruout the country, you can realize what a great future lies ahead for the color TV. Other networks undoubtedly will get into color programming as public pressures mount.

Just one day after the FCC announcement approving the RCA compatible color system, the Milwaukee Sentinel reported that Admiral was already producing color sets in pilot production with plans to introduce them to its distributors on December 30, 1953 at a price more than \$1,000, with production quantities increasing by the end of the second quarter 1954. A production goal of 30 thousand color sets were planned by the end of the year.

[The Milwaukee Sentinel - Dec 19, 1953](#)

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Admiral Sets Goal on Color TV Production

CHICAGO, Dec. 18—(AP)—Admiral Corp. has set a production goal of more than 30,000 color television sets during the next 12 months. John B. Huarisa, vice president, announced Friday.

Huarisa said action of the Federal Communications Commission Thursday, approving the compatible color television system, "will help to clear the air of the confusion that has been created during the past few months."

Admiral has been building color receivers on a pilot basis, Huarisa said, and plans to introduce them to distributors Dec. 30. He added production will be increased sufficiently by the second 1954 quarter to provide a sample for every dealer in cities on the color cable.

Price of Admiral's color console, which has a 15 inch tube providing a 12 inch picture, is expected to be more than \$1,000 Huarisa said.

Article published January 4, 1954 in the Pittsburgh Press. "Admiral color set listed at \$1175 and introduced in Chicago."

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Admiral Color Set
Listed at \$1175

CHICAGO, Jan. 4 (UP)—
Admiral Corp. has introduced its
first color television receiver in
Chicago. The color receiver,
which carried a list price of
\$1175, was among six new TV
models added to the company's
1954 line.

The firm also introduced a
21-inch black and white table
model priced at \$179.95, which
the company said was the lowest-
priced nationally advertised 21-
inch set on the market.

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FIRST WITH

Color TV

AMERICA'S NEWEST TV THRILL!

COME TO PATTON BROS. BENTON HARBOR STORE, SEE ...

Big 12½" Picture Tube Console

Admiral TV Color Set

Be one of the first to place your order for a 12½" color television set ... Delivery guaranteed as we receive shipments ... we will display the above set for the balance of this week in our Benton Harbor store which is open 'til 9 p. m. every weekday evening.

PURCHASE PRICE, \$1,175.00 installed with your existing antenna. One year service policy is advised at \$275.00.

BE SURE TO SEE THE BARGAINS WE HAVE IN 1953 SETS
PLUS **ADMIRAL'S** NEW 1954 MODELS.

PATTON BROTHERS

200 EMPIRE

OPEN 'TIL 9:00 P. M.

BEACON TV MOVES DOWNTOWN

TO HOMER
KEPS ELECTRIC BLDG.
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Beacon celebrates its Fifth Anniversary by moving to the Golden Triangle. In our new six-story headquarters you will see one of the largest displays of world-famous television, appliances, lamps and lighting fixtures, making us the largest appliance store between New York and Chicago.

GRAND OPENING SPECIAL

FIRST PUBLIC SHOWING IN PITTSBURGH

No Cost! No Obligation! Everyone Invited!

See **Admiral**
COLOR TELEVISION
Performing

ONE WEEK ONLY Sun. 12 to 9

Monday thru Saturday 9 to 9

640 GRANT ST. Downtown



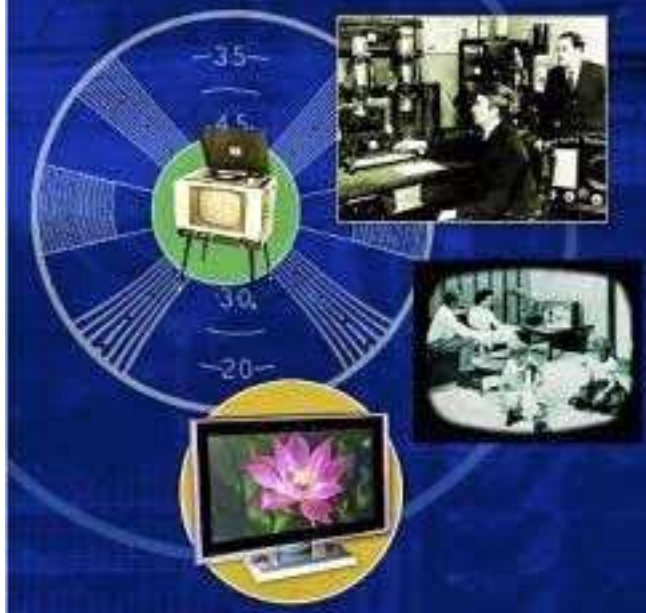
At the same time see the brilliant new 1954 Admiral 21" and 24" Sets Available for Immediate Delivery. Remember, any New TV Set Purchased Now, Can Receive Any Color Broadcast in Perfect Black and White, Now or in the Future.

BEACON'S
GOLD BOND of PROTECTION
GUARANTEES YOU
100% TRADE-IN
Allowance Toward Color
Television On Any New
Set Purchased From
Us Now.

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The Life Story of a Technology



Alexander B. Magoun

LOTS OF PROBLEMS

Color TV Here, But You Can't Buy a Set

Editor's Note: New Year's Day, thousands of people got their first look at color television when the Rose Bowl parade was beamed across the nation. The following story gives another look at TV color—a deep look into where this new development stands now.

By JACK MABLEY

(Copyright, 1954, Chicago Daily News)

CHICAGO, Jan. 7.—Color television is here. Color TV sets are on the market—but you can't buy one.

Color telecasts are being made several times a week—but unless you have a drag, you can't see one.

It will be some time between 1956 and 1960 before you can buy a color TV set and have it serviced in a price range anywhere near present black and white prices.

That is the opinion of responsible engineers in the TV manufacturing industry.

Wave of Publicity

The government approved color television for general use last month. The decision set off a wave of enthusiastic publicity on the general theme: "Color TV is here! And awaaaay we go!"

The tub thumping and breast beating have died down somewhat,

Color telecasting is complicated and costly.

Two color TV cameras on order by a Chicago station will cost \$79,000 each. It will cost another \$118,292 for equipment to make them work.

But the biggest hazard in color installation at a TV station is this: Developments are coming so fast that brand new equipment may become obsolete between the time it is ordered and when it is installed a few months later.

Cost Is Tremendous

Installation of color equipment will bring tremendous expenses to stations.

More engineers will be needed, and older staff members will have to be trained in color.

New lighting installations, and lighting and color technicians will be necessary.

It will even be necessary to overhaul or replace air conditioning systems to compensate for the heat of color lighting.

Color stock and films will be used. Here is one of the technical problems: Existing color films. A new available moves the industry from a standstill to a speed of 22

That brings up the core of the problem of color TV—the home receiver.

Regardless of what the broadcasters do, color TV isn't going to mean much until there is a mass audience—measured in the multi-millions.

There isn't going to be a mass audience until sets can be bought and serviced at a practical price. "Practical" means somewhere between \$300 and \$600 for the set, and less than \$100 a year for service.

From \$800 to \$1,200

Every major manufacturer has announced production of a line of color receivers. They have announced prices ranging from \$800 to \$1,200.

Try to buy one. They just aren't for sale.

One Chicago manufacturer said there is a chance they'll never be for sale. He feels that color sets now in limited production may be obsolete by summer.

Zenith has 100 sets on its production line. The cost in materials and actual labor is \$2,000 a set. Admiral has announced a price of \$1,095 on 1,000 sets it is producing.

million on the venture. Meanwhile, Walter Baker of the Radio Television Manufacturers Association recruited 29 organizations and dozens of engineers to the second NTSC's thirteen study panels. For eighteen months they performed field tests and tested further improvements to color signal transmissions made primarily by RCA's engineers. In May 1953, Goldmark seconded the motion to submit the electronic color standard proposal to the FCC. By then Coy and several other members had stepped down, and the new commission approved the standard on December 17.

RCA AND COLOR TELEVISION, 1954-1964

The new standard led to various firsts in color broadcasting, most of which are meaningless because virtually no one outside the broadcast engineers, laboratories, or executive suites could watch the programs in color. Admiral Television Corporation put the first receivers on the market for \$1,175 on December 30, 1953, so that it could take a deductible tax loss on its color factory investment. On New Year's Day, 1954, NBC broadcast the Rose Bowl Parade in Pasadena, California, across a 21-station network and RCA arranged with other manufacturers to install color and monochrome receivers in cities across the country. Ten-year-old Edward Reitan was awestruck by the "12-inch screens, so tiny and blurry that you had to look at the larger black and white screens to recognize detail. But it was color and it was gorgeous!" (Reitan) RCA's first production receiver, the CT-100, went on sale at the end of March for \$995, about the cost of a used car and five times the cost of a comparable black-and-white set.

The electronic innovation forced by CBS, and RCA's insistence on monochrome compatibility meant that sales of the new color receivers were only slightly better than those for CBS. The color receivers were not nearly as good in mass production as in the field-tested prototypes, and the monochrome signal on them was inferior to that on a monochrome set because the dichroic lenses in the cameras reduced the brightness information available. Contrary to expectations, very few affluent early adopters bought the receivers made and sold by RCA and a host of its licensees. Instead the RCA Service Company staff ran ragged trying to keep the few receivers operating as advertised, leading General Electric Company's president, Ralph Cordiner, to complain that "you've almost got to have an engineer living in the house" (Fisher and Fisher, 1996, 328).

Meanwhile, the public bought monochrome televisions in a boom that rivaled the Internet in the late 1990s, or radio in the 1920s. When the

Side note:

If Admiral color sets were not selling, they were giving them away in an Arthur Godfrey Lux Liquid contest. "Win an Admiral 15 inch color TV consoles", one of 10 in this 1955 advertisement. (A similar contest was held to win an RCA 21CT55, sponsored by Kraft Parkay margarine)

YOU CAN WIN IN THE LUX LIQUID "FREE-FOR-ALL"!

All you do is send me your name and address!



DODGE CARS Dodge Coronet Lancer V-8—luxurious Hardtop, in choice of color combinations



ADMIRAL 15" Color TV Consoles new single dial tuning for breathtaking true-color reception



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Registered and guaranteed by Artcarved, America's foremost ringmaker



100 CHESTS OF ONEIDA COMMUNITY STERLING*
Service for Six in exquisite Engagement* pattern in anti-tarnish chest

*Trade-mark Oneida Ltd., Oneida, New York

AND everyone who enters gets a free gift—a handy wall pocket to hold your Lux Liquid, and a coupon worth 10¢

ARTHUR GODFREY, BOX 267, NEW YORK 46, N. Y.
Please enter me in the Lux Liquid Free For All

My name is _____

My address is _____

Employees of Lerner Brothers and their advertising agencies are not eligible to enter. All entries for Lux Liquid Free For All must be postmarked not later than midnight, June 17, received by June 27, 1955.

THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER MAGAZINE, MAY 22, 1955 69

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