

NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY, INC.

INTERDEPARTMENT CORRESPONDENCE

TO Mr Sidney Strotz
FROM Roy C Witmer

DATE Dec 6 1940
SUBJECT Pre-set Chimes

Referring to the attached note of the 2nd from John Swallow to you.

First, I will have to tell you that I have always been opposed to pre-set chimes because I am so sure that there would be many times when they would be very embarrassing. For instance, I don't like the idea of chimes crashing through the last few moments of a commercial announcement; or still more appropriately, what would chimes have done in the two cases that Swallow has just mentioned? I don't believe that automatic chimes would have cured these run-overs at all.

There is something about the idea of the necessity of a thing like pre-set chimes that infers some sort of weakness on our part. In effect, we say to ourselves we cannot or do not dare to cut a program ourselves, so we hide behind a set of automatic chimes.

I think if you will get out some tabulations that were made a couple of years ago on this subject, you will find that the flexibility of handling this with the human touch instead of the mechanical one is very desirable. There are many, many shows that run both under and over a few seconds, and the compensating flexibility of human handling takes care of it where pre-set chimes would not.

After all, if there is a great difference of opinion on this subject, why not try it sometime for a few days and see what happens. Such things are always only a matter of opinion until they are actually tried. However, if you do decide to try it, please above all else look out for last minute commercial announcements because if you don't it can cost us some good dough.

IH

