

NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY, INC.

INTERDEPARTMENT CORRESPONDENCE

RECEIVED

TO Mr E P H James

DATE May 22nd 1939

FROM C A Rackey

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SUBJECT NBC Outdoor Chimes

E. P. H. JAMES

During the past several months we have been trying to obtain a satisfactory model of an NBC chimes machine from RCA which would cost under \$100. The present one we use is made by an outside firm and costs about \$500. Thus far, progress has been very slow, but they do have a scheme, within our price range, which would probably be suitable if further proper development could be applied to it. This is, and has been, the chief difficulty, since RCA is unwilling to do more than some spare time work on a device for which they have no definite order and for which, at best, the market is very limited.

In the meantime, our own Development Group has devised an acceptable chimes machine using vacuum tubes only, which would probably come within the price range of the RCA model, perhaps slightly higher. That, therefore, is another possibility. We could decide which machine to use at the time action was required.

The above machines provide merely the original chimes signal. The following equipment must be added to either of them:-

- 1 - A timing mechanism, with or without an hour strike feature.
- 2 - A loudspeaker, size determined by coverage required.
- 3 - An amplifier system, size determined by size of loudspeaker.

The cost of an average installation, providing coverage similar to the one we have at Radio City, would be around \$700. Coverage as given by a church or similar type carillon would be more costly, about \$500 to \$1,000 additional. With the new chimes machine available, such an installation could be made anywhere, independent of the regular chimes machines which are available at the main NBC Division plants.

If the new chimes machine is out of the picture, the outdoor chimes can still be installed, for about the same price, at the following NBC offices which have regular chimes facilities; Chicago, Cleveland, Washington, Hollywood, and San Francisco. An hour strike could be included, if desired, by using one of the standard RCA carillon reeds and an appropriate timing mechanism.

At locations remote from the NBC offices, but in the same cities, connections for operation from the local Control Room could be provided by leased telephone lines.

The chimes striking device made up by the KYW staff out of miscellaneous spare parts seemed to solve their problem. However, with a proper amplifier and loudspeaker system, plus the type of installation required in most other locations, this portion of the equipment represents only about 15% of the total cost. Besides, to duplicate it in the small quantity we require would cost about the same as the mechanisms we are considering, while the quality of note would be inferior.

Mr E P H James

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We have supplied information concerning these chimes installations to Chicago, Hollywood, Cleveland, and Washington. Latest reports indicate little or no progress in Hollywood, Washington, and Cleveland, but some progress in Chicago. There the matter is tied up with negotiations with the Mart people concerning exterior clock design, sharing expenses, etc.

This sums up the situation at present. While we shall continue to work with RCA on the chimes problem, further definite action requires specific orders or commitments from NBC.



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