

Pathfinder

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Phonevision test

In Chicago, 300 carefully-selected TV set owners last fortnight saw full-length movies telecast for \$1 each in the first test of Zenith Radio Corp.'s long-deferred "Phonevision."

Families with the specially equipped television sets ordered a key signal sent to their homes, via telephone circuit, for each movie ordered. The signal then unscrambled the picture. Sent the first test day were *April Showers* (Warner Bros.), *Welcome Stranger* (Paramount) and *Homecoming* (MGM).

Raved one set-owner: "This is it. It was a long time coming, but it's here."

Quick

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BUSINESS

Home Movies via Television?

Next September, 300 picked Chicago families will test to see if, and how often, they will pay \$1 (to be charged on their monthly phone bills) to see a movie on television. All a family need do, once its TV set is equipped with this special "Phonevision" device, is phone the transmitting station to switch on the program. The phone may still be used while an electronic signal unscrambles the transmitted movie.

The FCC has okayed the test. Zenith Radio Corp., makers of "Phonevision," say the device works equally with color or black-and-white TV, will sell for \$10-\$15. The \$1 charge will be divided among film producers, phone company and TV station.

Last week Zenith's president, Eugene McDonald, Jr., said Hollywood producers, including at least one major producer, will let him have enough films for the Chicago test. He also promised: 1) Within two years, if the FCC approves Phonevision nationally, it can use enough movies to make TV production profitable for Hollywood; 2) Within five years Phonevision can use at least 365 films a year—more than three times as many as Hollywood ever turned out.

