

FM STATION W1XPW, under the management of Franklin M. Doolittle, who also operates WDRC, is doing an aggressive job of selling the advantages of the new broadcasting to one of the richest markets in America. Franklin Doolittle believes in FM as superior medium of radio entertainment and advertising. He has been active in broadcasting since its inception. Photographs in the offices of WDRC, at Hartford, portray his series of transmitters, going back to the time when he himself performed all the functions which now require an extensive and highly specialized organization.

He has brought the same enthusiastic and progressive spirit to his plans to improve further the service to radio listeners through FM transmission Taking advantage of Meriden Mountain's 1,000-ft. elevation, located at the geographical center of Connecticut, he has erected there station W1XPW.

Although this station has been used for various experimental and test purposes, notably in conjunction with Major Armstrong's relay transmissions originating at Alpine, the purpose of its installation was entirely commercial. To that end, a 19-hour daily schedule of special FM programs was inaugurated last September. At that time, Mr. Doolittle announced in the Connecticut newspapers that *"W1XPW is starting this new schedule so that high fidelity programs will be available for demonstration purposes, and for reception by purchasers of FM sets."*

In other words, instead of waiting until enough sets had been sold to constitute an FM audience, he very wisely took the position that programs, and plenty of them, must be on the air before the public would start to buy receivers. Then, to encourage the dealers in their efforts to merchandise FM, he set up a separate FM promotion and production department, headed by Robert M. Provan, Jr., laid out schedules a week in advance and started a weekly program mailing to radio dealers within the station's service area.

At the same time, he enlisted the cooperation of the newspapers in a publicity campaign to tell listeners about the greater enjoyment offered by FM reception. It must be admitted that the dealers were slow, at first, to take advantage of the efforts to open the market for FM receivers. Investigation showed that this was largely due to misunderstanding of announcements from the FCC that FM transmitters would not operate on a commercial basis until January 1st, 1941.

Salesmen representing radio manufacturers not in a position to deliver FM receivers also urged this point in their efforts to discourage dealers from undertaking FM sales, so that they would continue to concentrate their efforts on AM sets. Resulting confusion in the dealers' minds, and the all-too-clear recollection of television promises unfulfilled, unquestionably caused many dealers to think that FM, too, might be still in the experimental stage, something of the indefinite future.

Slowly, however, the idea of FM as a demonstrated success and an accomplished fact became a conviction in the minds of the Connecticut radio dealers. This was further confirmed when the newspapers started to print the daily FM programs on their radio pages. Some, of course, with heavy commitments already made on the purchase of higherpriced AM sets in anticipation of the Christmas trade, simply could not undertake to merchandise FM-AM models for fear of jeopardizing their AM sales. These stores, however, are watching their stocks carefully, in preparation for swinging over to FM-AM receivers as soon as they are out from under.

Receiving conditions in Connecticut are not favorable to AM reception. local interference is extremely bad in many of the busy industrial centers. This is generally attributed to leaking power lines, and equipment which has long needed replacement. In those sections, FM shows up to great advantage. Waterbury, like other Connecticut cities, is located in a river valley, where surrounding hills make AM reception difficult, yet W1XPW gets in with a signal strong enough to give absolutely perfect reception during severe summer thunderstorms. A very large part of the credit for FM's rapid progress in this state is due to the aggressive efforts of W1XPW. As Mr. Doolittle said in a recent article published by the Hartford Times: *"very shortly, the first question asked about a radio receiver will be: Has it a frequency modulation band?"*