



*The first transistor radio, the Regency TR-1. Early models of the first radios are in the Smithsonian Museum*

## 1954 **Regency Radio debuts, first commercial mass-produced transistor product**

TI was producing germanium transistors, but the market had been slow to respond.

The industry was comfortable with vacuum tubes and had taken a wait-and-see attitude. Transistor sales had been just a trickle with a few applications, but Executive Vice President Pat Haggerty's goal was to produce them by the hundreds of thousands. A daring plan would herald the world's acceptance of transistors and help launch TI into a new industry.

Haggerty decided that the electronics industry needed a transistor wake-up call and that a small radio would provide it.

TI's Semiconductor Products Division took on the challenge of developing a method for mass-producing germanium transistors. The existing fabrication consisted of skilled operators assembling tiny bars into individual transistors. It was a slow and tedious task and would never reach the production levels Haggerty envisioned.

TI's new fabrication method allowed for batches of transistors to be built at the same time in a furnace.

In the Spring of 1954, Haggerty decided TI would develop the transistor radio business, even though, at the time, transistors were poorly suited for the job and much too expensive.

After TI demonstrated a working transistor radio to the Regency Division of Industrial Development Engineering Associates (IDEA) of Indianapolis, the two companies decided immediately to design the production model jointly. IDEA would then assemble and market 100,000 of the Regency-brand radios. The revolutionary new transistor radio would be introduced in New York and Los Angeles by mid-October 1954 to take advantage of Christmas sales.

On October 18, 1954, the Regency TR-1 radio was officially announced to the world. More than 100,000 pocket radios were eventually sold.

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