

the available published data, checking their validity, etc. I believe that considerable money could be saved by the industry if a well-organized, well-run, statistical data center is set up and the information made available to the supporting companies. Such a center could be a boon to the smaller company that cannot justify maintaining its own statistical files, and, for the larger company that does maintain such files, the cost would be reduced. The fact that we are becoming ever more active in the foreign markets could make this industry data information center even more important, for I am sure most of you know that statistical data availability is different in nearly every country or at least it is not always available from the sources we are accustomed to in this country.

A Statistical Data Center properly planned and manned with competent personnel that would make available all authentic published data on a given subject or subjects on reasonable notice would, in addition to saving cost for the industry, speed up the work of the researcher. If this idea develops to be practical, then the question arises as to who should sponsor such a project. I would suggest that it be sponsored by the American Chemical Society under the auspices of the Chemical Marketing and Economics Division and the Division of Chemical Literature.

SUMMARY

In brief, my thoughts on Management's View of the Marketing Information Problem are:

1. Market research has grown immensely in stature and importance over the last 20 years.
2. Management has reached a stage where it must depend on marketing information to guide it in sound decisions.
3. The need for accurate and timely marketing information will become even more important over the next 20 years.
4. Progress has been and is being made in developing new sources of information, as well as in organizing and utilizing the available information. Statistical data being published today are greatly improved, both in scope and quality. Competition will be ever keener and those companies that move ahead will be the ones that are progressive and have the necessary information to make the right decisions.

We must continue to improve in the development of marketing information, thereby improving the "confidence factor." In this connection, the Statistical Data Center covered earlier is one forward step that will improve the "confidence factor."

Language and Cultural Problems in the Promotion and Marketing of United States Chemical Products Abroad*

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Received May 6, 1964

The new branches of the communication sciences, psychological and cultural linguistics, offer powerful tools for those who wish to use them in dealing with people in other countries and cultures. The effective marketer always must know his customer, but this truism is too frequently ignored when he goes outside his own culture. The inherent friendliness of the American businessman may be thought impertinent or impudent; the words he uses to persuade at home may be considered rude or even obscene in some cultures.

"Let the *seller* beware!" should be the motivating catch phrase in foreign marketing. Let him beware of offending his potential clientele by word or deed. Let him also beware of well-schooled competitors from countries closer to the target markets. The acquisition of psychologically and emotionally charged vocabularies, whether in English or another language, can be a very potent aid to persuasion.

* Presented before the Divisions of Chemical Literature and Chemical Marketing and Economics, 147th National Meeting of the American Chemical Society, Philadelphia, Pa., April 7, 1964.

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We shall divide our discussion of the effective promotion of American chemical products abroad into language and cultural phenomena. Language problems are not necessarily outside of the English which is our usual first language. Nor are the cultural problems necessarily separable from those of language. We shall attempt to show the interaction by explication using cases-in-point. We shall divide out examples by region of the world and by ethnic group.

The English Language.—It is quite definitely true that English has become the international language of business, but it is not true that there is *an* English language. American English varies from one part of the country to another. Words and constructions which amount to colloquialisms are of little value when one must deal with British English-speaking people. Misunderstandings which arise over seemingly small matters of choice of words can cause tense situations. An example could be the use of the word "demand" in the U. K. to mean "purchase order" in the U. S. Likewise the American term "requisition" has a meaning of "taking by authority"

in Britain. A minor crisis arose over this problem in the early days of World War II when the British Purchasing Commission Office in Washington was requested to rewrite orders for chemicals because they were called "demands" and the American chemical industry was sensitive to such strong language.**

Advertising directed to the English-speaking countries is too often a copy of campaigns made here at home. American consumer motivations are quite different from those of India, Kenya, Republic of South Africa, Ghana, or even in Great Britain itself. More will be said on this subject when the non-English speaking parts of the world are discussed below.

Chemical terminology used in America is not always understood in other English-speaking countries. Our tendency to create new words, acronyms, or trade names, some of which have been accepted as generic to a set of derivative materials, has caused discomfort in communicating with British business people, and most particularly have problems been caused in former British colonies, now independent nations. In these emerging nations, whose commerce has been dominated by British business terminology before independence, localisms have become a part of the language used in that area. These words and their meanings must be known and understood if communication is to be satisfactory in conversation, agreements, or advertising.

The Other Languages.—Although English is acknowledged as the *lingua internationale* of business, there are certain inherent problems when written communications are exchanged between American and foreign firms. If one is attempting to lay the groundwork for some sort of contractual relationship, it is very important that the foreign correspondent be asked whether he prefers letters in his own language or English.

Let us assume that the overseas client indicates that his own language is preferred although he does know English. The American executive who does not know the language required is perhaps placed in the position of signing a letter or contract draft which he himself cannot read. Errors in translation or even in understanding by the translator of what the executive had drafted in English can cause serious handicaps in communication. To compensate for this possibility many foreign firms have adopted the very practical solution of using two-column letter paper with the local language message in one column and the translated version in the other. It is a pity that American firms do not adopt a similar technique.

When a contractual agreement is drafted, the legal version must be designated as the English or foreign language translation. In either circumstance, essential contract details should be copiously footnoted to ensure full understanding of conditions by the signatories.

Promotional material in English sent abroad to non-English speaking countries is about as useful as having an Indian company send a sales brochure to you in Bengali and would probably be filed in the same place—the waste basket. More important to getting your promotional message across, do *not* attempt to translate directly a

promotional piece no matter how effective it has been at home. It must be trans-cultured as well as translated. The image of your company and your products is created by your promotional literature. Ensure that that image is understood by the foreign recipient by associating your product with things with which he can identify. Don't make the common mistake of using, for example, units of measurement not prevalent in the target area. The metric system is used more widely than the pound-inch-ounce system.

If you are preparing catalogs for overseas use, make sure that the product nomenclature is common in the foreign language. Don't include prices in your catalog, but convey them in a separate publication since one foreign language catalog may be useful in several countries. For example, the French language version would be commonly used in North Africa and the Middle East while a separate price schedule can be made in the money units of each country rather than a separate catalog for each country.

A more subtle way in which information on American chemical products can be disseminated abroad is through product specifications and standards. German chemical firms have had good results from translations into Spanish and Portuguese of such technical materials for distribution in Latin America. Although most scientists in the United States prefer to publish their technical papers here, an occasional paper submitted to qualified journals abroad helps to establish the reputation of a firm in a target area. In fact, such papers can easily be used as "door-openers" with potential customers. Again the accent must be placed on being sure that the translations are good and in the vocabulary of the scientific community of the foreign area.

Verbal presentations in the form of formal speeches or informal conversations should be in the language of the country if possible. But be sure you know the local variation of language to maximize your communicated message. A manager of a Czech trade fair in Bombay opened the fair with a speech before 100,000 people in almost perfect Hindi. The lack of response on the part of his audience was explained by the fact that Gujarati and Marathi are the languages of the Bombay region. Probably no more than a handful of people present knew what he was saying. He might as well have spoken in Czech.

Trans-Culturation.—The marketing problems created by differences in cultures are probably even more severe than those of language. A language can be learned without ever having seen the area of the world in which the language is used. Cultural values are not so easily assimilated. The anthropologist says culture is defined as the sum of the behavior patterns, attitudes, and morals of a society which is transmitted from one generation to another. This definition is too introspective and absolute to suit me. I prefer to think of cultural values of the many societies as being the interaction among the societies of the qualities listed by the anthropologist.

Although we always tend to judge other cultures in terms of our own, we do admire certain aspects of these cultures. The proof lies in the magic of the word "imported" on any product for sale in this country. This is not uniformly the case abroad. In Europe the preferences are decidedly in favor of European products with the price differential being only a minor reason for this preference. When the reasons are analyzed, we find

** W. Hepburn Chamberlain, private communication. Colonel Chamberlain was in the British Purchasing Commission at the time.

that business methods used by Americans are frequently cited as inconsistent with local custom.

The inability or lack of desire of American business people to do more than one thing at a time has frustrated many a visitor to a foreign businessman. Even with an appointment set well in advance (a *sine qua non* for meeting foreign business people), the American is disturbed when matters not relevant to the agenda are constantly distracting the potential client. This situation obtains throughout Latin America. The opposite of this type of distraction occurs in the Far East, where I have sat over tea or coffee for several hours before it was apparent that the businessman was ready to talk about the subject uppermost in my mind.

Some Observations.—Although my subject is the promotion and marketing of chemical products, it should be apparent that I believe that the problems I have described apply to all forms of international business. Those who wish to penetrate the emerging markets of the world must build on European and Far Eastern marketing techniques. It is as absurd for us to attempt to use their methods in our culture as to try to force ours on them.

The schools of business administration of our universities and the professional management training organizations would be well advised to develop curricula for training Americans in the promotion and marketing of American products in the context of business practices of the target areas. Joint efforts between the departments of languages, anthropology, sociology, and business administration together with intern programs could develop international marketeers who would think in terms of a specific area of the world and avoid the frustrating loss of business because of, to use a strong word, incompetency. The type training which is needed is not primarily that commonly associated with marketing and business methods. It is rather a technique for identifying

traits and values that dominate a society or business community, and then interpreting them in terms of the marketing or manufacturing project being planned.

Some companies have chosen to train foreign nationals in their own sales, promotional, or manufacturing methods. The vulnerability of these companies to loss of trade secrets is high. The loss of investment in a foreign national who can command a higher position in local companies as a result of his American training is another vulnerability.

Europe is becoming prosperous at a great rate, but the American businessman finds frustration in the fact that business methods are similar to those used here over a generation ago. He tends to insist on breaking traditions at too fast a rate, instead of accommodating to the pace and method of Europe and persuading from within. With our great technological and marketing know-how, it will be a shame if we get there "lastest with the leastest" just because we insist that all foreign markets must conform to American business methods.

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European Chemical Market and Economic Information. Problems, Approaches, and Sources*

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Received May 19, 1964

Our objective in preparing this paper has been primarily to set down in an orderly fashion those tools which we use daily, or occasionally, to develop as sound and thorough as possible commercial information to guide our Company's chemical activities in Europe. We should add that the content of our paper is not limited to chemical product export marketing alone, but includes information

for other areas of international chemical business, namely, licensing, joint-venturing, and investment studies in Europe.

Before getting down to specific problems on the European scene, let us put these problems into context by thinking about the information needs in Europe of an American chemical company, and specifically, its International Division or otherwise designated group charged with international business activity. These information needs may take on extra dimensions in comparison to the United States.

* Presented before the Divisions of Chemical Literature and Chemical Marketing and Economics, 147th National Meeting of the American Chemical Society, Philadelphia, Pa., April 7, 1964.