

House Organ Editor's Conference

The Consumer House Organ

By ARTHUR WEST
Editor, Buick Bulletin

WE started out about four years ago with an internal house organ, a four-page newspaper sheet gotten up very cheaply and carelessly, circulating among our dealers. About two years ago we started on a different basis. We changed the paper to a magazine of sixteen pages, with a quarter million circulation, and it costs about \$7,000 or \$8,000 a month to print.

The method of circulation is this: We have about four thousand dealers in the country and each dealer sends us a list of names of those to whom he thinks he can some day sell an automobile. He makes up this list and each month we charge him two cents for sending the magazine to each man. If for any reason we have to guarantee return postage, and the magazine is not delivered, the dealer puts in a new name.

About six months ago, we wondered just what our dealers thought of the magazine, and we wrote them a letter and asked them, and from the replies that we received, we decided to make our dealers buy it, so we add the cost of the magazines to each fifth car that the dealer receives so that our dealers are now paying for the magazine.

The Internal House Organ

By ALBERT WORTMAN
YAWMAN & EBBE

THERE developed a need for something that would keep the office and factory employees interested in their individual work. The need of another house organ was felt, which could be devoted entirely to them—an internal house organ. It resulted in *The "Y and E" News*.

Briefly the idea was this: To offer prizes to employees for suggestions. These suggestions were to be about improvements in their environment or in their work or in the products that they were working on. The whole plan was to be fostered by the proposed new house organ.

It was instantly seen that this suggestion plan, if properly handled in the house organ, would develop individual ability on the part of the employees and would certainly make them think for themselves and keep their eyes open. It would develop their ambitions and quite conceivably it might give the company some ideas that would make for economy or efficiency or safety or the improvement of our products. Needless to say the plan was adopted. A four-page, eight and one-half by eleven inch sheet was published announcing the Employees' Suggestion Plan and it became the first number of *"The 'Y and E' News."*

In the second issue of *The News* we showed a line cut of the actual checks that had been paid out to the first prize winners, also half tone portraits of the men. This started another riot and another flood of suggestions—these mostly new ones, thought up on purpose. Suggestions came in so thick that the Board of Awards Committee, which was, by the way, composed of some of our best men, was seriously handicapped in their regular work.

The psychology of this thing was right. I have seen people turn "green with envy" as the phrase goes, because some insignificant pup in the same department had got a prize and official recognition just because he happened to see something that was perfectly obvious to anybody who had

eyes to see. So by means of *The News* they were all set to thinking; they became more observant—even, I might say, more intelligent workmen. They took new interest in their work and incidentally all the little odds and ends of inefficiency which the superintendents and executives up high could not see, because they were not there to see, began to correct themselves.

Well, up toward a thousand suggestions have already been received. No effort was made to get them except through the house organ. Many of them were absolutely useless except in that they had made the individuals think. Many others did not entitle the senders to cash prizes for one reason or another, but to these men—and by the way, a good proportion of our women employees also sent in suggestions—were given the Certificate of Award of Merit, signed by Mr. Erbe.

Swapping not Swiping

By ROBERT E. RAMSEY
ART METAL CONSTRUCTION CO.

INSTEAD of giving you a number of moments of what I think on this subject of swapping house organs, I am going to quote a dozen or more nationally known house organ editors, telling you just what they think of it.

I first sent a letter of research to two hundred and twenty-eight house organs. Two hundred and nineteen answered; one hundred and fifteen agreed to exchange; fifty-nine stated that they did get usable ideas from the other fellow's house organ; twelve declined to exchange; thirty had been discontinued and so advised me; three had a rule of sending it to a particular class only.

Libby, McNeil & Libby say: "We were often able to glean usable ideas." H. W. Straus & Co.: "We have gotten a good many ideas out of exchanges." Browning, King & Co.: "I always look over my exchanges with interest and sometimes with benefit to myself." Henry Diaston & Sons: "I am always glad to look over the house organs that may reach my desk, not so much as for the purpose of patterning crucibles as to get new slants and angles of other editors. This practice I have found very helpful." A. Stein & Co.: "We often get valuable hints from other publications." The Larkin Co.: "Frank to admit that many ideas are suggested through this interchange. Always glad to exchange." Gage Brothers & Co., these people come neerer hitting my own personal opinion than the other dozen and they say that the mutual interchange of house organs is beneficial to both parties, regardless of how diversified their lines may be. A great many ideas conveyed in house organs may be utilized in another line, if mixed with a little imagination and brains.

Don't think my swapping idea means that you are not going to do some thinking. No, sir; you have got to supply the brains and imagination.

Note, I say swapping and not swiping. I don't mean slavishly copying the other fellow's stuff in toto and forgetting to put his name on it, though as the editor of an Illinois house organ says: "We frequently find the other fellow's stuff so much better than our own that we are glad indeed to appropriate it and there seems to be a fraternal feeling amongst house organ editors and they do not find any fault when this is done."

Does exchanging or swapping hurt your originality? No. As the editor of *"The Mirror"* of the Chas. Williams Stores so well said: "We make it a practice to use original material almost entirely, but have found ideas in other publications very helpful."

Making the Employees' Magazine Worth While

By GAIL MURPHY

Advertising Manager, CHALMERS MOTOR CO.

I THOUGHT you might like to get another viewpoint of the house organ from the manufacturer's standpoint. We believe that the thing to do is keep our customers ours, and we want our house organ to keep our customers boosters. While we do not talk "Chalmers" in the house organ, we give hints on the care of the car.

As E. St. Elmo Lewis said, the man getting out the house organ has to be careful to prevent in-growing editorship. Some people will say that if we have our employees edit our house organ, they will not put the right kind of stuff in it. All I would say is try it out, and you will be surprised at the kind of material you will get. It develops the latent talent in the organization. Of course the censorship rests with the editor. The editor can see that nothing goes in that he does not want there.

One of the biggest things about having a successful house organ is to have the right kind of paper. A sense of news is very important. Take commonplace things—find points of interest. There should be a good mixture. Get next to the men in the factory. Get their confidence. The editor must also know the policies of the men.

A great many cases require diplomacy. At the same time, if you turn a man down cold he will not come back and give you anything else. Therefore, you must be able to tell him why he cannot have his article published. Next time he will submit something different. The editor should have an editorial staff to help him. Take the men into your confidence and tell them it is up to them to see that their department is represented. The only way to have them represented is to pick out one man, the best man in the department, to collect this material. Create competition among the foremen to get men to see that they are represented in each number.

As soon as this staff of correspondents is selected, we hold a meeting of the correspondents, talk the thing over with them, tell them they can help, and how. We impress upon these correspondents the fact that this is their paper. It is up to them whether it makes good. We publish a list of the correspondents with their departments and their pictures. We also get them in the habit of sending suggestions to us. We hold meetings of the correspondents after every issue to find what was in the magazine, and what was left out. We give credit to the fellows who had done good and kept the thing alive.

How to Get House Organ Editorial Matter

By FRANK J. McGRANN
GUARANTY TRUST COMPANY

IN getting out a house organ for employees, the very first thing to determine is your editorial policy. Who and what are you driving at? What do you wish to accomplish? In designing this policy you must shape it strictly in accord with the policy of your company.

Some things which should absolutely be avoided are the discussion of politics, religion and such purely personal subjects.

To carry out and secure the benefits of the work outlined by your editorial policy, it is necessary to carry nothing in the paper that would not be interesting to your employees. I daresay that many an editor of an internal organ has had to fill many inches of space with the so-called

overworked, lacking of interest, dried out filler. Now there is no excuse for any editor plastering up a lot of good space which your company pays good money for, and expects you to use for other purposes, with such stuff. One of your greatest sources of information is your own employees. Make them send to you everything of interest happening in their departments. Establish departments, such as department notes; and if you have a club, club notes; social notes, and if your company maintains a library, run book criticisms, suggestions of what books to read, etc. Carry family notes, such as births, marriages, engagements, and while not the most pleasant—deaths. Tell where the boys are spending their vacations and what they are doing in the line of athletics. These are the things your people want to read about. Avoid cold facts, and uninteresting statistics. If you have any "O. Henrys" in your crowd, get them to write apropos fiction. Promotions and recognitions of your men should be written up.

I believe you will agree with me when I say that you should not solicit outside advertising to pay the freight of your paper. And by paying the freight I mean making the other fellow pay for your desires and accomplishments. Assuming, of course, that you have—as most internal organs have—a small outside mailing list, it is very enticing when you think of a revenue that you can get in the form of advertising from people with whom you do business. *This is a holdup.* The only difference between this and cracking a man on the head with the butt of a gun is that you are within the law, and the other man gets about ten years in jail.

Publishing a House Organ to Bank Customers

By THEODORE JESSUP

WOODLAWN TRUST & SAVINGS COMPANY

THE eight arguments in favor of publishing a house organ to the customers of a financial institution, line up about as follows:

1. It is classed by its recipient with the best of the magazines and not as a mere advertisement and receives more careful reading as a consequence.
2. It is an information bureau of the work done in each department of the bank.
3. It is a financial educator in its community.
4. It gives the bank leadership, standing and dignity.
5. It stimulates dormant accounts.
6. It advertises the bank's various seasonal services.
7. It serves as an announcement bulletin; and reduces other forms of advertising expense.
8. It humanizes the bank to the customer.

Is there any one of these things which it is not desirable for a bank to bring about? Is there any way it can be brought about so thoroughly, so economically, so agreeably, as through the house organ?

The cost of publication, compared with other forms of publicity, is not large. Five thousand copies, every other month in the year, can be delivered at a cost of not to exceed twenty-five cents per customer. Monthly service would not be double that. Naturally the smaller the issue, the higher the cost, but even a circulation of 2,000 bi-monthly should not cost fifty cents per customer. Lower estimates may be made by the professional advertising gentlemen gathered hereabout, I speak as a layman, but below a certain point the cheaper they are the less valuable they become.

MRS. GERTRUDE EPPERSON BOAS has become a member of the Hoyt's Service, Inc., New York City, to take charge of a department known as "Women's Interests." Mr. Boas was formerly on the editorial staff of the *Ladies' Home Journal*.

Sentences from the Big Speeches at Philadelphia

The President of the United States

I feel perfectly safe in the hands of the average body of my fellow citizens. You are bound to feel safe in their hands. If they don't believe in you, you can't sell anything. Your vitality comes from them to you. It doesn't go from you to them, and the theory of Government which I decline to subscribe to is that the vitality of the nation comes out of positive counsels where a few men determine the policy of the country. And so, gentlemen, I feel at home in this company, not because I advertise, but because I have got principles that I am perfectly willing to expose to the public view.

I came merely to show my profound

Governor Brumbaugh

While it is not my province to advise, I believe that the true advertising agent will be as frank with his clients as is a dependable lawyer. To advise wisely the man of productive genius requires skill of the highest order and the men in the advertising business should be trained, skilled, capable men of high character and business insight. It might be well to license after proper tests those that buy, make or sell advertising. This would not only be a protection to the producer and to the consumer, but it would place the men in this business upon a basis of professional security of great significance and value.

interest in a body of men who are not only devoted to business, but devoted to ideals.

Business is right so long as it isn't sordid, and it can't be sordid if it is shot through with ideals. A man, no matter how humble his business, can hold his head up among the princes of the world if, as he ought to do, he will think.

As the servant of the people and not as their master, as one who would serve and not one who would govern, I congratulate you, my fellow-citizens, upon the ideals of a profession which can lower or exalt business as you choose, and which you have chosen to employ for its exaltation.

The Hon. Franklin K. Lane

What is the American spirit? Is it love of adventure? Two years ago Congress authorized the construction of a railroad in Alaska—five miles straight-away from the sea to the circle. We needed a thousand men, and within sixty days thirty-three thousand had made petition that they might take the hazards of that new country—not idlers, the flotsam of the sea of civilization, but men of steady habit.

There is no sense in saying that the spirit has gone out of a people when we as a landed proprietor are selling twelve million acres of desert every year to people who earn it by living on it.

The Text of the Legislative Enactment Secured by Asheville for Development Purposes

An Act to Aid in the Development of the City of Asheville.

The General Assembly of North Carolina do enact:

SECTION 1. That the mayor and board of aldermen of the city of Asheville shall annually set apart and appropriate from the funds derived annually from general taxes in said city an amount not less than one-fortieth of one per cent, nor more than one-tenth of one per cent upon the assessed valuation of all real and personal property taxable in said city, which funds shall be used and expended under the direction and control of the mayor and board of aldermen of said city, and the directors of the Board of Trade of Asheville, under such rules and regulations as they shall prescribe, for the purpose of aiding and encouraging the location of manufacturing, industrial and commercial plants in and near said city, the encouraging of the building of railroads thereto, and for such other purposes as will, in the discretion of said mayor and board of aldermen, and directors of the Board of Trade of Asheville, increase the population, taxable property and business property of said city.

Sec. 2. That said appropriation of funds shall not be made unless authorized by a vote of the

majority of the qualified voters of the city of Asheville at the next public election to be held in said city for the election of a mayor and board of aldermen thereof, at which election these qualified voters in said city who favor the making of such appropriation herein provided shall vote ballots having the words "For Appropriation" written or printed thereon, and those opposed to said appropriation shall vote ballots having the words "Against Appropriation" written or printed thereon; and if at such election a majority of qualified voters of said city shall cast ballots having the words "For Appropriation" written or printed thereon, then said mayor and board of aldermen shall make such appropriation as hereinbefore specified.

Sec. 3. That there shall be a separate box in which the ballots cast at said election shall be placed, and the result thereof shall be canvassed, determined, certified and accorded as the results of other elections in said city, and said election shall be held generally under the rules prescribed by law for the election of mayor and board of aldermen thereof.

Sec. 4. That this act shall be in force and effect from and after its ratification.

Ratified, this the 8th day of February.

**“WHEN ADVERTISERS LEARN
TO DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN
‘READERS’ AND ‘CIRCULATION’
AND DEMAND READERS RATHER
THAN MERE CIRCULATION, THEN
AND THEN ONLY WILL CONDI-
TIONS IMPROVE.”**

IF the experienced Advertisers who signed this Bulletin of the Association of National Advertisers believe the method of obtaining circulation is of greater importance than volume—

The policy of the Munsey Magazines would seem to be right.

Their circulation is full paid—unbribed—and strictly voluntary. And every copy is *read* from cover to cover—for these publications offer the purchaser absolutely no incentive other than their editorial contents.

The Munsey publications give the greatest buying power per unit of any group of National Magazines.

**A. N. A. Starts Agitation
Against “Forced Circulation”**

The Association of National Advertisers, through its circulation audit committee, announces what is in effect a campaign against forced circulations. In a news bulletin sent to the 250 members of the Association recently, it urges advertisers to give greater attention to quality of circulation and to the methods by which publishers secure subscribers. The bulletin reads in large part as follows:

“Every morning’s mail brings you notices of advance in advertising rates, based on increases in circulation. How do they get the increases in circulation? Sometimes by selling it, sometimes by giving it away and sometimes by *buying* it.

“It is partly our fault. The publishers have gone circulation mad and we are largely to blame. We have asked: ‘How much have you?’ and have failed to ask the equally important question: ‘How did you get it?’

“The quality of our copy has improved mightily in the past decade. We have learned co-operation with the Sales Department, we have learned about intelligent follow-up. Our merchandising methods have improved to a marked degree. But advertising is not as profitable as it used to be.

“Why?
“Because, like the Post Office Department, we are losing vast sums of money on second-class matter.

“Because the publications, in a seriously large number of cases, are not *building up subscription lists*; they are scrambling for names. Picture contests in which the lottery law is cleverly evaded, the instalment plans, certain classes of subscription agencies, the premiums to the subscriber, the subscriptions from solicitors who are authorized to *keep all the money they collect* (and often collect but a small fraction of what the printed slip says they collected), mean waste, waste, waste.

“Audited circulation statements as to the ‘how much’ are now readily obtainable. When carefully read, they give something of a hint as to how the circulation was obtained—enough of a hint to enable you to go further with your investigations in the suspicious cases.

“To the proper use of premiums and subscription agencies there is no objection. Their *abuse* should be given wide publicity. In future Bulletins from this committee and through the weekly News Bulletin, we shall show some of the things that are being done by publishers in the way of forcing circulation. These must not be considered attacks on any publication. They are not to be anything of the kind, but they will be shown simply to indicate to you the methods that are now in use.

“When advertisers learn to discriminate between ‘readers’ and ‘circulation’ and demand readers rather than mere circulation, then and then only will the conditions improve.

“F. G. EASTMAN,

“O. C. HARR,

“W. E. HUMELBAUGH,

“E. M. PETTIT,

“E. W. SIMONS,

“HARRY TIPPER,

“L. B. JONES, Chairman,

“Circulation Audit Committee.”

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THE FRANK A. MUNSEY COMPANY

Munsey’s Magazine **The Argosy** **All Story Weekly** **Railroad Man’s Magazine**
Chicago **New York** **Boston**