

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ADVERTISING.

Just why should a manufacturer, jobber or retailer advertise? What distinction should be made between advertising and pushing specific items at a stated price, and advertising a general product such as jewelry and advertising a single firm such as your own store or business? Just what is meant by the term general publicity? How does it help? Why does one firm advertise nothing but a product and another only the firm? For instance, why does Tiffany never advertise anything but Tiffany, while Wrigley advertises only chewing gum, and Marshall Field advertises sometimes goods and sometimes nothing but the store?

We received the above questions in a letter from a retailer recently and it occurs to us that they contain the whole question of advertising, which is now so prominently before the jewelry trade.

Perhaps we can make things plainer by putting the jeweler in the position of the consumer. It is different to do this with jewelry. He knows too much about it and he has assumed the distributor's attitude in regard to it for so long that it is harder for him to assume the consumer's attitude. Let us assume therefore, that he wants something else—say a typewriter.

Psychology teaches us that the human mind is made up of thought complexes. A complex is composed of all you have ever thought about any one thing or subject. All these thoughts are grouped together by association, with all others forming the particular complex. They are remembered or recalled to the conscious mind also by association, just as we say "one thing leads to another." Each thought is a link in a chain of related thoughts. In remembering, one thought brings another in rapid succession as long as you do not break the chain by changing to some other subject or complex. Every human mind has thousands of complexes, but we are now concerned with the typewriter complex, how it is built up in the mind of the prospect, and how it affects him.

We will assume that the mind of a person is a blank regarding typewriters. Then he hears the name of a certain make of typewriter with a description of the machine. From time to time he thinks, reads and hears of this machine. The complex grows larger and stronger with each added thought. For him there is no other kind of typewriter. When he buys a machine it will be this one. These statements are supported by scientific knowledge. If you doubt the control a complex has on the mind, try to persuade a dyed-in-the-wool Democrat to vote the straight Republican ticket. Or try to get the owner of a Cadillac car to change over to a Ford. Complexes control us. We do not control them. Every man has met the person who vows that a positively inferior make is the best machine made. He really thinks it is. Why? Because it is the only machine he has ever used, and he knows nothing about any other kind, says the Business Machine World.

To have a complex on only one kind is exceptional, in that there are no conflicting complexes. Now, instead of having a complex on one kind of machine, suppose the prospect has one for each of two or more different makes. The one he has thought about the most will be the strongest, and that is the machine he will buy. Building a strong complex is just a matter of addition; adding to it thought by thought. The

purpose of the advertiser is to make the prospective customer think about his goods to the exclusion of all others.

Fill the prospect's mind every chance you get, in every conceivable way, with thoughts, ideas and impressions of your goods. And always remember this: That every thought about your goods will be added to the prospect's complex. And every thought is on the job working for you.

This is what is accomplished by general publicity, and it works with every class of goods from automobiles to canned peas or chewing gum. That is why your real competitors are the dealers in advertised goods in all lines—not the jeweler in the next block. If he is advertising he is helping you to form the jewelry complex in the minds of the public instead of the paint complex or the automobile complex.

Knowing what we do of thought complexes, how can we cash in on it? Simply by using every means available to put our proposition before the greatest number of people possible, as often as we can. There are two ways of doing this selling by advertising and personal salesmanship.

The most powerful force in the world today is publicity—advertising. This is because of its ready distribution, its penetration, and the fact that a reader can't argue with it. If you formulate an objection in your mind, it does not answer but keeps on stating its cause. It does this in the home; on the street cars; in the private office of the general manager. It is everywhere at once.

Advertising will reach thousands in a salesman's territory every day. He can personally reach a dozen or so. Consequently the more advertising he has to help him the more sales he will close.

With enough continuous publicity behind an idea the whole human race can be put to thinking about it. They can be made to give up their money, property and their very lives to an idea or cause. Advertising, national, local and direct, will sell any good article. It will also sell an inferior article, but the results are, of course, not lasting. The salesman who tries to sell an article not advertised is badly handicapped before he begins.

Local newspaper advertising is a strong and effective means of broadcasting the dealer's message. Trade journals are the cheapest and most effective means of reaching the dealers. In stressing advertising there is no intention to cast reflections upon the salesman. The salesman and his work of closing sales begun by advertising are so important that it is not possible to cover it in this article.

It has been only a few years since psychology was to the average man a dull, dry subject, read by most of us after retiring, to help us to fall asleep. But today psychology speaks a language we can all understand. Every human action is caused and governed by some psychological law, and if we want to get the most out of our lives we will learn all we can about these laws.

Forming thought complexes in favor of your goods in the minds of your public in every possible way is the chief thing to be accomplished by your advertising in all its forms. That is why the older firm benefits the most from its current advertising. It has already formed more favorable complexes in the minds of more people and therefore can cash in on its current offerings with more people—customers—or in other words its "good will" has a greater cash value in proportion to the greater length of time and greater extent of its advertising.

Favorable thought complexes mean good will, reputation, prestige or whatever you desire to call them. They are produced by advertising in all ways over a series of years. This applies to classes of goods, to individuals, firms and specific maker of items.

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