

# **HOW TO MAKE MORE MONEY**

## **Part One**

By Louis Guenther  
with comments by Ken McCarthy

# History repeats itself... and smart people pay attention

The author of this book, Louis Guenther, was one of the greatest marketers of all time.

Not only did he create a massively successful publishing empire himself (he was one of the first to market daily stock quotes), his students (employees) were also massively successful as well. Ever heard of Forbes or Barron's? Both of these financial publishing giants were founded by Guenther alumni.

The book you're holding in your hands (or reading off a screen) predates the Claude Hopkins classic Scientific Advertising by twenty years. It is the first serious book ever written on the subject of direct marketing, which back in those days was known as "mail order."

"How to Make More Money" was first published in 1907 and was based on a collection of articles that Guenther had written over a two year period. Fortunately for us Guenther was not only a superb businessman, he was also an excellent teacher which probably explains why so many of his student-employees built huge businesses after going out on their own.

When the information for this book was gathered, the mail order industry was only fifteen years old.

Note the coincidence: Internet marketing, which began for real in the year 1993, is just about the same age at the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this important book's new annotated edition. Mail order was just 15 years old in 1907. Internet marketing is about the same age in 2007.

For those of us who've been involved with Internet marketing since the beginning, it's easy to lose sight of the fact that we are still in the very earliest stages of the industry's evolution. Truly, the best is yet to come. Guenther wisely recognized this about the mail order industry in 1907 – and boy was he right.

Knowing that mail order in 1907 was on the verge of a massive breakout wasn't the only thing Guenther got right.

As you'll see when you read this book, he was right about two other big things as well: 1) what to sell and 2) how to sell it.

In fact, a shockingly large percentage of the advice Guenther gives in this 1907 tome is not only right on target for today's Internet marketer, it's even ahead of the curve.

Now, keep in mind, the case studies – and prices – Guenther uses to illustrate his points come from business as it was 100 years ago and sometimes the language he chooses sound strange to our modern ear, but don't let the occasional anachronisms throw you off the trail.

Guenther was one of the great masters of selling at a distance and we're all very lucky to have his blunt, no nonsense and highly insightful book.

Ken McCarthy

# How to Make More Money

Or

## Selling by Mail

By Louis Guenther

A SERIES of Articles on the Mail Order Business, Touching Upon Every Phase of the Subject, Not Only in a General Way, But Dwelling Upon Its Application to Specific Businesses; Giving Illustrations of Successes and Failures and the Reasons Why. **Most Complete and Thorough Exposition of the Subject Ever Attempted.**

# INTRODUCTION

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Under the caption of “The Spread of the Mail Order Idea,” the contents of this book were run serially in the Mail Order Journal, in 24 installments, covering a period of two years. Each chapter is an exhaustive treatise, covering in all its phases, a special subject devoted to a branch of the mail order business.

The mail order way of doing business is undoubtedly the coming method of doing business. There is now hardly a mercantile institution, wholesale or retail, a financial institution, a manufacturing establishment, etc., that has not its mail order department if at all progressive and up-to-date. Even the farmer can go into the business and sell his livestock and farm products by mail to dealers in the country and city and receive more for his goods than if sold to a local dealer, or through agents to whom he must pay commissions. It has been the aim of the author to acquaint those already in the business how to enlarge their businesses by adding new lines, using better methods, more effective advertising, etc.; to show the professional man – no matter what his line – how to **sell the efforts of his brains to a larger clientele than he could ever acquire in his town or city**; to show the farmer how he can make more money out of his farm by selling his products by mail; and, lastly, to show the young man or woman how to start in business for himself or herself.

Aside from the financial value of the business to those engaged in it, and those benefited by it directly, or indirectly, **the mail order way of doing business is one of the greatest educators of modern times**. The United States is essentially a commercial nation and as such is rapidly climbing to the foremost position among the nations of the world. Millions of pieces of literature, in the shape of catalogs, booklets, circulars, letters, etc., running from 2 pages to nearly 2,000, are daily sent through the mails to millions of homes throughout the country, and this literature helps to teach the most isolated communities, or families, the most up-to-date methods of doing business. Many an illiterate member of a family, or an entire family, in an out-of-the-way place, have learned to read and write in order to take advantage to buy special goods not obtainable in their respective localities, or to take advantage of the lower prices by ordering by mail. And so it is safe to say that the coming generation of Americans will know more of business and business methods than all other nations of the world combined, and the mail order way of doing business will be mainly responsible for that condition. So **the value of the mail order way of doing business economically, financially and educationally cannot be overstated.**

The Author

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# The Spread of the Mail Order Idea.

Practically Every Line of Business Now Being Carried on in a Mail Order Way – Greatest Development Yet to Come – The Reasons for It – Legitimate Goods and Methods Superseding the Clap-Trap.

## Chapter I

**Selling by mail is the future method of doing business.** It is even now a business of great proportions, but in magnitude nothing like to the size it will attain in the near future. Off-handedly, this assertion may appear as a very broad statement to make, but when the facts are placed side by side with it, these facts, which are in existence all about us, bear out the truth of the statement.

Merchants in all lines of trade, throughout the country, are recognizing more and more, the importance of the mail order business.

Men of small means but good business ability are attracted to the mail order business, as they recognize in it the one remaining avenue which still offers limitless opportunities to make great strides with small capital for a beginning.

For a business to have reached a point where it focuses the attention of the entire world upon it, there must exist some reason for it, as the conditions responsible for it are only created by underlying causes that affect the life of the trade itself. The question naturally arises, what are these conditions?

They are simply economy and convenience.

**It costs less to sell, and it is more convenient to buy by mail.**

That is what has made the mail order business and what is causing it to grow so phenomenally every year.

When businessmen find out it is less expensive to sell by mail they arrive at the logical conclusion that it is a good business to go into. If they already have an established retail business the idea of adding to it a mail order department not only becomes very popular, but it receives serious attention from them.

On the other hand, the public will always buy where it can buy cheapest and where it is most convenient to do its trading.

And to both these susceptibilities, which is an inherent trait of most men and women, the mail order business appeals. To a greater degree is this so, at present, with people living in small towns and on the farms, than with the residents of the metropolitan centers, but even in these ramifications of the large retail business the advantages of buying by mail, are securing a strong foothold.

**It is impossible to deny that men and women will shop where it is most convenient and where they can make their purchases the cheapest.**

We ourselves will do this; we have seen members of our immediate families do it and if true of us the same traits will compel others to do the same thing.

Some may not care at all about saving any money on what they buy, but there are a few of such people and they are soon lost among the vast horde made up of those whose every action is governed by the price of an article.

It is the majority, not the minority, which controls the character and volume of a business, whatever its nature may be.

With a simple illustration, I am going to bring home to you how prices govern our buying habits.

Suppose, as an example, actual necessity for a suitcase compelled you to think seriously about purchasing one, and a suitcase tagged \$18.50, exhibited in Marshall Field & Co.'s window,



attracted your attention as you were passing; it seemed reasonable enough and you made up your mind to come down the next day and buy it. At home that evening while looking over the advertising section of the McClure's Magazine you happened to see an ad from a responsible concern offering a much better suitcase than the one in Marshall Field & Co.'s window, for \$14.50, shipped, express prepaid, direct to your home, and "money back if not satisfactory." Which of those suitcases would you buy?

This is what is being done every day. Through advertising and catalogues more and more people are taught, every year, how money can be saved by buying by mail. The mail order merchant, by selling in large quantities, can make a more reasonable price than the local retailer and when they come in competition with each other it is the merchant whose price is the lowest that carries off the order. This merchant usually is the mail order merchant.

When the mail order business was still very young, attempts were made to get manufacturers to refuse to sell goods to the mail order trade, but the efforts proved abortive, as control over this business was not vested in manufacturers – it lay exclusively with the superior facilities of our own government's postal service.

As soon as manufacturers saw that merchants in the mail order business did not ask for any concessions, but were willing to pay the same net prices as the retail trade, they were anxious to transact business with them, and naturally this anxiety grew apace with the increasing volume of orders that kept coming from mail order merchants.

Mail order men don't buy their goods any cheaper than do the merchants who own big department stores, but their advantage lies in the fact that they are able to sell the very same articles for less money; their profits are not eaten up by large rents, costly furnishings and high priced help.

It is the expense in conducting a business that governs its success, not the margin of its profits. To a certain extent environments and the territory from which business can be drawn are also factors, but they are of minor importance, and in all these things conditions favor the mail order business.

### *Less Expense Means More Profit*

What good is a 100% profit if it takes 90% of it to obtain every customer? Is it not more profitable to have but 20% as a margin of profit with a selling expense of only 3%? On the first example, \$1,000 worth of business would net only \$100, while the other, with one-fifth this margin, would realize on the same amount \$170 profit.

Herein lies the difference between the local and the mail order business. With that \$70 more profit, by using only a part of it, the customer of the former is drawn to trade with the latter, because he offers the same goods for less money.

A businessman of Saginaw, Mich., told me of an experience which will show how a mail order concern will sometimes carry coal to Newcastle. His wife wanted a music cabinet, and went to one of the retail stores there to buy one, but the price, which was \$10, was too high, so she let the matter rest until the next time she came to Chicago, where she bought this identical music cabinet for \$8.50.

The husband knew the manufacturer and so the next time he saw him, he asked how it was possible for a Chicago mail order house to sell his music cabinet cheaper than could the local merchants in his own town, and was quite puzzled about it until I explained the matter, for the manufacturer assured him that the Chicago concern paid him exactly what the local merchants did for his goods.

The Chicago mail order merchant was selling possibly a hundred cabinets a week, whereas the Saginaw merchant sold only ten, figuratively speaking, and he was satisfied with a profit of \$50 on the hundred while the other man at \$10 was only making \$20 and was buying the cabinets right at home, without any freight charges, and yet could not compete with a merchant

over 200 miles away. The retail dealer had to sell the cabinets for \$10, as his business must be done on a margin which pays expenses and a profit.

Let us for the sake of comparison place the two businesses side by side. Here is what we find aligned with the retail business: store, rental for ground floor space on a frequently traversed street where such rentals are always high, window displays, light, insurance, considerable clerical help, loss on credit accounts, wear and tear in handling goods to show them, and a restricted territory in which to obtain business, for people can only be induced to come to a store from a convenient distance. If a store should be located on the principal retail shopping street it has congested in the same territory the principal competitors; amongst them the trade of a limited population is divided and all the merchants are kept on a keen edge constantly devising effective plans to capture their share of trade.

### *Mail Order Dealer Saves in Many Ways*

On the other hand, the merchant doing a mail order business has in his favor the cheapest rent, for location with him is not an important factor; a building or a loft on any street will do. He doesn't have to have any window displays, expensive fixtures or electric light displays; a complete stock does not have to be carried, as it can be ordered in accordance with the demand of his customers, and this reduces the expense for insurance; there is not the same amount of help needed, no credit account, for the business can be all cash, and there is no wear and tear of goods from constant showing. He can secure customers in every part of the United States, as he can send his catalogue to any part of the country for the same postage it would cost to reach, by mail, a person only a block away from his store.

By studying the disadvantages of the one and the advantages of the other it does not require much acumen to discover the secret of the popularity of the mail order business and why it is so profitable when it is once successfully established.

To offset these disadvantages the progressive retail merchants are adding mail order departments to their businesses and where such departments have been properly organized they have become prosperous; many merchants have even found them the best paying of the two avenues through which to secure patronage.

The trend toward the mail order business, while it has been gradual, has only during the last ten years received its greatest momentum. **Dependent as it is upon postal facilities; those facilities with their great improvements have only come within the last few years.**

Of one of those facilities I wish to speak particularly – the rural free delivery of mail. Ten years ago this feature of our postal service was unknown; in that time it has doubled the amount of business done by mail almost every year. A person cannot appreciate its far-reaching importance until he spends a day along some country road traversed by a rural free delivery carrier.

Of our entire population 69% reside on the farms and it is this 69% which it is the intention of the government to bring within reach of one daily mail delivery at least and the post office department is extending this service to embrace the entire rural population as soon as it is possible. As it is, the rural free delivery carriers bring and carry away the mail of over 12,000,000 farmers; in other words, 12,000,000 farmers have been brought in daily contact with the teeming, bustling activities of city life, and this has occasioned the significant remark from a prominent statesman that, "it is making our farmers all businessmen."

The farmer alone can realize what a great convenience the rural free delivery system has become to him and he is not going to allow that convenience to be taken away, as has been quite often demonstrated by his protest.

I only speak of this here to indicate what a firm hold this mail service now has upon farmers. They want it to because it does not compel them to drive frequently to town, as was the case formerly. They can now write out their orders in their cozy parlors, put the letter in an

envelope, affix a stamp to it and then take it to a mail box fastened on a post somewhere on the farm that skirts the road and when the rural carrier comes along he picks it up and carries it to town.

### *Why Patronage from Farmers is Increasing*

As a type, the farmer is no different than the average city businessman; he does not wish to be inconvenienced. If it is his busy season he wants to stay on the farm as much as possible. In the winter, he doesn't want to make needless trips. It is this that has made this free delivery branch of our postal service so popular with him.

It is reasonable to assume that if this one facility is doubling the mail order business every year that the greatest growth of the business is yet to come, for this service reaches less than one-fifth of the farming population. The government appropriation for 1905 for the rural free delivery is over \$20,000,000, there are to be over 4,500 new routes established and the President in his annual message has called Congress' attention to the needs of rapidly extending this service on account of the great benefits it brings within reach of the farmers.

A faint idea can also be obtained of how the mail order business grows from what business two big general mail order merchandise houses in Chicago did last year, which was \$60,000,000. The oldest of these two concerns has not been in existence thirty years, while the youngest is not yet fifteen years old.

Such immense growth in such a remarkably short period of time is unparalleled in trade. It could only be possible in the mail order business. Both of these concerns occupy immense buildings and employ more help individually than any retail department store in the city.

In the brief space of these articles it is almost impossible to give very many examples, so I must confine myself to a few of the prominent instances and speak of the rest in a general way. There are many other large concerns in Chicago which are just as striking examples, but in a more limited way. The same comparison holds true in other large cities.

It is reaching the point now that any retail business of any size at all is regarded incomplete without a mail order department. All the big department stores, clothing stores, etc., have hidden somewhere in their large buildings mail order departments which are as busy filling orders to be sent by express or mail as are the clerks taking orders over the counter from city customers.

This bringing to life of a new artery of domestic commerce has been the evolution practically of the last fifteen years. When I say this I refer to it as a business of vast importance. The mail order business is much older, but before the period referred to it was a business of schemes, clap-trap goods, novelties, medicines and other light specialties. Things have changed and are constantly changing and always for the better.

But with all of this remarkable growth, the curtain has been scarcely drawn aside to give a glimpse of its future. The business is still in its infancy.

The mail order business is not overcrowded and there will be plenty of room in it for 25 years to come for the merchant and men of average business ability. There is a population of over 80,000,000 people to reach by mail, all possible mail order buyers, aside from the people in our colonies. There are 37,000,000 farmers who are still to be embraced by the rural free delivery system. There is expected in the near future the creation of a parcel post, like that in most foreign countries, to serve the entire country, and a more convenient form of transmitting currency through the mails.

### *Parcel Post and New Transmissible Currency Will Come*

Shrewd businessmen, with the faculty to discern the gradual changes the evolution of the mail order business is bringing about, accept as a certainty the early establishment of a parcel post

and a more satisfactory and convenient form of money which will adapt itself readily to safe transmission through the mails.

We have already at hand many signs which indicate that the trend is all in this direction. In his last message to Congress, the Postmaster General recommended a rate be made for carrying parcels from the starting point of a rural free delivery route to its end; the object in view was to help small merchants to hold their customers who lived out of town and on these routes, by affording them a cheap and uniform rate to send them parcels.

Such an arrangement will permit country merchants to build up their own mail order business and it is to their interest to plan early as to how this is to be done.

Knowing most of his out-of-town customers personally, the country merchant has a much greater hold upon their confidence than has a strange and distant house, but it will be necessary for him to make his talk along mail order lines; excellent service, the immediate filling of orders, prompt delivery and price.

Let him do this upon an effective and systematic campaign and the small merchant will have little occasion for complaint about the dropping off of his trade.

Should the Postmaster General's recommendation be acted upon favorably, which in all likelihood it will be, the experiment will prove a success, as was the rural free delivery, which was originally tried as an experiment, but the test was so successful and satisfactory that from then on this service was rapidly extended.

With the success of the parcel post once established, limited even as it is to the short distance covered by a rural carrier, farmers from all over the country with their demands for the extension of the parcel post to include the entire mail system will bring such pressure to bear as to compel Congress to install this service.

The will of the people will make Congress acquiesce with what it wants, as it has compelled it to do many times in the past, in spite of the powerful opposition of the different express companies, which now enjoy a monopoly of the parcel carrying business.

While the mail order business has grown in the face of all obstacles, if these obstacles were eliminated from its path, nothing would interfere with it taking first rank in this country in volume.

One of these handicaps is the express companies; the other is an inadequate means for the public to secure a safe and transmissible form of currency.

The express companies charge a minimum tariff for carrying a parcel of twenty-five cents; in some instances it is as low as twenty cents, very rarely less, but this tariff, as is usually the case with every monopoly, is not uniform. It can be made one day and changed the next, and the rates are always different, governed as they are by weight, class of articles and the distances covered, not considering the preferential rates made big shippers, wherein lies the principal cause for the inability of the small merchants to compete with them.

#### *Uniformity in Carrying Rates Likely*

When the government begins to carry parcels as is now done in most of the foreign countries, every merchant will pay a uniform rate, which will be very much cheaper, for the government does not have to pay any dividends on an excessive capitalization, as the express companies do.

If a businessman can send a parcel from London, England, to San Francisco, Cal., through the British parcel post, for less money than we can send the same parcel only a few miles, our post office department carrying these parcels by treaty arrangements, what is there to prevent our government extending the same beneficent service to its own citizens?

And that is what it will do in spite of all the influence that the express companies will bring to bear, for the will of the people is always supreme, many demonstrations of which can be

brought forward is proof. The most recent case, as an example of this, is the rapid manner in which the rural free delivery was extended in the face of opposition from country merchants.

Our needs for a form of currency which will adapt itself to the new requirements created by the mail order business, it is expected will soon be realized.

A number of such measures have been proposed in Congress, but they have been found too complicated. A simple form is necessary and the best minds in the country are now at work to evolve such a form.

We have our money orders, express orders and bank drafts, but they fall far short of supplying the needs, for it is estimated that almost as much money is sent in shape of paper bills, currency, bank checks and stamps through the mails as there is by these forms.

When the government created its money order service, it did not have in mind the mail order business, as at that time it was an infant in swaddling clothes. To secure a money order a person has to present himself at a post office authorized to issue them and these offices are only in towns of certain grades and far and few.

Express orders and bank drafts, like money orders, also require personal attendance to secure them; this is a great inconvenience, which is what makes these forms so unsatisfactory and especially since the great additions to the business which have followed the rural free delivery.

Likewise people don't want to pay a minimum rate of three cents to send a small amount of money, so they prefer to burden the mails with paper money, loose currency and stamps, the last of which must be sold at a discount where a large quantity is received in the course of business.

When we have a rural free delivery system, as is contemplated, to reach every farmer in the country, a government parcel post and a safe and transmissible currency, we will then have ideal conditions governing the mail order business.

Then it will be possible for the farmer, who is the best and biggest customer of the mail order dealer, to send for a catalogue, order from it what he wants, inclose his remittance with a feeling of perfect safety and in a few days have, brought to him by the carrier, except heavy goods, which he has ordered.

Surely if there are any forces which will breed the mail order buying habit among the farmers to a state of perfection, it is all these conveniences.

And these conveniences are partially here – what still is lacking is bound to come.

The same convenience will inculcate the fever to buy by mail into the habits of city folks to a less degree, but sufficient enough on certain lines to make it profitable to go after their business.

As the real growth of the business is just beginning, this is the time for those who are looking for untrammelled roads of opportunity to start.

Of course, there are chances in other fields of endeavor, but to turn them to account it takes far more capital, more actual hustling and risk to succeed, and I figure that every person naturally desires to select, as a means to establish an independent business, those channels which offer the least resistance.

### *Open to All Business and Professions*

For every class of businessmen, professional men or men who are employed but want to better themselves by going into some venture of their own, there are opportunities and plenty of them in the mail order business.

There is also room – and plenty of it – in this fascinating business for ambitious women.

Because the business is young, and for this reason, more than any other, it as yet is not overcrowded.

You are aware that where there is less competition success is much easier to attain and that where such condition prevails less capital is needed to go into business.

You would not think of going into the grocery business with a small amount of money and expect, from this beginning, in a few years to build a mammoth grocery establishment; there are too many other grocers who cut the trade up so that it is a task in itself to eke out a living.

You would not expect from a small dry goods store in some outlying part of the city to have a big department store at the end of a few years; the big department store, as it is, make it hard enough for the small stores to pay expenses, without considering the many small dry goods stores which further cut the life out of this trade for all except the big factors with their enormous capital.

It is the same in all other commercial lines; every year there is more competition and profits of the small men grow smaller, making it necessary for a person who wishes to make a success to put more capital into the business, and notwithstanding the greater risk assumed, the uncertainty is not decreased at all.

In this day of combinations there is ever present the danger of the big factors controlling the competitive arteries of their particular business, which puts all but those in favor with the "System" at their mercy, and while there is no possibility of things reaching this extreme, every small retailer in a big town will tell you frankly that there is getting to be less money in his business each year and will offer as an explanation for this state of affairs that big stores down town get the trade through their cheaper prices.

What injury the big stores in large cities have done to the small retailers, the general mail order merchandise houses, like Montgomery Ward & Co., etc., have duplicated toward the country merchant, but the country merchant has the advantage of being nearer to his customers, as they are far away, and if he is a shrewd and enterprising man he has means still within his control to successfully combat this competition, while the government helps him with a rural free delivery and is planning other equally effective conveniences.

I don't wish to be understood that the general mail order merchandise houses located in large cities won't prosper and grow; this cannot be prevented; but I wish to convey the fact that they never can have country merchants at their mercy like the big down-town retail stores of large cities hold the small stores, of a competitive line, in the outlying sections. The mail order business, as its name implies, secures its business through the mails and to use the mails we all pay the same price.

### *Comparisons Which Tell the Story*

That there are great opportunities in the mail order business and what creates them, I have told you, and a little further along it is my intention to speak specifically of these different opportunities, but just not I want to make a comparison to clearly emphasize in what respect the mail order business differs from anything else.

Take for example a city of Chicago's size, with its two million population. There are stores selling dry goods, hardware, stationery, groceries, clothing, jewelry, etc., which, aside from the big retail emporiums within the down-town loop, must number at least close to twenty thousand, and among all these stores the entire city's business must be distributed.

There are not in all, at the present time, that many persons throughout the country doing an exclusive mail order business, and the most of them are selling specialties, invented devices, proprietary remedies or something else besides general merchandise of the kind the retailers in the big cities or in the small towns handle.

Their market is not 2,000,000, but among the entire population of 80,000,000, and their best customers are secured from the 69 per cent of this population, those people who live on farms and in small towns.

Such cold figures establish the certainty of the many opportunities that this business offer to enterprising people.

As a further comparison take up any periodical of general circulation, especially a publication of which the largest part of its circulation reaches country people, and count the advertisers in it.

The Woman's Magazine of St. Louis, Mo., a splendid illustration of what is called a purely mail order type of paper, in one of its recent issues contained, as I counted, two hundred and forty-three separate advertisements, which included some of a general nature that could not be called mail order advertising, while in this count were, included advertisers who ran more than one advertisement over their names, so if we put the figure at 200 separate advertisers we will be comparatively safe in making the following comparison.

This paper actually reaches over 1,600,000 homes every month, and according to our statistics, there are an average of five people to every home, so that each number of this paper is read by over 8,000,000 people.

If these people were distributed proportionately among the two hundred advertisers to make a separate community for each one of them, to confine their efforts without any competition, to secure business, they would each have approximately a city of 40,000 without another merchant in it, while the small retailer in a big city like Chicago has less than 100.

There are smaller cities where the ratio is not so great and there are smaller papers likewise with less circulation and with less advertisers, so that whatever illustration is selected it will be found that ratio will equalize itself. My purpose in making the two comparisons which have been given was to show striking differences as positive proof that if you are thinking of going into this business they must convince you that the selection has been a wise one and it devolves upon you to find the methods and the articles, provided they have not already been determined upon, to insure your success in the mail order business.

The retailer, wholesaler, doctor, lawyer, druggist, and so I could run rapidly over the different classifications by which human endeavor to earn a livelihood is called, all can find opening in this business. I mention a great many of them in succeeding articles.

What can be sold by personal talk can be as easily sold by mail. Selling by mail doesn't imply that the goods must be shipped by mail, but that transactions to the completion of an order is negotiated through the mails, after which, if the goods are light enough, the mails will carry them to their destination, otherwise they can be sent by express or freight, depending upon the circumstances.

## CHAPTER II

**Confidence** and Price, the Underlying Factors Responsible for the Phenomenal Growth of the Mail Order Business. Why There Are Opportunities Without Limit. Some Notable Examples of the Efficiency of Advertising.

It is no exaggeration to claim that almost everything made by human hands can now be sold by mail. This has been so often demonstrated with articles far remote from what we heretofore considered possible to sell in this way that it has forced into general recognition the fact of the elasticity of mail order methods to adapt themselves to all character of business.

Two things have contributed to bring about these conditions – confidence and price. It took time and expensive advertising campaigns by the pioneers in the business to inculcate the confidence in the public mind that heavy and important articles could be as safely bought from the description of them in printed catalogs and letters as from seeing the actual goods.

Those who had the hardihood to buy were well satisfied, and told their friends. So from one to another this confidence spread – the majority of newspapers and periodicals helped it along by a rigorous censorship over the advertising which was permitted in their columns, and the watchful care of the government to try and keep the mails free from dishonest offerings also helped greatly in this direction. With all such forces at work in their interest it did not take long for mail order methods to gain such a foothold throughout the country that it is now safe to assert that nearly every person at some time or other buys or sells something by mail.

Price is a very important factor. Whatever article is sold by mail must as much govern itself by the competitive factor of trade as govern similar articles sold over the counter of a retail store.

If two retail stores in the same city handled one kind of a sewing machine and one of them which has the public confidence, advertised the machine cheaper than did the other, the store which offered the machine at a lesser price would soon have all the business. But, unfortunately, many persons who essay to go into this business, select articles to sell which can be purchased more cheaply in any store, overlooking the important fact that their prices must be, if not less, at least as reasonable. The inevitable result of this lack of foresight is not enough orders are secured to make the venture profitable.

Against the competitive factor naturally there are a number of things immune as, for instance, inventions controlled by the advertiser, schemes offering for sale a person's professional ability, like that of a doctor, lawyer, architect, etc., and a patent medicine. Commodities of such character can be sold at a price which their owners think proper and with the right methods can be made to succeed, as long, of course, as the price is not beyond the reach of the majority of those who could be induced to buy.

Considering therefore, that mail order methods can be applied to almost any kind of business, the opportunities by them are not limited to any particular class.

The man already in business, by exercising proper judgment, can find some way to successfully apply these methods to his own particular business. The man or woman who is looking for openings does not have to seek further for such openings as there are plenty of them to be found in the mail order business.

And what is possible for the retail merchant to accomplish can be done also by the wholesaler, of whom, in fact, a great number are now reaching their trade through mail order methods much more cheaply and more satisfactorily than heretofore through traveling salesmen.

Allow me to illustrate how the mail order business can be done by both classes of trade just mentioned.

Every department store can get out a catalogue once a year, and, if necessary, during the year some other seasonable smaller catalogues. A little space in the advertising which they are



doing right along could be devoted to soliciting orders by mail and to do this should be added methods that suggest themselves by the store's size and environments.

Because big stores do a mail order business on a large scale it should not deter smaller stores from going after their share of this trade for there are ways, if only sought out, by which any handicap can be overcome. A small store in the interior of Indiana made a specialty of selling by mail certain outfits of clothing and built up a national business, while one in Jackson, Mich., is doing business throughout the country in such a small article as linen handkerchiefs. Nearly every store carries something, or could, which would be a desirable mail order specialty – the question is to determine what that article is. After a customer has been secured and made acquainted with the store it becomes then an easier matter to sell him other articles carried by the store.

Shoe dealers, grocers, hardware men and gents' furnishing stores are in a position to do what the department store or dry goods merchants are doing. Their efforts from the beginning do not need to embrace the entire country; there is a large enough field to develop business within a radius of a few hundred miles. This is a big enough start; then as the business grows the scope of territory will enlarge itself naturally.

### *Cobbled Himself to the State House*

Douglas at one time was a cobbler, but he knew how to make good shoes. He was not content to cobble away all his life; he realized that if he could find an economical method to tell people what good shoes he made it would not be long before people would want his particular make. Unlike the majority of shoemakers and dealers who are content when providing satisfaction to a few customers he sought a way to tell the whole public and found that way. Today Douglas shoes are sold over all the country, while the maker of them is a merchant prince and Governor of the Commonwealth of the great State of Massachusetts.

Heinz made pickles, good pickles, and when he started to make them he had no more capital than has the average grocer of today – but he knew that once he induced a person to try his pickles that person would continue to want them, and it was only a question of how to advertise to make known the fact that his pickles were so delicious. All over the world Heinz's pickles can now be bought, together with other palatable relishes and condiments. This all followed the ability Heinz himself to advertise his pickles. There are other grocers who if they would give thought as to what they handle which pleases their own customers most they could with proper advertising duplicate Heinz's success.

Down east a hardware man when business was dull devoted his spare moments to employing his inventive abilities and perfected a device to chop meat into fine particles. This meat chopper can now be bought in any hardware store. Another hardware man conceived the idea that it was possible to sell stoves by mail and the expense would be so small that he really could afford to sell stoves much cheaper than they can be bought for retail in a hardware store – now his advertising can be found in every agricultural paper, periodical and magazine of importance and his business has grown to where it has become necessary to build a large factory to make his stoves.

There are advertisers today selling patented garters and other gents' furnishing specialties who a few years back owned modest men's furnishing stores in some cities or small towns.

I only mention these examples to fortify my claim, as I go on with my discussion of the mail order business, that it is a business of limitless opportunities, as I realize that it is not

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*TABLOID ADVICE – No. 1 – The difference between success and failure is in doing it right or in doing it wrong. If it costs just a little more to start right – to make a success – isn't it better to pay that little more and make success, than to "save" the pennies and lose everything?*

difficult to display the prospects in a most roseate color since words can always be easily borrowed from the English language to make a statement or a conclusion appear plausible; but when proofs are constantly furnished as I am producing them my statements must command the serious thought of businessmen which corroborated proof demands.

And yet, in view of all these opportunities, not every one can succeed in this business. **There is no trade or field of human endeavor in which success for all who engage in it can be found.** We must accept this business like we do all other businesses – to a certain extent as a speculation, for no matter what we attempt to do none can tell until success finally crowns his efforts whether he can make a success of the business or not.

#### *To Know We Must First Find Out*

All of us should consider that where we do not venture we gain nothing and **we can never tell what our abilities are until they have been put to the test.** An athlete doesn't know how strong he is until he tries his skill; a physician what kind of diseases he masters better than others, until he is put to the test; the lawyer what branch of law he is best suited for until he has had some experience when his own predilection will decide this question best for him, and so it is in everything; we only find out after we have tried our abilities whether we are made of the stuff that wins out or not.

To bridge the uncertainty until it has been definitely found out by actual demonstration that a person is going to succeed in the mail order business we must at the beginning attempt all our experiments with economy – **every step which is taken should be guided with the utmost care, the capital at the command of a business should be spent very judiciously and every safeguard and precaution ought to be exercised to prevent any reckless or foolish experiments,** and there are competent advisers who can be consulted so that every person who goes into this business has recourse to all possible means to make a success.

#### *Druggists Well Situated for This Business*

Of all the small tradesmen the druggist is possibly in the best position to find something suitable for a mail order business for through his hands passes a large number of very good prescriptions written by physicians which he can when he finds out that they are exceptionally good, put on the market as proprietary remedies. His experience and knowledge as a chemist often enables him to think of some very good drug specialty.

With a druggist, when he is thinking of going into the mail order business, his thoughts first ought to be to decide upon what article he should handle – and what will help him in deciding correctly better than anything else is his own experience with his customers, for he must reason that since human nature is alike the world over, the articles he has sold over his counter which were of such a satisfactory nature that customers would buy these articles over and over again could be sold just as quickly through the mails.

A man doesn't have to talk the English tongue or think in German to know when something he has bought pleases him. Transport a Hottentots from Africa to Canada and when it is cold he will soon know that an overcoat and other clothing are required to protect him from the elements, and he will obediently follow the procession to the clothier to secure the necessary wearing apparel.

Likewise when the druggist has an article which, when it has once been tried, gives satisfaction, it is only a question of proper advertising to get people to give it a trial to secure them as customers, and they will remain customers unless another article of greater merit displaces it.

**For a moment I shall depart from my subject to impress upon the reader the absolute importance of satisfying customers – the neglect of which has been the undoing of so many in**

business. Permanent trade has never been built up from one-time orders and fly-by-night business – here today tomorrow nowhere, is not the kind of a business which the average businessman wants to engage in.

### *Expense as a Factor*

A business has its expenses and the greatest part of this expense originally falls upon getting the customer. Mail order men of long experience willingly pay as much as a customer's first order amounts to secure him, depending upon what that customer will order during a year's time for their profit.

In a year's time for goods which are quickly consumed a person will spend considerable money. As an example, take the mail order whiskey business which of late has become so popular – if it costs ten dollars in advertising and other expense to get a person to try the whiskey, that expense is not excessive provided the whiskey is of such a character it will be ordered again and again whenever the supply is exhausted.

The advertising should be done to get customers – the business run to retain customers, and where these two attributes of success don't harmonize the expense of the business is so great it eats up all the profits on what are called "first orders."

Returning to the druggists, instance after instance could be cited as an encouragement to them when they have something that has merit to try to build up a national business by mail and not be content with the meager profits eked out of a retail drug business.

The proprietor of Bromo Seltzer, Emerson, owned a small drug store in Baltimore and from his simple effervescent salt created an immense fortune, and this simply because whoever used Bromo Seltzer realized from its effects what a very good thing it was and kept on using it, telling all his friends about it, and backed up with good advertising the sale of Bromo Seltzer very quickly spread to all parts of the world.

A fortune can be quickly made from a proprietary article when once a national demand has been created for it. One thousand people a day using a ten-cent article would mean gross sales every year of \$36,500, and if it is a dollar article \$365,000.

### *Price of an Article Least Important*

Just think of how many persons of our population of eighty million take a glass of Bromo Seltzer every day, which costs about ten cents, aside from the rest of the world and you, knowing the popularity of this well-known article, can imagine what wealth it is bringing its originator and the company every year. Yet this is but one example of many. The sales by druggists all over the land are making other fortunes – for Carter's Little Liver Pills, Cascarets, Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription, Peruna, Lydia Pinham's Compound, etc.

While these are not remedies and proprietary articles sold by mail direct to consumers, a great deal of the business on them is done by mail with the retail druggist, so that in one respect they can be regarded as partially mail order businesses. But I am treating the business in which druggists are concerned in a broader manner by illustrating what dependence can be placed upon effective advertising to popularize an article belonging to the class just described, no matter in what manner it is sold – through the druggist or direct to the consumer by mail.

Essentially the methods that aim to bring such an article direct to the consumer, for a druggist who cannot command a large capital, must be economical. A druggist can appreciate the importance of this advice much better than can others who are not in this business. He knows from the vast number of the different proprietary articles and druggists' sundries he has on his shelves – and there are many he does not handle for there has been no demand created for them – that it takes considerable money and persistent advertising to arouse sufficient demand to warrant

him in putting in a stock of new article, and he is only one of the many hundred thousands of druggists in the United States.

To reach the consumer he can concentrate his advertising in a few good papers and, later as his business develops if it is wanted to turn the business through the retail druggists, he can then, in communities where enough customers have been secured to warrant the expense, with this as a nucleus, induce retail druggists to handle the goods, backing them up with advertising in that locality.

### *Depending Upon Evolution*

**Such businesses, anyway, are creatures of evolution.** Here we have something which has been originally advertised exclusively by mail evolving itself into a business later through druggists and others that was in the beginning offered through druggists but later evolved itself into a strictly mail order seller – according to the interpretation of this meaning – as sold direct to the consumer and not through the medium of a retail druggist.

Location to a druggist has no disadvantages so long as he has a desirable article. If later, when actual experience has proven that he is in a fair way to make a success of the article by advertising, if a more central location provides any competitive advantages the change can be easily effected.

When he starts, a druggist should select the best selling specialty he has or knows of; then decide upon effective publicity. Both these important essentials, required by success, must be planned specifically and these plans can only be perfected by a thorough study of the nature of the article or a business, if such be the case that each druggist separately decides upon.

A druggist can get that far without any assistance. His experience in the store often gives him the proper cue for the article, but after that he is at loss what further steps to take to get his business in proper shape and push it. It is here where wisdom dictates that the services of an expert advertising man be called in, not because he knows more than the druggist about the latter's business, but because coming in contact every day with the different problems of publicity this experience, which the druggist lacks, helps him to lay plans to exploit the new venture along proper lines and with the certainty that every dollar which is expended for the business is economically spent.

It doesn't take an inexperienced person to be long in business to appreciate the wisdom of this sensible advice without which he will find how often he has spent money upon something the outcome of which later has proven a piece of ignorant folly, that an experienced person would have avoided.

### *Wasteful Experiments Dissipate Capital*

And it also doesn't take long for wasteful experiments to dissipate a person's capital without even giving that capital a fair chance to show what there is really in the business, and it takes considerable courage and patience for any one of us to stand behind an enterprise where all the money seems to be going out and nothing coming in. While it is a consolation to be told it is out of this stuff that the greatest successes in life are moulded, there is no need going through the process when in the majority of cases it can be avoided.

**A banker is not made by merely stepping into a bank, sitting down to the president's desk and taking up the work from this point, but by gradual evolution in the banking business – some from clerks work their way upwards. The same is true in any other business calling in life – the merchant, architect, physician, advertising man, civil engineer and even the druggist, as he himself well knows, learn their business through different stages of experience, but with the help of good advice from men schooled in their particular business the knowledge how to do well what engages their talents, is more readily and quickly acquired than if left to one's own resources.**

If a druggist could get the business by mail he could safely be left to his own resources to properly handle it for on the average he is a good businessman and competent enough correspondent to write fairly good business letters.

### *Advertising Must Be Effective*

But the uppermost problem with every undertaking depending upon advertising is to have that advertising effective enough to bring business, and a man who has never had any experience with advertising at all certainly cannot be expected to understand its difficult problems so well as the man who is giving his constant attention to it.

One cannot pick out any large business today that does any volume of advertising which does not employ an advertising manager whose business it is to prepare the advertising copy which is to go into the newspapers and other periodicals, select those papers for the business, figure out what the advertising in each paper costs and write all the other literature, such as folders, catalogues, booklets and form letters.

In what regard the skill of a good advertising man is held is conveyed by the fact that he is the best paid man in the professions. On an average a good advertising man can easily earn \$100 a week, or \$5,000 a year, and men of exceptional keenness, whose brains are productive of clever ideas that bring business, make considerably more. Not long ago the Chicago Tribune in the Worker's Magazine, a supplement to its regular Sunday issue, related how one advertising man in Chicago – a free lance, without employment with any certain concern – makes an income of about \$30,000 a year in just furnishing the different large local dry goods houses with ideas, and perfecting them.

Even when a large concern employs an advertising man regularly, this does not prevent it from buying the ideas of others and paying handsomely for all such good ideas, as it is realized that not all the good ideas are concentrated in any one single head.

Now if these big concerns, or rather the heads of them, whom you will confess must all be shrewd businessmen, could get business without employing advertising managers they certainly would get rid very quickly of the great expense which the employment of an advertising manager and his subordinate employees attach to the business.

### *The Eclipse of St. Jacob's Oil*

But they can't do this except at the great risk of a serious loss of business. It isn't very long ago, when St. Jacob's Oil, of which every druggist is familiar, was the most popular liniment on a drug store's shelf – but where is it today?

Its sudden eclipse has behind it a very interesting story. St. Jacob's Oil was making money so rapidly for Chas. Vogeler & Sons, the manufacturers that this prosperity took on an aspect of such permanence that the firm did not see the use of advertising any longer. The remedy was well introduced, everyone knew it and, so they felt, it was much better to keep as profits the few hundred thousand dollars spent annually with the newspapers for advertising, which they did. From the day that this advertising was withdrawn the decline in popularity of St. Jacob's Oil set in, and a few years ago the concern itself was compelled to go into the hands of a receiver.

It was not because this liniment deteriorated in remedial value but, withdrawn from public sight the public mind soon forgot all about it, confirming the oft-repeated statement that out of sight soon out of mind, especially the public mind, which is fickle to a pronounced degree when there are other liniments strenuously advertising themselves – as for example, Omega Oil, which today occupies relatively the position St. Jacob's Oil did fifteen years ago.

Before I go further, I shall also tell a little story, which while it is not authentic, has been so often mentioned as an example of in what regard the value of constant advertising is held by the shrewdest and most successful advertisers in the United States, the Royal Baking Powder Co.

At a directors meeting attention was called to the great tax on the business of advertising. The directors considered it a tax; little did they appreciate that advertising was what built up their business, and what was holding it for them with such an iron graph that it is difficult for another baking powder to make serious inroads upon the Royal business.

#### *A Saving Which Would Have Meant Serious Loss*

This meeting happened a few years after the Royal Baking Powder Co. was sold to a corporation by the founders of the business, who were great believers in publicity. It was figured out that by cutting out the advertising for one year a considerably greater dividend could be paid to the stockholders but this opinion was soon dissipated when the advertising manager at that time figured it out in black and white how it would cost the company to make up the loss by the withdrawal of the advertising for even one year, ten dollars for every dollar thus saved.

The argument that prevailed and brought the directors around very quickly to see this problem in its right light was the certainty of some other baking powder company jumping into the breach left open by the Royal Baking Powder Co. and that it would take the company ten times the money saved to dislodge that competition.

All of which goes to show what an important problem advertising is, how necessary that it be done right and how it behooves a druggist to find some aid among the competent advertising men to increase his prospects of succeeding, and the chances for such outcome are slim indeed where a druggist has to depend upon his own resources.

In all there are published in this country about 25,000 papers, covering all sorts of topics, from the news dished up to the public daily or weekly by the newspapers, to the class papers devoted to some specific realm of thought or discussion. Among these papers each different venture must select those which would bring results and a person doesn't have to stretch his imagination to appreciate it would be a costly undertaking to find out what those papers are by actual test, but a competent advertising man who is a constant student, with the experience he has acquired and his knowledge of the papers, their circulation and for what classes of business each paper is known to be an effective trade bringer, can pick out for a client at once the papers that would be the most desirable for him.

#### *Knowledge of Paper and Their Rates*

As he knows their rates he will not be paying fancy prices; posted as he is on circulation he will not be buying a "pig in a poke," or space in any paper unless he is certain that paper has actually all the circulation the publisher claims for it; but these two things, important as they be, are not the only indispensable necessities to bring orders.

On the right advertising it can be said depends everything – saying just the things which would suggest to the readers of the announcement the desire to purchase the article described. Pure type won't do it – mere description falls far too short; what brings responses to an advertisement are those arguments which produces a feeling of need for such an article even where the need is not pressing.

Call it what you will, this ability is an art, so much appreciated in the business world that talented advertising men make more money than most literary men, authors, poets and public speakers.

The man that can write a heart disease advertisement so that a person who even has no heart trouble will get to thinking he has, from the symptoms and description, can always

command employment from manufacturers and purveyors of proprietary medicines, for there are, indeed, few such men.

There, too, is the question of space. Where an ad an inch in depth will tell a story completely, so that it will bring inquiries, it is not necessary to use a quarter page. But who, except an experienced advertising man, can decide with any degree of safety where to stop in this matter of space?

Advertising is only profitable where it brings results; when it fails in this it becomes quite expensive. Some papers like the Ladies' Home Journal and Woman's Magazine, charge \$6.00 an agate line, which would make the small space of an inch (there are fourteen agate lines to an inch) cost \$84 an insertion. At such prices it would not take long before the cost of advertising, if it failed to bring results, would dissipate the capital of a business.

While \$6 a line is about the highest price charged by any one paper, the papers which charge from \$1 a line to \$6, when collected together are very numerous and the papers that have a rate of from \$1 a line down to a few cents a line run into the thousands.

A superficial inspection of a list of such papers would drive home the truth that it is comparatively an easy matter for an advertiser to spend, in a year's time, upon advertising, upwards of a hundred thousand dollars and yet the size of his advertising would not attract much attention for its magnitude.

#### *Advertisers Who Spend a Fortune*

There are advertisers in America, like the Royal Baking Powder, Scott's Emulsion, Ayers' and Hood's Sarsaparillas, New York Life Insurance Co., and other big insurance societies, Sears, Roebuck & Co., Montgomery Ward & Co., National Biscuit Co., Standard Oil Co., Sapolio, Pear's Soap, Armour's products, Pearline – and the list could be extended to fill a page – whose advertising appropriations every year each run up into the six figures.

These fortunes are spent because these large advertisers have faith in advertising being a splendid force for increasing their business, and this faith is not a newly acquired one, but comes from experimenting with advertising, proving that properly directed publicity is the cheapest, most effective and profitable means to increase business, at the command of businessmen.

When men in whose hands are entrusted the care of a business which has invested in it millions of dollars are firm believers in the potency of advertising, those who are just starting with their business can place their faith in the same business force and not fear they are making a mistake.

Now let us come back to a few illustrations of the value of knowing what space it is safe to use for advertising. Supposing a druggist, for example, were about to place before the public a new toilet preparation, here are a few costly errors in judgment he would be liable to make.

#### *Some Factors Which Might Be Overlooked*

In the selection of papers he might overlook concentrating his advertising in papers which due to the nature of their contents would be read exclusively by women, and as he has to pay for the circulation of the entire edition of a paper all that part of the circulation not reaching the eyes of women is wasted.

Economical advertising has no place for waste circulation; it aims to make every copy of a paper reach someone who could be interested, but a person who does not understand the value of different kinds of circulation or the truth about them has not the safeguards thrown around him as has an advertising man of long experience, so he has to proceed finding his way and paying as he goes for what some person long acquainted with advertising would not spend a penny on.

What is true of the druggist is likewise true in every other line – all are more inclined to err in the choice of papers than to select the right ones. It is only logical that this should be so, for business acumen is not the result of haphazard selection in its methods.

Then, carried away with his idea he must spread out because his business is new to the public; the druggist will use big space – a lot of which is wholly unnecessary, and costly – so as to make a respectable showing with the older advertisers.

He will spend ten dollars where one dollar would have done just as well. Not infrequently he will stake his all on one ad, which, but in rare exceptions, is to throw the money to the four winds, as advertising must be done consistently, confidence of the public must be secured and in many cases an educational advertising campaign is necessary to acquaint people with the merits of the article advertised.

This, those who have still to acquire their experience, don't know, but a good advertising man will tell them all these important things it is required of an advertiser to know, and save them considerable money before a year's time is over.

A saving of ten lines of space every money in an ad in the Woman's Magazine and the Ladies' Home Journal would come to \$1,440.00 in a year's time – and what could we not do with this money?

This is on only two papers, so from this example you can appreciate the importance of economical advertising – even if it is profitable.

#### *An Object Lesson in Advertising*

In Chicago there is a medical company, manufacturing a mineral salt for which an extensive demand has been created through the mails by advertising. It uses pages of advertisements.

In Richmond, Va., there is another advertiser, and it might be said to be a direct competitor of this one, as he, too, is selling a salt, but instead of it being taken out of the earth it is the residue of the waters of a mineral spring secured by evaporating the waters. His expense for advertising is one-twentieth of that of the Chicago company, and doing a bigger business which means of course that the profits are much larger, and one of the contributing forces which has made such a result possible, was economical advertising.

This advertiser's case is also a shining example of misdirected efforts. Until a few years ago he depended entirely upon himself as to how to conduct his advertising, and before he realized he had much to learn, his experience cost him in the neighborhood of \$20,000 – and he had nothing to show for it.

The name of his remedy was wrong, and it was too long. He tried to introduce it through physicians but went at it in such a way that the physicians were repelled rather than attracted to the preparation, notwithstanding it has marvelous curative properties, and the recommendations from the leading medical authorities in the South testified to this fact; all efforts made in other directions ignominiously failed.

Then a competent advertising man took hold of the proposition, overhauled the entire business, changed the name, the literature, advertising and methods; in less than a year's time he had things coming his way – the tide had stopped going out; it was now coming in.

The inexperienced man spent \$20,000 and was ready to give up in disgust – the experienced man spent only a thousand dollars and proved to the advertiser that there were great possibilities in his business – in fact he revived an expiring business.

Others, undoubtedly, will see in this experience, as if through a mirror, a reflection of their own – they will possibly realize that if their efforts had not been misdirected also, the result might have been far different.



### *The Fulcrum That Moves the Business*

Behind the advertising is the fulcrum that moves the business; advertising can only bring the business and a possible customer together; from thence on all dependence must be placed on the methods to get a person to buy.

A greater part of this work falls upon the literature – that which is put up in printed form, such as the booklet, catalogue or circular, describing the article or articles which are handled.

When it is impossible for a person to see with his own eyes what he is asked to buy, it is much more difficult to make a sale to him and it becomes still more difficult when the advertiser is a total stranger to him.

Consequently the printed literature must beget confidence. It must minutely enter into complete description, it must point out in a convincing manner every point of merit, and it must anticipate every objection that might arise in the mind of the reader.

This is not an easy task – writing good convincing literature of the kind which will make a stranger living at a distance want to buy.

To sit down and write a booklet, or even a one-page circular, most any person can do who has an education at all – but it may be a mere shell of words, lacking that ring which produces trade. He who writes good booklets and business literature is the keen student of human nature.

To such a man, human nature is like the keys of a piano under the fingers of a skilled artist. For every different proposition he strikes the keys differently. He selects those arguments which will make the reader of his matter think like he does, he will argue with him through type, raising favorable thoughts in the mind of the person he is addressing, and he will arouse through “suggestion” a desire of possession which either brings the orders or makes it easy for the circular letters or personally dictated correspondence to secure the order.

Of such stuff is good literature made. Every line in it is a telling blow; there is nothing which would drive away business – but every word leads up to an order.

### *Proper Literature of Great Importance*

A well advertised business without good literature can be compared with a boat under full sail without a rudder. It will float, but it won't run in the right direction.

Follow up letters, called so to distinguish them from the regular business correspondence are but little less in importance than the printed literature. These letters are form letters – in text like the personally dictated letter, except the form letter is addressed to a large number of people at one time.

This letter is an evolution of modern business methods. At stated intervals or seasons, where a business house wishes to make an offer to every customer or person who at some time or other has inquired of the concern about its goods, instead of dictating to stenographers a special letter to each, a form letter is prepared which is set up in type that is an exact duplicate of the type of the typewriter used by the concern, then printed on the regular letter head in colors to match the ribbon of the typewriter so that the names and places of the persons to whom they are addressed can be filled in, and the whole letter then looks as if it were a personally written one.

Some large business houses send out at a time as many as 500,000 of these form letters, all of them made up as carefully as the individual letter, sealed with a two-cent stamp affixed to it, and very few of the people who receive them can detect the difference, so perfectly has printing now-a-days imitated the work of the typewriter, and made it possible to simplify the office work, relieving it of much of the routine, and permitting the correspondence department to answer all letter requiring special attention.

### *The Difference in Letters*

There is a wide difference between such letters, which is best shown by the results they bring. Having to cater to the composite whims and judgment of many people these letters must be so constructed as to influence a majority of them favorably towards the contents of the letter.

Unless one of these letters brings back enough business to more than pay for the expense of getting them out – the printing, addressing and postage – it cannot be called a productive letter.

As to the number of follow up letters required depends entirely upon the nature of the business. Usually where an article is sold for a very small sum fewer of such letters are needed, the number increasing as the price grows larger, for it is harder to make people who have to depend upon a written description part with money when it reaches any sum at all.

A dime or a dollar can be easily spared, and when a person really desires an article at about this price he will send it more quickly than he would five or ten dollars, which is a large amount to spend at one time, especially when there are always needs in other directions springing up.

Where formerly it was a practice when someone inquired of a concern about its goods to send a solicitor or agent to talk the party into buying, modern business methods now mostly rely upon these follow up letters to do this work, and a strong and effective series of them, each letter presenting the proposition in a different light, or using different arguments, are not only cheaper but more effective than personal solicitations, as they can cover greater ground at less expense, and are not denied an audience so often as is the man who calls.

To the booklet or other printed matter is left the minute description of the goods, but the letters concern themselves mostly in talking to each person in the personal tone which would be adopted if that person were himself before a salesman.

### *What Must Be Anticipated*

But where in personal talk it is possible to overcome any objections which might arise and secure business while the interest was rife, distance compels the writer of the form letter to conjure up a mental picture of his people, what arguments would appeal to them, to what about the goods or the terms upon which the goods are sold they might object, all of which he has to anticipate and answer for them in the letter itself.

There is not given rule for universal application to govern the construction of such letters. The specific requirements of each business determine this.

Should a druggist be offering an eczema cure he will have to have letters which another druggist, selling a cancer cure, could not use at all – their nature, their length, and the number of them are governed by the difference between goods and price.

At times with these letters supplementary printed matter is enclosed, the object being to continuously provide plenty of reading matter so that the interest will not flag.

And all this matter is treated as advertising, which is not limited to direct orders, but to keep the advertiser and his goods constantly before those who have been introduced to him through his advertising, so that these people can recommend the advertiser's goods whenever such a subject is talked about or they are asked about them.

One of the most remarkable features of a business which is consistently and everlastingly advertising itself is in the way patronage comes to it in increasing proportions as it grows older from sources which cannot be traced directly, but it is known that it emanates from this indirect advertising.

In a general way, as far as it was possible, I have attempted to point out why good literature and effective form letters are an indispensable part of an advertised business, and serious thought and attention should be devoted to having all this matter just right.

### *Originality Always the Keynote*

Whatever a druggist has to sell it should be attempted to offer it by some original method. This does not imply it is necessary to evolve selling plans entirely different from what others possess, but in some manner or form there ought to be some originality to make his proposition stand out differently from that of his competitors.

This gives his business individuality, provides a talking point, an argument which enables him to approach a person from an entirely different standpoint and it is the dissimilarity between propositions which attracts the most attention.

An illustration, which enables me to point out the importance of originality as a factor of success in advertising, is the experience I had with a druggist who had a very good all-round skin remedy. With so many skin remedies already on the market it was a discouraging task to approach this one with any assurance of succeeding in exploiting it, and for which the druggist did not have very much money, anyway, to push it.

To overcome the obstacles raised by the great number of competitors – some of them much older and their goods already well introduced – as well as the lack of capital, all the talking points about the other remedies were very carefully gone over. The result was that none of them offered the theory that skin troubles were caused by germ life, but that they came from impure blood.

Here was a good cue since the druggist's own skin remedy was an external application. A theory was constructed plausibly relating how germs caused all skin afflictions, that they were not occasioned by poison in the blood, and there was only one blood poison considered which could cause an affection of the skin – syphilitic blood poisoning.

The theory made that business. People were in the habit of taking internal remedies. The druggist's arguments were plausible, and to prove his theory correct his arguments were fortified with an offer to send a free sample – and if it is left to the free sample, provided enough people can be induced to send for it, and the remedy is exceptionally good – the rest of the task to get people to buy it is comparatively easy, for merit will obtain the business.

### *The Lesson Taught by Liquozone*

Another case in point, about similar to this, is the now widely advertised Liquozone. This remedy sprang into almost immediate popularity because of the original manner in which it was advertised, and the remedy itself being a good one, it held business after the free sample had paved the way.

Originality in exploiting any business is making a short cut to success, but to be original is a very difficult thing. Ideas which help to be original are not ones at the command of beck and call.

Not every one can be so clever, but where a prospective business can be featured in an original manner by all means do it. Let that originality run its course throughout the business – from the advertising through the printed matter and follow up letters.

If you can't be this, at least try to keep as far away from duplicating the style, arguments and methods of competitors, for the nearer you get to their way of doing things the harder you make it for yourself to get orders.

Every person, if it were left to him as to which advertiser to patronize, were there are two to be considered, each one making the same claims, would answer that the one who would receive his business would be the one who has been before the public longer.

*The Public Is Consistent*

The public is consistent as long as there is not reason to make a change; come to it with different arguments and new claims, supported with plausible reasons, it will set it to thinking that as it was different at least the new thing is worthy of a trial.

Take the common soda cracker, as proof of this. Until the public was told by the National Biscuit Co. how unhealthy were the crackers when bought out of the ordinary soda box, which we can all remember laying in a promiscuous place in a grocery store, kept eating them unconscious of the constant danger from disease.

Now we won't buy soda crackers unless they are sold in sealed packages, which don't cost us any more, and by this suggestion of sanitation the National Biscuit co. has created for itself an enormous business from the common soda cracker, sold at five cents a package.