

more efficiently, it is putting the newspaper industry in a position to take advantage of other opportunities for disseminating information," explains Roy Megarry, publisher, Globe & Mail (Canada) to CPRS conference attenders. Specifically he cites: 1) on-line data base (Info Globe); 2) satellite transmission & remote printing; 3) on-going development of a pagination system; 4) Portabubble -- a portable teleram that weighs 15 pounds, has no moving parts except tiny cooling fan, can store 11,000 words and can be edited into Globe & Mail's computer system via a telephone line.

Concerned with production costs, Amer. Newspaper Publishers Ass'n is developing a substitute for wood pulp used in the manufacture of newsprint. Kenaf, a fast-growing, non-wood, fibrous plant that can be farmed economically in large areas of the US, is proving a successful potential substitute.

Statistics show that newspapers are thriving. The number of dailies has remained relatively constant since WWII; despite some highly publicized closings, daily circulation is near 62 million; and Sunday circulation is nearly 55 million according to William Marcil, ANPA pres. 100 million adults in US read a newspaper daily; they spent \$5.5 billion in 1981 to buy 1 1/2 billion newspapers -- more than in any previous year; and their share of total advertising is nearly 30% -- more than radio & tv combined. "Advertisers trust newspaper advertising to sell their products because their customers trust newspapers. In a recent survey by Opinion Research Center, newspaper advertising earned a 68% believability rating, double the 34% earned by tv," Marcil told So. Dakota Press Ass'n members.

NEWSPAPERS STAY IN TUNE WITH THE TIMES
"It will carry 30 million bits of storable information; weigh less than 3 pounds; provide hard copy; handle both text and graphics; be completely portable; allow random access; permit user self-pacing; be available 24 hours a day; cost less than 25¢ a connect-hour; and be paid for mostly by someone other than the customer."
-- John LeGates, Harvard, describing newspapers (info systems of today & the future)

4. LARGE GENERAL CIRCULATION MAGAZINES CONTINUE TO FARE POORLY

A major Canadian magazine, Today -- a nationwide newspaper supplement with circulation of 3 million -- will close

at the end of August. Despite distribution by major newspapers and joint ownership by 3 large newspaper groups, the advertising just wasn't there, according to the closing announcement. Today was Canada's largest-circulation publication distributed by 18 papers across the country.

CREATIVE ITEM OF INTEREST TO PROFESSIONALS

Modern music is the latest addition to Emhart's creative public relations arsenal. Prolific practitioner John Budd, vp-pr, has been in the forefront of new persuasion methods and communication vehicles, such as the first video taped annual report. Now he enlisted composer Richard Einhorn to prepare a "Musique Concrete" composition, "the rhythmic sounds of productivity" or "symphonie automatique." The "sound montage of electronic music melded with the rhythms, percussions & metallic beats of machinery" is being distributed in tape & disc versions. Machinery used is, of course, Emhart's -- and its more mundane purpose is to manufacture shoes, rivets & cut gears and to package foods. (For copy write Budd at 426 Colt Highway, Farmington, Ct. 06032)

CONVENTIONAL WISDOM OF WHAT CUSTOMERS CONSIDER A CONVENIENCE MAY BE IN ERROR, OIL COS. FIND IN REVERSING CASHLESS SOCIETY TREND; INTRIGUING QUESTIONS RAISED FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS

Accepted trend says we are a credit card society. But extensive research by major oil companies shows approximately 70% of gasoline sales are made with cash. This, along with the high cost of credit, has motivated several oil companies to take controversial actions.

As of April 15, Atlantic Richfield eliminated the use of their credit card. "We knew it would be a controversial move. But ARCO has always been considered an innovator. We were the first major to convert to a self-serve operation. We were also the pioneer of the one-stop-shopping concept with our AM/PM Mini-Markets," Tony Hatch, media rels mgr, told prr.

Announcement to discontinue credit cards was made at a press conference March 2. ARCO execs embarked on an extensive coast-to-coast media sweep to explain company's decision. A repeat of this media blitz will take place shortly announcing the impact of their controversial decision. "Results have all been pluses so far. I handle all the consumer groups and they love it," Bill Duke, mgr/nat'l prgms, told prr.

Other companies are doing a variation on the same theme. Rather than discontinuing the credit card, they're offering a discount for cash. Federal law doesn't permit charging a higher price for credit card sales. By offering a discount for cash, credit card users absorb the processing fee for credit sales. Texaco, Amoco, Exxon are three companies that are doing just that.

"We aren't getting rid of the credit card because a lot of our customers still want the convenience of the card," Jerry Cooper, dpa, Amoco Oil, explained to prr. "We found that there aren't credit-card customers or cash customers only. Usually our customers use both. For some it de-

"Texaco retailers didn't like the credit card processing fee at first, thinking they had to absorb the additional cost," Chris Kiersted, Texaco's mpr, told prr. "There was legal action taken which was found in our favor. State legislation enacted recently in Maryland declares that fees on gasoline cards are illegal. Effective date on that law was suppose to be July 1. But it has been delayed by court order on the basis of objections & actions taken by both retailers independently and Texaco contending that the law is discriminatory & punitive and should not be allowed to take affect. Texaco dealers brought the court action asking that they be allowed to continue with the Texaco card fee. People dislike a fee but they recognize the value of the card. Having it available is worth the price."



pend on what time of the month it is. If it's toward the end, they'll shift to credit card and they'll be willing to pay the extra to do that -- to have that security. On the other hand, when they have cash in their pocket they'd rather get the discount."

IS PR A LINE OR STAFF JOB ... OR BOTH? DO PRACTITIONERS MAKE DECISIONS?

US Chamber of Commerce questioned practitioners' decision-making role while trying to draw a distinction between line & staff functions. Its Survey of Business Leaders 1) asked that the questionnaire not be passed along to the public relations staff for completion; 2) called public relations a "specialized role" similar to "economics." "It wasn't so much a question of narrow field but whether or not people were making top level decisions. Economists typically don't do that. They give advice to line execs who do make the decisions," James Morris, Chamber's survey research center director, told prr.

Responding by letter to the US CofC, Paul Kelley, dpr, U-Haul Internat'l (Phoenix), encouraged them to recognize the profession's role in business: "The public relations executive is responsible first for communicating the totality of external input on the corporation to the CEO; second for participating in and understanding the decisions of the corporation taken in response to the macro situation; and finally for communicating those decisions to whatever audiences have a need and/or want to know."

Apparently an effective protest, Morris plans to revise questionnaire's directions. "His letter brought to my attention the fact that there is a lot of variation among individual firms as to who does what. I'm going to drop the illustration in the future."

DESPITE TROUBLED ECONOMIC TIMES PR PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS THRIVE

Professional organizations are growing like mad. Women In Communications just accepted its 12,000th member -- up from 10,000 in

mid-February. "In economically troubled times like we have now, professionals turn more to professional organizations because they need the service & assistance that they can provide. The package of membership services we offer is what our people need at this time," Ruth Massingill, WICI's comms dir, told prr. WICI has had a membership drive both in retention & recruitment areas all spring and has improved membership services giving chapters more tools with which to recruit.

PRSA's membership now totals 10,487. "People are seeking to become more professional. And new people are coming into the field who want to learn. Hence, the growth of public relations organizations which cater to these needs," PRSA pres. Joe Awad told prr.

WHY FIELD IS GROWING

1. Increasing recognition of the importance of public relations as a management function in all types of organizations & institutions.
2. Change in our economy from manufacturing to services which lends itself to public relations.
3. Growing sophistication & effectiveness of public relations. It's showing that it can do the job.

-- Joe Awad

Neck-and-neck is IABC's 9,735. Incoming IABC pres. Tom Ruddell attributes their growth to "the commitment & enthusiasm of the membership coupled with a superb professional staff."

UPDATE ON THE ROLE & POWER OF THE MEDIA

1. MARY CUNNINGHAM CASE IN RETROSPECT DEFINES WHAT MEDIA CAN, CAN'T DO

The moral of her saga is that, in mass societies, notoriety remains an extremely valuable commodity. In recent weeks she

has been the subject of a cover photo & story in Parade, interviews with by-liners from key dailies; has written a major article in Working Women, addressed the American Newspaper Publishers Ass'n, et al. Though she continues to charge unfairness in coverage of her relationship with Bendix CEO Wm. Agee, the fact is Cunningham wouldn't have these opportunities except for the publicity that the flap gave her.

The role of media is to put topics on the public agenda. Her case is both titilating & relevant, raising legitimate issues of nepotism & women's ability to rise in management. Intelligence & social courage shine through her comment & her action. But would she have been hired as a vp at Seagrams with less than 2 years total experience without the media attention?

Their own words hurt them. Cunningham claims to be the object of sexual bias, yet likens her experience to being "mentally raped." What analogy could more strongly reinforce the sexual tone she wishes to eliminate? And Agee has learned nothing. UPI reports he celebrated the marriage at a company party for 1,000 employees ... and called his bride "the first lady of the Bendix Corporation." Could any phrase more completely undermine the contention that relationships do not confer position?

The case has other strategic aspects. (1) Cunningham & Agee are now married. Is her reappearance in the news a publicity blitz to explain this somewhat compromising fact? Who launched the blitz: Bendix, Seagram, the couple themselves? (2) Agee's public response to a rumor about their friendship started it all. (3) She told Parade she resigned rather than fighting back in the media to avoid hurting his position. Had he not been chrmed "I would have hit every talk show," written a book (which she is again considering) & generally used her celebrity status "to go public with my moral outrage."

2. AFFECT OF THE MEDIA ON PUBLIC POLICY WILL BE STUDIED BY HARVARD

"We know that the press has an increasing impact on the way that public policy is formed and institutions perform, but we know very little either anecdotally or systematically about exactly how that impact is felt and with what consequences," Johathan Moore, dir of the John F. Kennedy School of Governemnt's Institute of Politics said of the study. "We need a new body of information about how the press affects policy-making." A \$225,000 research grant from the Charles H. Revson Foundation will fund a probe of cases such as the Iranian hostage incident, Three Mile Island accident, strategic arms limitation & the Agnew resignation. Moore hopes the project can become a permanent study center on the interrelationship of press, politics & public policy. Results will be published in magazines, journals & a book to appear in approximately 3 years.

3. WHO SAID NEWSPAPERS ARE DEAD OR ABOUT TO BE KILLED BY NEW TECHNOLOGY? CANADA'S GLOBE & MAIL AND ANPA PRES. DON'T THINK SO

Rumors about the death of the print medium are exaggerated. In fact, the new technology is adding to its vigor. "Not

only is computer technology enabling us to communicate with our readers & advertisers