centuries by religious wars. And the Baptists appear to have no pressure for taking this action now except honest repentance.

¶**IABC OPENS A SITE ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB.** Currently has 44 pages of info on various products, services, activities & issues pertaining to organizational communication. Uses easy-to-read format with graphics; hypertext hotlinks allow users to jump from page to page, & to search by key word. From the Web pages, E-mail messages can be sent to the Internet & CompuServe addresses of IABC staff mbrs & volunteers. Open to mbrs & nonmbrs. Address is: http://www.hooked.net/iabc.com/welcome.html. To help people take advantage of its Web site, IABC has created a 9-pg guidebook available free by contacting Kyle Heger, pub'ns mgr: 415/433-3400, ext 120, or fax 415/362-8762.

HOW TO LICK COMPUTER PHOBIA IN COLLEAGUES OR MANAGERS

"If I were to do an intuitive regression analysis, I'd say the level of fear of technology is directly proportional to age. **The older, the more phobic**," counselor David Kirk (Phila) told prr. (See 6/12 issue.) "This creates an interesting management problem because it sets up culture clashes -- the 20-somethings where technology is like breath against those who still set up paperbased scheduling systems." His tips:

TURNING PHOBICS INTO USERS

1) **Find out what matters to them**.
   Then present the opportunities or challenges from a point of view linked to what they're committed to. Show it in ways that make a difference to what matters to them. Do it in little bits & pieces, finding things that will change their lives. Get them addicted to it slowly.

2) **Do something yourself with technology that saves them** & blows them out of the water. They'll want to know how you did that.

3) **Sometimes it takes a senior management threat** to "just do it."

WHAT IF THE CEO IS PHOBIC?

"Eventually it'll hit them where it hurts, which is the inability to attract & retain the kind of employees they need. As the 20-somethings dominate the employee pool, they need to be attracted & retained. Imagine if these 50-something technophobes were beginning their careers & had the choice between a company that had a telephone & one that didn't. Which would they go to? Same thing is happening here."

¶**INTERNET MONITORING SERVICE PROVIDES DAILY -- OR HOURLY -- READ** on what 32 million+ Internet users are saying. Developed for Edelman Public Relations, the I-Wire service monitors some 200,000 Internet documents daily. It scans mailing lists, home pages & 16,000+ special interest newsgroups in search of "matches." "It's proving to be a valuable barometer for identifying & responding to potential crisis situation for our clients," says Nancy Ruscheinski, sr vp & dir of Edelman Interactive Solutions. In March, Edelman established its home page (http://www.edelman.com) which is currently documenting an average of 600 hits per day. (More: 312/240-3000)

GM's VOLUNTEER "AMBASSADOR" PROGRAM SELLS CARS & COMPANY

General Motors' 750,000 employees & retirées function as ambassadors for GM's products to their friends & families. Formal campaign, called GM Ambassadors, equips them with the info needed to talk credibly about GM cars & trucks. If those they talk with actually buy or lease, the ambassador receives points toward merchandise.

VALUE OF GRASSROOTS SALES EFFORTS

Wirthlin Study for GM found:

A. 75% of customers reached by a sales referral effort cite the contact as the single most important influence on their purchase decision

B. 1 in 5 Americans comes in contact with a GM employee or retiree daily

C. 50% of the time, a potential customer initiates contact with an employee to seek info. Employee tracking study revealed, however, that to be credible spokespeople, employees needed more info to respond

Thus, successful ambassador initiatives must be formal, guided programs.

> Enlisting employees as ambassadors is not only an effective way to move product or make external publics aware of your organization's issues or services. It **builds positive relationships in all directions**. Any organization can do it -- schools, hospitals, retail, utilities, NPOs etc. Outcome: Employees become more informed & (in the process) committed (they buy in) to their organization's (& their job's) continued well being. This gets passed along to those they talk with externally, building personal ties back to the organization in a credible person-to-person manner.

HOW CAMPAIGN WORKS

1. **Employee/retiree enrolls** to become an ambassador. At launch, enrollment was via business reply cards; later improved with a toll-free phone number. They receive detailed product & business info including:

   GM Ambassador Welcome Kit: product info book with photos & descriptions of each GM model, competitive comparison matrix & a price list. Also contains orientation to the campaign & recognition benefits.

   GM Ambassador newsletter covers market segments including GM strategy by brand; identifies competition & GM advantages; analyzes emerging trends in technology, quality, safety, retailing; reports campaign progress.

Infoline: on-line computer system keeps local communication coordinators & public affairs community up-to-date on the product & Ambassador campaign info. This info is then distributed at the local level.

2. **Ambassador interacts with a potential customer**, learns customer's interest & needs.

3. **Ambassador calls toll free number** to register prospective customer's name, address, phone & product interest.

4. **Customer Kit is mailed within 24 hrs.** Includes product info & a sales validation card to give the dealer if they purchase a vehicle.

5. **Ambassador receives points** if customer purchases or leases & turns in the sales validation card. Ambassador accumulates points toward merchandise.

6. **Network of 500 employees were recruited to serve as Ambassador Local Coordinators** (ALCs). They receive additional info to share at the local level, including:

   Satellite broadcasts (3 in '94) provide the latest info on the Ambassador campaign & GM products. Also give ALCs the opportunity for a live call-in session to ask questions & talk about what's happening at their locations.

   ALC Today newsletter & collateral materials.

7. **Campaign info is also included in other internal communication vehicles:**
- *GM This Week*, a weekly satellite telecast to all GM locations
- *InfoBriefs*, a compilation of news releases sent to all GM editors for their local newsletters
- *GM Newsline*, a daily pub'n highlighting the latest news about GM & the automotive industry
- *GM Retiree Forums*, presentation & Q&A sessions held in 16 major GM retiree markets
- *Quality Network Councils & United Auto Workers Internal Representative Councils*, regularly scheduled meetings & presentations to committees responsible for UAW programs & communication activities

RESULTS   More than **100,000 ambassadors** have enrolled ... registering **60,000 prospective customers** ... resulting in **25,817 sales** ... totaling more than **1/2 billion dollars** in revenue.

¶ 3.8% of these customers report they would not have bought their GM vehicle if the GM Ambassador campaign did not exist.

¶ Program's Return on Investment: this almost 4% sales increase brought a 17.2% profit when comparing revenues versus program cost. And this doesn't take into account the other benefits of the program -- nor the wavering purchasers who may have been saved.

NEW DATA SYSTEM PINPOINTS PUBLICS AT WORK LOCATIONS

Lifestyle segmentation is called Workplace PRIZM, extending existing PRIZM zip code system:

- It profiles the *working* population of an area (rather than the *residential* population)
- Gives the distribution of PRIZM lifestyle clusters carried into a neighborhood by its working population
- All types of workers are covered, including the private sector, public sector & the growing sector of people who work at home

Alexandria, Va's Old Town district is an example of how an area changes from night to day. 45% of the 8,200 residents belong to the "Executive Suites" PRIZM cluster. During the day, the influx of workers swells the population to over 24,000 causing "Executive Suites" to shrink to just 15% & adding several new clusters like "Young Literati," "Upward Bound" & "Suburban Sprawl."

This opens up opportunities for **restaurants, retailers, healthcare, banks, fundraisers, NPOs** & others who target working clientele. E.g., banks can pinpoint the best sites for new branch offices & ATMs; & compare actual branch performance against daytime market potential. Retailers can select new store or restaurant sites; create merchandise & product mixes for daytime traffic; develop pr programs, creative messages & media buys targeted to a daytime population. (More from Claritas, 703/812-2700)

ITEMS OF IMPORTANCE TO PRACTITIONERS

¶**SELECTIVE PERCEPTION STILL RULES, EVEN WHEN IT HURTS.** When Rhode Island's privately insured state banking system collapsed in '91, people were caught off guard despite months of reports of trouble. Why?

> *"I'd read the paper, but it's the old premise that if it doesn't [seem to] affect you, you don't pay attention,"*

says one depositor. Others say they paid no attention to politics before the banking collapse -- so it became a classic triggering event. Especially when they learned it was caused by insider deals and cozy relationships among regulators, pols & the bankers they were charged with overseeing. Many who were unable to get their funds for up to 18 months are now activists.

¶**TREND TOWARD CIVILITY? RELIGIONS APOLOGIZE FOR PAST BEHAVIOR.** First, the Pope asked for forgiveness for crimes perpetrated over the centuries by Catholics against non-Catholics. Then last week the Southern Baptist Convention -- which was formed as a splinter group 150 years ago over the issue of slaveowning -- overwhelmingly voted a formal apology at its annual conference for past behaviors & attitudes toward African-Americans. Since it is the largest US Protestant group, and dominant in the racially mixed South, this could have great impact. Cynics could argue the Pope is promoting ecumenism & the Baptists want to recruit more blacks. But the Pope chose the Czech Republic for his statement, a land bloodied for