

missions from 5 international cities -- London, Nairobi, Rio de Janeiro, Sydney & Tokyo -- fed into Atlanta simultaneously. On Thursday, choirs from each of the 6 cities sang together -- but in their own languages. Time delays accommodated satellite "bounce" time. On Friday, the "first intercontinental domino fall" began in Atlanta, then went one by one to Rio, London, Nairobi, Tokyo, Sydney and back to Atlanta. "They had to fumigate all the buildings to make sure a roach didn't knock over one of the dominoes," a spokesperson told pr. Visnews (NYC) handled the technology.

PRSA headquarters will stay in NYC. That was the unanimous decision of PRSA board of directors. Motivation was primarily financial based on study done by Touche Ross. It found moving to another city would cost \$836,000 plus an estimated \$257,000 revenue loss. Cost for relocating within NYC is \$186,312. Lease for current hqtrs expires April '87. Flap over how decision was made & presented to members & other competing cities tested the PR Society's pr capabilities.

Like a rock star, businessman Lee Iacocca stole the show last week in Boston. PR & issues pioneer Howard Chase was scheduled to speak to PRSA. But a VIP reception (with no speech) for Iacocca nixed that. Only 15 registered for the seminar. 2,000 attended the Iacocca affair including invited PRSA members. Seminar has been rescheduled. No doubt practitioners could learn more from Chase but celebrity wins out.

QUALITY CIRCLES SHOW SAVINGS & ZERO DEFECTS  
BY UTILIZING PARTICIPATION & GROUP RELATIONS  
(ANYONE USING THEM IN PR DEPARTMENTS?)

Participative management & quality circles are now a necessity rather than an option if organization intends to compete. Donald Dewar,

co-founder of 7,000 mbr International Ass'n of Quality Circles, feels they're vital today whether operations are international or purely domestic.

In '85, an estimated \$2 trillion was saved in the US & Canada by quality circle activities. Better than 1 million employees in the 2 countries are involved. This savings is based on a 4 to 1 savings-to-cost ratio. "Three major surveys have been conducted to date by the association. They reflect rising savings-to-cost ratios of 4 to 1, 5 to 1 and 6 to 1, respectively. The greatest part of circle expense is the cost of employee wages while attending problem-solving sessions." Dewar's predictions for the rest of the 80s:

1. Concept of "Zero Defects" (considered a fleeting fad in the 60s) will be rediscovered as an essential part of employee problem-solving groups. In Japan, org'ns are close to the goal of producing no defects at all. Defects which do occur are measured in parts per million -- a measurement which shocks many Western quality professionals. (See pr 2/4/85 for a review of Edward Deming's mgmt philosophy -- as quality improves, productivity automatically increases -- and his 14 points for managers. Or call pr for copy.)

2. Managers will be expected to conduct circle activities. Performance reviews will include evaluation of the circle's success.

3. "White collar" & service industry circles will account for 1/3 of employee involvement groups in US & Canada by 1990. Previous use exclusively by "blue collar" workers is rapidly changing. More than 100 major hospitals in the US & Canada use circles. Even US gov't is discovering its effectiveness. (More info from Quality Circle Institute, P.O. Box Q, Red Bluff, Calif. 96080; 916/527-6970.)

Vol.29 No.19  
May 12, 1986

7-11 DECISION ON ADULT MAGS: DOES GOOD MARKETING TOP OTHER CONCERNS?  
PLAYING TO CONSERVATIVE VALUES HELPS LOCALIZE THE BIG CORPORATION

Southland Corp (Dallas) announced it won't sell Playboy, Penthouse or Forum anymore. Partly because of "growing public awareness & concern over a possible link between adult magazines and crime, violence & child abuse," spokesman Doug Reed told pr.

But 7-11 already had a workable method of keeping the mags out of the hands of children -- and the sight of those who might be offended -- by 1) not displaying them, but holding them behind the sales counter 2) with their covers obscured 3) for purchase by adults only. In addition, only those 3 were carried -- not the raunchier mags.

Market Research vs. Pressure Groups Decision was also based on market research.

3 yrs ago when customers were asked about the mags, "an overwhelming majority either supported or were indifferent to our policy," notes Reed. Recent market research of customers & general public shows "support is not nearly as strong -- tending towards more conservative values."

Special interest groups -- Rev. Donald Wildmon's Nat'l Federation for Decency & Rev. Jerry Falwell's Liberty Federation (the old Moral Majority) -- had no influence on the decision, according to Reed. "We've received pressure from them for several years now. Their activities have not affected sales whatsoever. Matter of fact, in some areas sales increased because we never advertise these magazines." Activity from these groups has been "negligible at best" during the past 6-8 months.

This case is another illustration of the increasing complexity of public relations issues. For instance, both Wildmon & Falwell took credit despite company denials.

More & more the issue is freedom of choice. It is joined between those who want to curtail that freedom according to their views of what is "moral" or "good," and those who believe democracy demands accommodation to others' rights. Ironically -- and a potentially dangerous circumstance -- too often those who want to limit intellectual freedom are the same folks who preach unlimited "free enterprise" economically.

Adding additional irony to this case was Playboy publisher Hugh Hefner's response: "When people like Wildmon & Jerry Falwell go on tv, they say, 'We're not supporting censorship. We just don't think Playboy should be sold in 7-11 with the bread & milk.' The two most popular products in 7-11 are cigarettes & beer. The purchasers in 7-11 are Playboy readers. They aren't little old ladies." Thus...the company had to choose between positions advocated by Falwell or Hefner...two extremes with no middle ground.

-- Pat Jackson

"If we had made a decision in response to these groups' pressure, it would have been made a long time ago." However, both groups took credit.

Getting The Gov't Off Our Backs??? US Attorney General Ed Meese's Commission on Pornography is widely considered more a right wing political ploy than an objective investigative body. Tho it hasn't made its report yet, it recently sent letters to major convenience & drugstore chains warning that they had been identified as businesses "involved in the sale or distribution of pornography" because they sell adult mags. Reed rejects the notion that the letter influenced Southland's decision. "We contemplated this long & hard and based it on a great deal of information, not just one letter."

Does Decision Infringe 1st Amendment Rights? "We're not saying people can't read these magazines. Just purchase them somewhere else or subscribe. We as retailers have the right to choose those products which best represent the needs of the communities where we do business," Reed contends. 7-11 can justly argue that it has a right to determine the products it sells, that the mags are available elsewhere for those who want them. Yet normal marketing policy is never to make a customer go elsewhere.

Company has been "inundated with media calls." Negative editorials have mainly been on decision's infringement of 1st Amendment rights. But, Reed notes, that was to be expected. "In the past, media sided with us. So we weren't sure what their reaction would be. But it has been extremely fair." Company has received several thousand letters, phone calls, cards, even flowers. "It's running about 10 to 1 in support of our decision. We didn't expect that."

Motivating Factor "To most people, 7-11 is not a big company in Dallas or 8,000 stores across the country. It's their little store down on the corner. If we can do anything to enhance the quality of their neighborhoods -- March of Dimes or child abuse prevention programs -- then it makes us a better corporate citizen. And, quite selfishly, it's good for our business. This decision will enhance that aspect."

WAS BURGER KING'S "HERB CAMPAIGN" SUCCESSFUL? DIFFERENTIATING PUBLICITY AWARENESS FROM BEHAVIOR "In terms of building top-of-mind awareness, it was extremely successful. In terms of building sales, it was disappointing. We had only a 1% sales growth," Joyce Myers, pr mgr, told prr. If you're into measuring clips, Herb generated 4,000-5,000. (See prr 1/13.)

Internally it was considered a "perfect marriage between public relations & advertising." It convinced the company to use more pr with adv'g campaigns. "We thought it was very successful during a difficult time in the fast food industry."

Negative press reports of 15-yr-old spotting Herb but being disqualified because of age caused public outcry in Birmingham. But rules posted in restaurants state contestants must be at least 16 to win. "We understand the disappointment of the 15-yr-old and we were sorry about it, but in fairness to everyone across the country we had to maintain the rules." Reason for not including children under 16 was because "we didn't want to encourage young kids to stay out of school waiting for Herb to show up at Burger King. We really did it to protect their interests."

NEW PAPER AVAILABLE FROM WALT LINDENMANN ON COMMUNICATIONS AUDITS

They measure an organization's communication effectiveness internally & externally, begins his 18-pg paper: "The Communications Audit: What It Is ...When To Conduct It...How To Proceed...Possible Topics And Audiences To Be Covered...Possible Analytical Approaches." It explains all that plus. For instance:

Communications audits involve 2 major dimensions:

1. Attitudinal, focusing on the differences between what sr mgmt is saying about an org'n & its problems...what the org'n's pr people are saying...and what outside audiences are saying. The audit will determine if they are out of sync so the org'n can take corrective action.

TYPICAL DESIGN FOR A CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT		
Publics	Total Number Of Interviews	Methodology Generally Used For Interviewing
General public	350 - 1,000	Phone
Customers	300 - 500	Phone
Investment community	25 - 100	Personal or phone
Stockholders	500 individual 100 institutional	Mail or phone Mail or phone
Media	50 - 100	Phone
Plant communities	300 general public 30-50 comty leaders (per comty or state)	Phone Personal
Influentials	varies by state 100 national	Personal or phone Personal or phone
Employees	500 - 1,000	Mail

2. Communications, focusing on the messages the org'n conveys about itself in the materials it produces & distributes and compares these to the messages being conveyed by others outside the org'n.

Audit will uncover credibility gaps and establish 1) short & long term goals; 2) priority of those goals; 3) communications themes, major or minor, to be emphasized; 4) most important publics; 5) reaction of these publics to any current or proposed pr programs or activities; 6) communications methods that have been, or are likely to be most & least successful; 7) new types of communication approaches that may be warranted; 8) acceptable measuring sticks to insure evaluation.

An effective audit has to answer 3 crucial questions: 1) What is really going on, internally & externally, that is relevant to know for meeting the org'n's overall communications goals & objectives? 2) What is the meaning behind what is going on; that is, what are the reasons that certain things are being done & certain perceptions are being held? 3) What does it take to plug into the present communications process to bring the way things are done & how perceptions are held more in line with the needs & goals of the organization? (18-pg paper free "as long as the supply lasts," from Lindenmann, Opinion Research Corp, 1 Penn Plaza, Ste.1632, NYC 10119; 212/736-3077.)

ITEMS OF CONCERN TO PRACTITIONERS

Technological special event extraordinaire celebrated Coca-Cola's 100th anniversary last week. Bottlers from around the world gathered in Atlanta. Satellite trans-