

Reply.
In reply to: Advertising programme
Sender: John MINCK / HP0400/02

Dated: 09/26/86 at 1056.

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Part 1.

TO: Malcolm MCMILLAN / HP1400/G1

Part 2.

Interesting thoughts, Malcolm. The fact that QTD didn't have much media going before the MCG takeover is a poor place for Scheifele to start. The need for media pages for us to say what we want to customers starts with the competitive situation and not on what you were doing before.

I have been thinking of some sort of manifesto which would recount the previous situation of combined divisions spending maybe 500K on maybe 20 different ads with maybe 200 appearances during 1984. For a promise to take that money and add another 500K, we get an agency which gets paid 250K and a William Tell ad which cost 250K. So far, SPD has gotten about 9 column inches in the William Tell ad, and nothing more.

The ads themselves are sophmoric. And they really do reflect more of a consumer mentality. I had no trouble accepting a "bumper sticker" single slogan ad for consumer things like lipstick or cola. But my knowledge of engineers (and I've delt with thousands in my time) is that they do want facts and specs and benefits--in a word--long copy. Why else would the readership studies of MW/RF show that their technical articles get such good reader recall ratings? And why does a Tek ad with 2 pages packed full get 72% reader recall--just as good as the William Tell 6-page insert.

Incidentally, a nice irony to the 72% rating that DFS and Carol bragged about is a 1-page, 2-color ad I did on a dull 8683/4 signal generator in 1984 which got a 72% rating too. It cost about 4000 to prep and ran at about 2K per page. It had quite a few specs and benefits.

My big soapbox now is to try to force a demonstration that these bumper sticker abominations are something the readers like. I've been trying to get a split-run test run with a short-copy/long-copy test done on some ad. Actually I wanted it done on my AWS ad just in preparation. Scheifele scrubbed that idea, but may agree to do it on Allan's EMI ad.

Actually, on Scheifele's positioning campaign, when I found she was thinking of a test phase to check reader reaction, I suggested that we tag unto that test program a test of short/copy vs. long/copy to prove once and for all whether the DFS fixation was justified. I have promised to pack my tent if the proof is there. Interestingly, a DFS biggie sitting next to me at that positioning presentation said that long/short test would be better run in a split ad run test. Naturally, I jumped on that and thereby came with the AWS split run proposal. (I'll send you a copy of my ad brief where I put in an unsolicited proposal for the test.)

But even that test may get delayed and delayed, if I know DFS and Scheifele.

The other aspect of the problem is that Carol claims a lot of support for her program from various field market development people. I can't believe that but going out with any sort of broad-based questioning at this time could be pretty volatile. I do know that Cathi reported that Europe doesn't like the thing at all. The ad copy doesn't read to Europeans. The contrast with

all the major competitors is painfully obvious.

The ultimate problem may be Reeser himself. He has edicted that there be no talking head ads and that seems to be what the agency is hanging their arguments on. But I will say this. I know I could construct an ad program that wasn't talking heads but did present our HP advantages of family programs and hard performance facts and benefits. And certainly more than bumper sticker slogans.

And tactically, you never take Reeser on head on. That is fatal. Even the Marketing Council should not try that. That's also why an ad manifesto would be so tricky and delicate. And that's why we probably need more grass-roots feedback.

Anyway, these are just some more background (deep background) comments for you.

Cheers,