

In Great Britain, we undertook a two year educational effort to prepare the entire population for the changeover from pound-shilling to decimal currency. We believe this represents the most intense and successful Social Marketing campaign ever undertaken. This necessarily involved not only the comprehensive promulgation of somewhat technical data to a wide variety of publics (consumers, merchants, bankers, teachers, etc.) but also the cultivation of attitudes favorable to cooperating in the effort. After all, they were phasing out a custom and habit of four hundred years' standing for the nation, and of perhaps sixty or seventy years' standing for many individuals.

But the campaign was professionally wrought, governmentally financed, and publicly respected. It was effective beyond the most optimistic expectations.

The same was true for an anti-drug program in West Germany, directed primarily to potential teenage abusers. Once again, the professional marketing communicators employed their unparalleled understanding of their audience and of how communications must be used to effect real change. They avoided mistakes made by other well-intended but less astute anti-drug campaigns, and the project appears to have rendered a demonstrable public service.

I believe there are areas where we must now bend to our own ends the competence of professional communicators, in a deliberate stroke of public policy, to accomplish widely desired health benefits. Such a policy is prefigured in other areas of public priority -- the military, for instance. All of the U.S. armed services routinely engage in the use of marketing communications and paid media -- broadcast and otherwise -- to ensure fulfillment of their recruiting objectives.