

2. Set up a joint AMA-advertiser board

One of the best ways for the AMA to learn the advertisers' problems and explain its own problems to the advertisers would be through the establishment of a joint AMA-industry board, the purpose of which would be to work out mutually satisfactory solutions to various problems. This could be done through one or more of the already existing trade associations, such as the American Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Association and the American Drug Manufacturers' Association. Such an offer of cooperation on the part of the AMA would indicate positively to the industry the desire of the AMA for greater mutual understanding.

3. Aim at higher advertising standards for AMA publications

The majority of medical advertisers definitely prefer the AMA to accept for advertising in its publications only products of professional interest presented in a professional way. They furthermore express the belief that if the AMA would adopt this policy, additional revenue from increased medical accounts would more than make up for the loss of the non-medical income.

It would probably be unwise to make this change suddenly. A gradual change, however, could be achieved by concentrating selling effort exclusively on professional advertisers, and by gradually tightening the restrictions on the non-medical product copy.

As a first step, the advertisers almost universally suggest that the advertising of non-Council products be made to conform to the "honesty in advertising" rules to which the Council products are subject. They would apply this restriction particularly to advertising by cigarette manufacturers who make pseudo-scientific claims in their copy.

4. Expand direct-mail promotion

The advertisers, practically without exception, agree that if they were presented with more evidence of the value of AMA space, if they were shown how they could increase their results proportionately more by devoting their budgets to AMA publication space rather than to non-AMA space, they would increase their space purchases in AMA publications.

The direct-mail promotion program should be carefully set up to tie in with the personal sales calls of the space representatives. It should be designed so as to cover continuously the various areas which need to be covered. It should allow for the continuous turnover of personnel on the mailing list, so that new people are informed of points which they should know and that old hands are periodically reminded of these points. Throughout, a systematic effort should be made to build up the prestige of the AMA and to increase the good-will of the recipient toward the AMA.

The direct-mail pieces would fall roughly, according to purpose, into three classes: public information, which would aim at giving information on how specific AMA publications serve the medical industry; service pieces, which would aim at giving the manufacturer helpful statistical compilations, information on how to write more effective ads, survey results on attitudes of physicians, etc.; and public relations pieces, aiming at creating favorable attitudes toward the AMA and its publications, and practical esteem for Council Acceptance, reprints of ads, editorials and articles about how the AMA is trying to improve the attitudes of physicians toward using medical advertising, etc.

5. Improve personal selling

The advertisers universally comment that the AMA is doing a poor job of promoting and selling publication space. All but the larger accounts state the space representatives call on them infrequently, that their presentations are non-existent or poor, and that the representatives are poorly informed on AMA policy.

The advertisers say that if more selling effort is made by the AMA, the AMA will sell more space. From a purely business point of view, it would seem that the possibility of increasing advertising revenue by several million dollars per year would justify increasing the expenditures made for promotion and selling of space.

The first step, it appears to us, would be the establishment of a system of remuneration of all AMA personnel connected with sales, which reflects directly their productiveness. This would enable the AMA to get and hold top caliber personnel who would do the kind of promotion and selling job which the AMA publications as leaders in the field, deserve. Secondly, establishing a centralized