

FISH MERCHANDISING SESSION

WEDNESDAY—NOVEMBER 19

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Selling Fish with "Point-of-Purchase" Advertising

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FIRST, let us define "point-of-purchase" and "point-of-sale." Point-of-sale can supposedly be made in the home as a result of reading an ad or watching a TV program. Point-of-purchase is a sale made in actual goods at the point where it is sold. Recent figures show that only two per cent of items in a supermarket are pre-sold.

One trade association offers \$100 for the best definition of merchandising. This has been offered for the past five or six years and is still unclaimed. To me, merchandising is selling, but this must be three-level selling. For example, in the distribution of fish, the broker, grocer and consumer must all be sold to make any merchandising plan effective.

Point-of-purchase displays are one of the recognized advertising media that most effectively carries out a merchandising program; furthermore, it is the one medium that every salesman can help control, be more effective in, and actually see the results or benefits derived therefrom. Although other media are a necessary and helpful part of any well-conceived merchandising program, it is necessary to wrap it up and carry it through with a point-of-purchase program.

Since the war display material has gained new prominence. It is no longer just a part of the advertising and merchandising picture, but is now a recognized advertising medium in its own right. Even with years in the business, I am not always aware of its value and acceptance. This was vividly demonstrated recently when I spoke to the Pennsylvania Retail Grocers. I had hoped to sell them on the value of point-of-purchase materials, but this was not necessary. They told me they knew the value, would use it, and asked where they could get more displays. Display is now a major factor; do not treat it lightly.

The vehicles of displays are numerous; floor bins, wire trims, shelf talkers, etc. The uses of these vary with locality and type of store and constantly change. It is true that some stores claim they do not use display material, but when sales fall off a little, they scramble for display material. If personnel of a store claim they will not use display material, in six months they will probably completely reverse their thinking.

In any display program you must first make certain it is acceptable to the dealer, thus insuring usage. It can usually be tailored to fit a budget.

The need for display material that sells is greater than ever before. Mr. Armstrong, Director of Merchandising of Kroger Stores, says "Will the manufacturers please have their salesmen stop telling our buyers about all the wonderful advertising on the product. We presume you have ample advertising or you would not be on our shelves. Instead, please tell our buyers what you propose to do at the point-of-purchase to help move products from the shelves as effec-

tively as we put it on there." Also, I would like to quote Mr. Justin Dart, President of Liggett Rexall Stores, who stated before the Merchandising Executives Club of New York "There is nothing, absolutely nothing, that will replace merchandising at the point-of-purchase."

On this point, you should educate your salesmen as to the value of display in the store. In essence a display card, shelf talker or other form can mean extra dollars in his pocket if he will study where, how and in which store it should be placed. Many companies dramatize sales in terms of cash in a salesman's pocket. The salesman understands this language, thus insuring greater placement for you. Also on this point, even for large chain food stores you will be wise to erect a display, photograph it and keep sales records as to performance in terms of sales. When calling on another store, even in the same chain, show the photograph and sell it in terms of dollar sales. While on this subject, fisheries people have an excellent impulse item which can mean sales day after day. You also have a high profit item for the grocer. A grocer has items he makes money on and items he makes money with. Your product falls into the latter, and he loves these items.

Many items in a supermarket are impulse; in fact, over 50 per cent of sales are impulse sales. The Coca-Cola Company states that over 44 per cent of their sales in these stores are impulse sales.

Remember these stores are looking for good display ideas. I know from experience and from inquiry that fish products as a whole are not merchandised. You know more about movement of your product than the wholesaler knows. He will welcome you with any idea that will sell more.

The large food stores do 60 per cent of their volume in twelve to fifteen hours of the week. During these peak hours display is all important in plus sales to you and the grocer. As a housewife shops she sees only seven or eight per cent of the items, or approximately 287 items, from the thousands the store carries.

The stores are seeking selling displays as well as displays that create excitement. Mr. Myer B. Marcus, Vice President of Food Fair Stores, recently stated that displays keep their stores live and interesting and that in serving many of the same customers each week displays are a valued impulse factor to overcome the inertia of a shopping list which stifles sales.

If nothing else, please take home one important fact: "Product promotion without point-of-purchase is wasted money."

In addition, sell your own salesmen on your display program as well as you sell them on your product. As high as 84 per cent of the effectiveness of a display program can be lost from the time it is conceived until it reaches its final use, due to poor selling to your own organization.

In closing, please try something new. If you can't get local help on display, at least take an afternoon off, go to a supermarket and look for a display that you can alter or adapt to your products. In some manner either steal or buy the display. Rework it and run a few tests, and you will be amazed at what you can do at point-of-purchase.