

## Linotype Agency Management

THERE are four fundamentals upon which the Linotype business is built:

Management  
Finance  
Production  
Distribution

This chapter of the Sales Manual deals with the last of these—Distribution, or Sales Management. While Linotype sales are world-wide, for the purposes of these pages, we will consider certain general phases, treating specific over-seas conditions separately. However, many of the principles discussed are universally applicable.

**Distribution** The business activity that takes place after a product is manufactured and before the customer accepts shipment is broadly termed Distribution. Its most important phase is Sales. In other chapters we have dealt with the market and kinds of people with whom Linotype does business, as well as the subject of Public Relations. All have an important bearing upon the consideration of effective selling.

For many years, Linotype has done business in the domestic field through Agencies, located in strategic points throughout the United States. At various times, and in varying degrees, stocks of maintenance parts and supplies have been set up in most of the agencies to serve our customers better. But always, all agencies have been first and foremost Sales Agencies. Experience has shown that it is necessary for us to have the intimate knowledge of the needs and problems of publishers and printers that can be acquired only through sales groups established within practical boundaries. These are the nerve centers of the Linotype business.

**What Is An Agency?** It is an organization which is entrusted with the operation of business arising from and destined for the industry to be served within its boundaries. While it is provided with the necessary housing, equipment, stocks, tools, etc., these are but the means whereby our people carry on their work. An agency is an *organization*. It will be successful to the

extent that its personnel is properly chosen, the necessary routine maintained, enthusiastic cooperation developed, and intelligent supervision given by the manager.

In considering agencies, it is necessary that Management establish a set of standards and rules of operation whereby all concerned may know how to judge and be judged; what routines, records and systems will be maintained; what methods are required and recommended; and what, in the light of experience or new objectives sought, need uniform control. Successful management requires uniform measuring standards. This applies to measuring and comparing agencies with one another, as well as measurement of men within agencies, especially in the field. There are a number of teams in a baseball league. Every team plays according to a uniform set of rules and their performances as teams can be compared with each other. Each man on the teams, too, plays under standard rules of play. Their standing can thus be rated. The analogy applies to business when it is operated under the agency setup, as Linotype does.

The Agency Manager recognizes the value of comparisons of performance which uniform rules and requirements afford. Some of these he supplies to Management, while others come to him from Management. Together, they provide the necessary intelligence for successful business operation.

**What Is An Agency Manager?** He is a man who has been chosen by the Management to supervise the operation of an agency under the requirements laid down by them. To him are entrusted the details of the successful conduct of Company business within the boundaries of the agency.

Through him Company policies, regulations and instructions are relayed to members of the agency staff and fieldmen. But, first of all, and at all times, he is a *Sales Manager*. There are administrative duties that he must perform and many decisions made as to the application of Company requirements. He must answer questions when raised either by the fieldmen or customers (when Brooklyn reference is not required), and assume the responsibility for detailed sales strategy, sales and service routine and maintain a live and intelligent personnel.

In fact, the successful agency manager seldom



finds enough hours in the day or sufficient days in the week to do the job that he has to do and the Company expects of him.

The good will of the industry and the Company is to be maintained and enhanced wherever possible. The volume of business is to be increased through his aggressive leadership of the salesmen in his organization; and the confidence of the people within the industry in his section, that they will be well and speedily served, will be maintained and strengthened at all times. He stands midway between the customer and the home office. He reflects the success of the Company to the customers directly and through his fieldmen, and interprets the needs and attitudes of the trade and his field force to headquarters for their guidance and intelligent consideration.

The successful manager possesses the qualities which make possible those business and personal relationships between the Company and customers which will continue to remain mutually pleasant and profitable through the years. Linotype has maintained many such friendships through the sixty-odd years of service to the industry that needs and uses its products. Our agency managers have had an important part in the creation and maintenance of good will. The ability to demonstrate this to everyone throughout the agency oftentimes measures the capacity of managers—it is so fundamental.

Good will, however, is not always to be won by "the-customer-is-always-right" attitude. Customers respect fairness, even though their immediate self-interests suffer sometimes. That which is right can take a degree of firmness which a customer may feel is too strict, but usually if the decision is fair and understood, his respect for the Company increases in due course. It is not unusual to find that individual selfishness prompts claims that Company policy can ill-afford to concede, and it is at this point that the agency manager is called upon to exercise the tact and diplomacy which will retain the confidence and good will of the customer. Good will is a two-way street with no left-turns. Frequently it requires patience, judgment and a personality that inspires confidence.

But it's worth all of the effort. It may be that there are cases where substantial sales have been made when good will has been lacking. If so, they are few. With the presence of good will, however, the problems of specific sales are materially lessened and either new relationships are established more easily, or those which have existed in the past are continued. Two qualities are basic in all successful business relationships—good will and respect.

**Personal Qualities** The name Linotype stands high in the business world. This is because its policies have been on the highest levels, its products have been the

best that engineering skills have been able to devise and build, and its personnel has been in keeping with the same high standards.

Agency managers are the deputies by whom the industry judge the Company. They have the advantage of a respected heritage which has grown out of years of fair dealing. They have the backing of a Company which can afford to admit its error when such is the case, rather than evading just responsibility. They are expected to maintain the same degree of integrity and confidence which the Company constantly insists upon among the trade and its own organization.

The ability to be equally at ease among those of every level is a necessary quality. Agency managers must think and talk intelligently with publishers, employing printers, managing and production executives, as well as with foremen, operators and machinists. There is no dividing line between these groups or levels, when it comes to agency managers and their salesmen. The Linotype typifies enduring and advantageous investment to the proprietor. It means profitable production to those executives who are entrusted with successful operation, and an unfailing means of meeting deadlines and delivery schedules for the foremen. It is recognized for its satisfactory and easy operation by the men who sit at the keyboard, and plant machinists know it to be dependable, well-built and easily maintained. So it is that the level of discussions with all of these people must be equally intelligent and interesting to them, always reflecting the degree of understanding which establishes mutual confidence.

Nor are these attributes to be confined to the agency manager. They apply equally to every Linotype person—man and woman—with whom the trade (and the public) come in contact, both within the agency and in the field, during business hours and always. Leadership, however, stems from the manager.

Just as the physical appearance of the agency must be at its best, so too should the agency manager and all of his representatives be similarly presentable at all times. There are few men who are capable of overcoming sloppy dress or conduct—we know of none. When traveling, Linotype asks its managers and fieldmen to live in a manner to bring credit to themselves and the Company. Expense provisions are made to meet the needs of proper travel, hotel and such entertaining as is needed. Management complains only when reasonable self-discipline and intelligent conformance to accepted standards are lacking.

Discussions and conversations are the outward manifestations of integrity and sincerity, and their lack would become evident without great delay. It is satisfactory reaction for Management, when publishers and printers visit Brooklyn or meet our executives at conventions, to hear "We rely upon George (or Jim) to keep us in line. He has always advised us correctly and we



consider him one of us." Agency managers and fieldmen alike share this responsibility and recognition.

**Leadership** The fact that Management has placed him in charge of an agency indicates their belief that he possesses the quality of leadership. Regardless of how automatic the routine of an organization is devised, or how carefully it may be operated, the necessity for leadership exists. The intelligent preparation of field and office reports requires watchful supervision near to the center of each agency or group activity.

Analysis of conditions can point the way toward needed sales strategy or remedies to meet a situation while it is not yet serious. Advice or personal assistance given to representatives often saves the day when the going is tough in the field. A fieldman may feel able to cope with a situation single-handed, but his strength is greater when he knows that his agency manager can and will throw his added weight into the scales when needed. And, carrying this a step further, the agency manager knows that behind him and his men there is the whole Brooklyn organization and resources—all eager to cooperate in the best possible way. Teamwork weighs heavily in favor of every man on the team. Each man, realizing that his strength is shared by others and he sharing that of the remainder of the team, takes on self-confidence. The fieldman who feels alone in his job can be an awfully lonely man. But when he knows that he has others—his agency manager, the Brooklyn organization and all their means of cooperation—to draw upon, he has assets far beyond his personal qualities. The agency manager is the key to such conditions. Leadership—resourcefulness, experience, aggressiveness and loyalty.

**Analysis** Analysis is the strainer through which reports, problems, plans for action, decisions of varied sorts must pass every day. The agency manager must determine where and when help is needed to carry on successfully at a dozen or more points in the field at once. The correspondence with customers, too, must reflect proper consideration of queries of many sorts. Decisions may involve technical matters which, out of his experience, can be answered without difficulty. Or, it may be that something must be referred to the proper department in Brooklyn—a decision made. All of such things—every day, perhaps, the analysis of problems that come to his attention requires experience, poise, patience, and always the will to solve situations to the satisfaction of customers, representatives and Management. Truly, as one seasoned manager puts it, "I'm the middle-man."

But the term "analysis" carries farther afield than any of these situations. It becomes involved in other peoples' businesses. That Linotype representative who

has so far won the confidence of his customers that they will ask him to analyze the mechanical or typographical conditions in their plants and make recommendations for improvement is to be commended. And he is to be backed up, too. He may not need personal help—if not, at least he must have every conceivable assistance that available technical information and printed matter afford. If he does need more help—or if the task is one that the agency can better handle, then it becomes a cooperative effort in which the agency manager and agency personnel participate. Here it is that customers frequently ask that an "expert" prepare suggestions. The fieldman is encouraged to refer (or bring) the problem to the agency and there the best available brains combine to prepare an analysis of the problem and its solution, which the representative can submit for the consideration of his customer. Machinery layouts, in fact sometimes entire composing-room layouts, involve a degree of experience that exceeds any one man's abilities to recommend. Then it is that the cooperation of the agency personnel and sometimes, if it seems desirable, the proper Brooklyn department is called upon to work shoulder to shoulder with the representative. Magazine layouts can be simple or complex. The combined knowledge of the Linotype organization includes endless records of specific problems that have been solved. Typographically, the resources of all agencies and the backing of the Brooklyn experts are constantly drawn on by customers and salesmen everywhere.

Through it all, the agency manager is the focal point through which these requests pass. His ability to recognize the best way to handle situations—his analysis of the proper procedure—has a decided bearing upon the effectiveness of his agency and his fieldmen in representing Linotype as our organization is prepared to serve and as our customers have a right to expect.

**Yardsticks** Reference has been made to Management's requirement of uniformity in matters of agency routine. This is to insure the adoption and use of common denominators throughout the organization, rather than independent methods which various individuals might feel were desirable from their own preferences. They include a unified approach to interpreting Company policies, statements to the trade or press, timing of specific activities, standards of employment, salary adjustment methods, routine systems of accounting, recording, Rand usage, reports, filing, etc. All of such activities that exist in agencies are weighed, selected and dictated by Management so as to make available to each agency manager the best of the combined experience of others and permit exact comparisons of all operations, regardless of local conditions.

Since agencies are first of all Sales agencies, it is obvious that a means of establishing measurements both of potentials and performances is necessary. Ex-



perience has proved that the "per machine" basis is sound. It is fair to assume that an agency with (let us say) 6,000 outstanding machines within its boundaries should yield orders for new machines of three-quarters as many as another agency where there are 8,000 outstanding machines. It should sell at least the same percentage of supplies and maintenance parts to machines as the larger agency territory.

By the same token, individual salesmen should be similarly rated. A salesman with 500 outstanding machines in his territory should show at least the same sales volume as others with corresponding territory. In other words, the "per machine" yardstick justifies the basis which Management has established—the common denominator for all agencies and all salesmen. If there are local conditions that might alter the literal application of this yardstick, they will be made known to Management by agency managers.

**Keeping Sales Personnel Up** Aging sales staffs create problems. Agency managers find this to be an ever-present source of concern. The question as to the imminence of replacing an elderly man with one who can be built into an equally successful, or better, man is not something to be decided at a moment's notice. There are circumstances where exactly this may be necessary—through sickness, accident or sudden death. Consequently, whatever may be the immediate condition, agency managers must be training men who can step into the sales lineup and carry on. Behind this, there must be the constant surveying of possible candidates for salesmen. These sometimes become evident through their own ambition and solicitation. Or, perhaps diplomatic conversations with potential prospects may lead to such action on their part.

Some may be working for our own customers. In case a man is employed by them, our policy—and this will be seen to be quite as practical as it is ethical—is to listen to such suggestions by those who believe that the life of the Linotype salesman is alluring.

Then, without exception, their employers are made aware of the situation (preferably by the applicant or otherwise by the agency manager) and their consent to such discussions is secured. If the slightest objection is expressed, they should be told that we would not think of pursuing the matter further. Few employers have ever taken exception to this procedure. Many have been drawn closer to our Company because of our attitude.

The qualifications offered for our sales force seldom are the same. Usually, they are of course practical printers, since the relationships which they are expected to develop with customers are of a technical nature. Our experience has been that some are operators, a few are Linotype machinists, a considerable number of foremen and some superintendents have

furnished agencies with material out of which sales personnel has been built. Such arrangements seldom can be justified by the promise of immediate increased income, at least under usual conditions, because of the high wage scales in the industry. But there is a certain freedom and broader horizons (in the minds of some) to be traveling for Linotype and meeting men who are their equals and superiors—all bound together with the smell of printers' ink. This type of person seldom gets it out of his system, once he is "in."

The training of salesmen requires more than casual attention—it is serious business. While it is true that they will acquire experience quickly when actually in the field, and encountering specific problems, it is more necessary that candidates get their initiation within the agency. There they learn the rules of the game and become associated with the people who must cope with the situations arising among the men in the field. Many men have learned much through careful reading of customer files and salesmen's reports. These files are full of years of experience with actual cases, their complexities, their handling. Errors in judgment are sometimes disclosed, while the eventual solutions of most of them give to candidates the opportunity for accumulating knowledge for future action when similar cases may come to them for handling.

There always are reasons for the reports and the rules regarding contracts, credits, etc., which may not seem wholly clear to such new Linotypemen until they are fully explained. No rule is made without a reason. Its elimination may not mean simplification—it may mean complications. Most neophytes are greatly surprised by the variation in legal requirements in the various states. The details of the same transaction may differ greatly in the 48 states—and usually do. Hence, the necessity for agency managers making such matters entirely clear to trainees within the agency.

As the candidate progresses, the procedure of temporarily associating him with various active salesmen on observation trips has proved effective. His induction into the team on his own will differ with circumstances, but this is the period when agency managers will keep close watch. The old theory of giving him an SBI and "let's see if he can swim" is gone. A new man in the field may be reflecting the wisdom and competence (or its lack) of an agency manager quite as much as his own capabilities.

**Meeting the Industry** In another chapter of this Sales Manual, emphasis has been placed upon the attitude of our Management toward meetings and conventions of the printing and publishing industry. Agency managers are awake to the advantages in meeting groups of the men who are our customers—or who should be. There are instances, too, when men who have not been contacted for long periods can be culti-



vated during such meetings. This opportunity for such fraternization is not to be under-rated.

We have previously emphasized the lasting effects growing out of the knowledge that Linotype is interested in knowing the trade's views and problems. There are instances where agency managers take such an active part in conventions that they assume almost official importance in the eyes of publishers and printers—without becoming either criticized or officious. Such relationships are the result of years of close associations and confidence. They are among the highest forms of agency management relationships with the trade. The personal contacts with trade association managers which agency managers (and salesmen) can develop usually prove to be exceptional means of mutual advantage. The tangible things that we can do for these men (who usually are literally swamped with details) are more than repaid by the intangible ways that they can repay us when their members may be discussing matters in which we are definitely interested. The trade remembers, too, the interest that the Linotypemen unselfishly display in their meetings and out.

These thoughts apply equally to the salesmen who represent us and attend industry meetings. Agency managers merely point up what the salesmen should do and these policies should be stressed with them. Meetings and conventions can be considered nuisances at times—but they shouldn't be. They are either a paradise or purgatory—but this largely depends upon what the agency manager and salesmen make them.

**The Use of Printed Sales Aids** Certainly nobody connected with the printing business needs any reminder of the value of carefully planned printing in selling. And there is little reason to doubt the attitude

of Management toward Linotype advertising, whether it be in trade publications or specific pieces of printed items. Neither should there be any question as to the need for the constant use of such material.

Every piece of printing is produced for a purpose. There are three "P's" to be considered—Planning, Printing and Placing. The last is just as important as the others. A piece can be carefully planned and well printed—but if it fails to find itself in the hands of prospects and customers, better that it should never have been planned and produced. It has failed in its purpose.

The agency manager plays an important part in the advertising setup. Probably there will never be a salesman who will claim that Management should eliminate their advertising program—they would complain bitterly if this were suggested. But too many of those same salesmen fail to use, to anywhere near the possibility afforded, the printed sales helps that are liberally furnished to them.

In the chapter on advertising, we have covered this condition sufficiently. This chapter is written for agency managers—and the point we hope to make here is that the agency manager should keep his salesmen constantly conscious that our Management requires the distribution of our printed matter judiciously and with the knowledge that it does make a definite impression in the minds of the trade.

We yield no advantage in any way to the competitor, and this applies to our advertising and printed matter—*but it must be used*. Advertising is not advertising when it is on the agency shelf—it becomes advertising only when it passes into the hands of the men whom we want to influence in our favor. It's the job of the agency manager to keep this one of the most active phases of sales management.



