

Pro Job Demands Business Methods

By Eddie Loos, Pro

Lake Shore CC, Glencoe, Ill.

STUDY and application of the basic principles of business would greatly benefit many professionals. We hear successful businessmen around our clubs tell of their operation but too seldom do we realize that the same fundamentals they employ can be used by us in running our own business better—for ourselves and our clubs.

Infrequently can the pro advertise in newspapers. So he may then believe that he is ruled out from advertising, with the exception of, perhaps, a letter to the membership near the start of the season, and some shop signs that are displayed because they call for the minimum of effort and expense. We forget that in the pro-business one of the stocks that is as valuable as our shop merchandise is the stock of time that we must sell profitably. We must subtly, but strongly, advertise to convert that time into cash.

Experienced Pro Assistant Important

A number of pros know about the very successful innovation we made at Lake Shore in making it probably the most lesson-minded golf club in the country. Instead of having a good, but inexperienced youngster to help with the lessons, I have Angel de la Torre, a splendidly qualified professional. Some thought that this might prove an expensive and possibly dangerous experiment. But it has worked out to advertise the desirability of first class lessons, and very infrequently is there lesson time open on the Lake Shore calendar. The result has been to exhibit at our club a most impressively high standard of play. That means more club patronage in every department.

The principle simply was that of standardizing a high-class product for a high-class market. It gives the customers complete confidence in buying, and that's the first requirement in successful pro department operation.

I hear pros complain often about their inability to compete with price-cutters. The truth of it is that pros never will be able to compete with price-cutters. The lower some pro may be able to knock a price on golf equipment, still lower will stores cut. Stores can depend on profits

from other merchandise sales. The pro must remember, too, that his store isn't in a location allowing him to compete for business that shifts with lower price quotations. At some courses the pro may skillfully contest for part of the low-price market, but even then he must tactfully put across the idea that the stuff may be the best possible for the price, but by no means the best for the customer.

Study of merchandising will convince the pro that if he lets the cut-price angle take command he is sacrificing not only his own greatest business asset, but isn't helping his customers.

Limitations to Cheapness of Golf

There are limitations to golf's cheapness which necessarily curtail the maximum market. If clubs were a dollar apiece and golf balls were a dime per, the game still would be too expensive for millions in this country. So why should pros get stampered about the cheap goods market? Even a few minutes' study of sales figures on cheap and on good grade golf merchandise will show that the pro is getting the bigger volume and the bigger profit. The main problem of the pros is to protect that situation before getting deeply concerned about competing in the cut-throat market where they are up against experts who will give no quarter.

What is it the public wants? Maybe it is the very cheapest when the game is new to the player and he—or she—has only a vague notion of what it's all about. But that stage doesn't last long. As anyone gets wiser in golf he switches away from the cheap. He looks for something more dependable.

Many of us remember the old, old story of the young man who spent much but got little in return and asked in ancient times of Hasan, the Wise One, who lived in the City of Tyre, what he should do to receive the most for that which he spent. The answer to this age-old question was:

"My son, the priceless ingredient of every commodity in the market is the honor and integrity of him who makes it and of him who sells it. Consider well their names before you buy."

His ancient principle is still the under-

lying thought in advertising the world over today. The price of an article, so far as the manufacturer is concerned and so far as a large percentage of the prospective buyers are concerned, is secondary. Even those who are compelled by lack of money to buy on what might be termed a "temporary basis" realize, just as the others more fortunate appreciate, that you get only that which you pay for.

Some companies which handle those important commodities necessary to our everyday life, spend the largest part of their advertising appropriation not in saying how cheaply you may buy their particular product but rather in telling you the story over and over again of the quality of their product. This is referred to in advertising parlance as "institutional copy."

There are other manufacturers who from time to time make the tragic mistake of eliminating institutional copy when conditions are bad and they hope to save money. For the moment it may be money in hand but over the long haul they will have lost out, not only for a temporary period but in many cases for all time.

When you are in business, your natural reaction, when you are first approached with the idea of advertising your product, is that advertising raises the cost of your

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product or service. As a matter of fact, the very opposite is true.

Let me give you an example: The price that you pay for any product covers several items, including the cost of making it, the cost of selling it and all of the taxes—federal, state, county, city, as well as many hidden taxes direct and indirect.

By advertising, the cost of production and the cost of selling is made less. Business men know that in order to manufacture economically, they must have volume production. This in turn means volume sales and volume sales cannot be achieved economically without advertising!

Without advertising, people do not readily learn about merchandise or services or make up their minds to buy. Knowing this, dealers are slow to invest in merchandise which is not well advertised. When they do so, they must be permitted to make a bigger margin of profit because that merchandise sells much more slowly. The public has to pay the larger price, quality considered.

G. P. A. Organized to Smooth Pro-Salesman Relations

ABOUT 40 golf salesmen operating in and around Ohio have organized an association called the G. P. A. (Golf Peddlers Association). A. Earle Schlaw (Kroydon Golf Co.), 310 East 238th Street, Euclid, O., is president; Lloyd "Red" Barton (Worthington Ball Co.), Box 71, Elyria, O., is secretary and treasurer; and William Roney (Burke), and Gordon Goyette (Hagen), are vice-presidents.

The association is essentially social in operation but it plans to bring the salesmen and pros in closer contact, and sell professionals on patronizing golf salesmen, who have year-round positions. It also plans to create better understanding between salesmen of competitive firms.

Toward this end the G. P. A. will stage a tournament at the Elyria (Ohio) CC, August 7. A sweepstakes will enable the pros, peddlers, and newspapermen to shoot for about \$700 in cash and merchandise. This Pro-Peddler scramble will be open to all pros and class A assistants in the Cleveland, Youngstown, and Akron districts, along with the presidents of the other PGA districts in Ohio. Next year the event will be held in Cincinnati. Columbus and Toledo will get the event in the order named, thereafter.