ABOUT ADVERTISING AND PRINTING: A CONCISE, PRACTICAL, AND ORIGINAL MANUAL ON THE ART OF LOCAL ADVERTISING

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About Advertising and Printing: A Concise, Practical, and Original Manual on the Art of Local Advertising by Nathaniel C. Fowler

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NATHANIEL C. FOWLER

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Trieste

"To folks who live on printers' ink."

ABOUT ADVERTISING

AND PRINTING.

A CONCISE, PRACTICAL, AND ORIGINAL MANUAL

ON THE

ART OF LOCAL ADVERTISING.

BY

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"The many things amongst as many pages."

Copyright, 1888,
By L. BARTA & CO

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L. Barta & Co
Boston.

GENERALLY.

"To the point, perhaps, and covering lots of ground."

ADVERTISING is a distinct art, as much so as the art of coal mining or of engine building. To be a successful advertiser one must at least understand the rudiments of that science which to-day is so little studied and so little understood.

Any one can write an advertisement, and almost any one can write it to please the advertiser; but often the advertisement which is so gratifying to the writer will hardly attract a passing notice from the possible customer. Whether or not the advertisement be pleasing to the pride of the writer or advertiser is a question of small consideration, but vital importance hinges upon the capacity of the advertisement to attract the people, and, by attracting them, gain their intelligent attention, which, once obtained, must force the gist of the advertisement into their minds, and, if they be available customers to the line advertised, impress upon them the wisdom of an inspection of the goods advertised.

Few advertisements sell goods directly. The burden upon an advertisement is to draw attention to the store, or to the articles there for sale, teaching the first lesson in prospective purchasing. The advertisement brings people to the store, and there its mission stops; — then success in selling depends upon the quality of the goods, the price, and the salesman. But let me emphatically say here that, in the evolution of selling, to the medium which brings the possible customer to the store or place of business, furnishing the always difficult to forge connecting link between

buyer and seller, is due half the credit of the sale; and the world over, inventive genius has not devised a substitute for legitimate advertising.

One advertisement well written and well displayed is worth a dozen indifferently made up advertisements. Effective advertising is always distinctive, sharp, short, pointed, and, above all, original.

An advertisement should be a public announcement of a fact. A misleading advertisement never paid in the long run, and seldom in the short run. Customers are not fools in any community. When told by a flaming advertisement that dollar goods are to be sold for a quarter, they begin a mental calculation, and will, ten chances to one, figure it out that the advertiser lied twice as much as he really did.

If the advertisement depart from the truth at all, let it be in underestimating the true value of the goods advertised; indeed, it is good policy to occasionally misrepresent in this direction, creating, as it generally does, a healthy surprise on the part of the purchaser, resulting in increased confidence, and setting in circulation a sort of mouth-to-mouth advertisement, which, when influenced in the right direction, is one of the things to be encouraged.

Avoid the everlasting typographical harangue about bargains. The public is thoroughly tired of reading about that which doesn't often exist, and is seldom recognized when it does. Nobody has the slightest confidence in a bargain store, — the name itself is a libel on truthfulness.

The old phrase of "less than cost" has helped to cost many a man his reputation and business. No sensible merchant does business on that basis, and printed claims that he does so are transparent lies, pure and simple; and the public, be it ever so ignorant, scents a printed lie, the more so when it is surrounded by a nest of misleading, extravagant statements.

Bargains are the chestnuts of trade, and less-than-cost goods parodies on nothing.

Business is done to make money; everybody knows it; and it is useless to attempt to deny principles of trade where there is not a glimmer of a

chance of its being believed. A truthful advertisement is worth a value in any market; a falsifying one is a business boomerang, bringing loss at the rebound.

Do not copy neighbors' ideas. Each advertisement should be new and fresh, and it is well to preserve an identity in all of them easily recognizable as peculiar to the advertiser.

An advertisement is a public and perfectly refined and legitimate invitation from the dealer to everybody; it assures a cordial welcome to the visitor; it is an infallible sign of business, enterprise, and life.

If the advertisement should have the appearance of cordiality, let the reception to the would-be customer be made more so. The store which advertises places itself under printed obligations to the public, and should be ever vigilant of that which is due the guest within its doors.

The dealer may not be recognized within the self-made portals of the local aristocracy, his circulars through the medium of the mail may remain unopened; but his money can buy a place within the pages of the local paper, and his name and trade will force respectful attention if his announcements be carefully arranged.

There is no stratum of society not reached and influenced by advertising. The bluest blue-blooded descendant of the oldest family, who prides himself upon his impenetrability from things common and commonly, is affected, and proves that he is by saying that he isn't. In no town where there is a newspaper can there exist an impregnable spot.

Many an unsuccessful merchant claims and believes that advertising does not pay people in general, and himself in particular, and from his experience he speaks seemingly reasonable truth. His advertising did not pay. So might the farmer complain that his poor seed brought no harvest. The fault was in the farmer and the seed, not in the principles of agriculture. Advertising does pay, and will pay; but the advertiser must make it pay.

Advertising is not an experiment, nor is it a business side issue; it is a part of the paraphernalia of business necessity, to be studied and