

FIRST PRINCIPLES OF ADVERTISING

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First Principles of Advertising by Wilbur D. Nesbit

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WILBUR D. NESBIT

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OF ADVERTISING**

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By

WILBUR D. NESBIT

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FOREWORD

This textbook is not intended to be a volume for the practicing advertising man or woman, but is virtually the "first steps" in the profession. It is based on the actual experience of the author, and has been planned and prepared along the lines he would follow were the student a beginner in his own department. It is assumed that the student has no knowledge of advertising beyond the fact that he has seen advertisements in their various forms. It is further assumed that the chief desire of the student is to write advertisements; and as it is necessary to have some knowledge of the practice of advertising, the various chapters are given to furnish that background and foundation.

Sincere appreciation is expressed and due acknowledgements made of the obligation of the author to his many friends in the profession who have made valuable suggestions. It is planned that a second volume shall go into the technical details of an advertising department, advertising agency work, and the other matters which become essential after the student has qualified in his preliminary work.

CONTENTS



I	The Beginnings of Advertising.....	1
II	Advertising and Its Value.....	7
III	Creating an Advertisement.....	11
IV	How to Plan the Use of Type.....	15
V	Study of the Product.....	21
VI	Studying the Market.....	25
VII	Dovetailing Advertising with Selling	29
VIII	Getting the Selling Idea.....	33
IX	The Problem of Getting Attention..	37
X	Methods of Creating Interest.....	41
XI	Regulating the Amount of Copy...	45
XII	The Line of Human Appeal.....	51
XIII	Varied Forms of Advertising.....	57
XIV	Direct Appeal—The House Organ— Mail Order.....	63
XV	Determining the Size of the Cam- paign.....	71
XVI	Laying Out Your Advertisement...	75
XVII	Working with the Artist.....	81
XVIII	Writing an Advertisement.....	85
XIX	An Example of Preparing an Adver- tisement.....	89
XX	Printing and Plates.....	95
XXI	The "Slogan".....	103
XXII	A Parting Word.....	109

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I

THE BEGINNINGS OF ADVERTISING

In the Old Testament book of Ruth, written a great many centuries ago, we find perhaps the earliest mention of advertising, and it is directly connected with the thought of selling.

"Now Boaz went up to the gate of the city and sat him down there." The gate of the city, in the old, old days, was naturally a center of life and business, for it was where all the people went out and came in. Just as it is said today that if you sit long enough at a certain corner in Paris you will see every American who is in France, because he will pass that spot, so at the gate of the olden cities could eventually be seen practically everybody of importance in them.

At the city gate, therefore, after waiting until his audience was before him, Boaz said:

"I thought to advertise thee, saying, Buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people."^{*}

That is what advertising is today—an effort to tell people about something and to get them to buy it.

In the British Museum is an advertisement that is thirty centuries old. It was written on papyrus

^{*} Ruth iv:4.