

"Success in circulation is and will continue to be the result of a shirt-sleeves job, lots of ups and downs, and the combination of Perspective, Perspiration and Promotion."

— JAMES F. JAE,
Former Circulation Manager,
St. Louis
Globe-Democrat

CHAPTER 3

Chief Factors in Building Circulation

A STRONG, sound circulation for a newspaper cannot be built in a few months; it is usually the development of many years. And at no time after it has been established is a newspaper's circulation entirely free from threatening slumps and changes. The experiences of those most successful in this field of newspaper enterprise reveal that circulation growth and steadiness depend upon four conditions:

1. A newspaper inviting to the eye and easy to read.
2. News and advertising features within the newspaper that attract and interest readers.
3. The publisher's and the circulation manager's thorough knowledge and understanding of the community in which the newspaper is published.
4. A well-organized and well-directed circulation department.

These are recognized as extremely important in the building of reliable newspaper circulation.

THE NEWSPAPER MUST HAVE APPEAL

A worthy item of merchandise with consumer appeal is the first essential of any successful selling campaign. Unless the publisher, in producing his newspaper and in shaping it for reader consumption, gives attention to its contents, quality and appearance with the same thorough study and care with which other manufacturers prepare their products for the trade, he is out of step at the very first in developing circulation.

Make the Paper Easy To Read

One of the first essentials is to produce a newspaper that is inviting to the eye and easy to read; it should be attractive in makeup,

with pictures to break the monotony of solid type and with headlines arranged on each page so as to give balance and provide easy reading. A good press that prints clearly is a great aid in building circulation. The use of plain, simple words, short sentences and paragraphs also helps wonderfully. Books that have the biggest circulation are the Bible, McGuffey's Reader and the Boy Scout Manual. Scholars who translated the Bible lifted moral standards because they put great truths in simple words that men could understand. And if newspapers are to draw readers they must present the news in clear, understandable language.

This matter of plain, clear writing may seem to fit better in a textbook on news-writing, but it is so vitally connected with circulation building that H. Phelps Gates, circulation manager of the *Christian Science Monitor*, recommends that newspaper publishers sponsor a "Simple Word Week" and a "Familiar Word Week" as steps toward greater circulation. Mr. Gates offers these 26 points of easy reading for every newspaper employee who puts anything in writing within the news, advertising or circulation department:

1. Use short simple words.
2. Use more one-syllable words.
3. Use familiar words.
4. Use personal words.
5. Use concrete words.
6. Make every word work.
7. Avoid technical words.
8. Get rid of rubber stamp phrases.
9. Put sparkle and freshness into phrases.
10. Create figures of speech.
11. Use intimate phrases in all kinds of writing.
12. Use short sentences.
13. Make frequent use of very short sentences.
14. Use short sentences as an aid to clear thinking.
15. Make sentences active . . . use active verbs.
16. Use short, simple paragraphs.
17. Use very short paragraphs for variety and emphasis.
18. Use one-idea paragraphs.
19. Use one-viewpoint paragraphs.
20. Use paragraphs for action, impact, and result.
21. Write for a specific purpose.
22. Write to one person, one human being.
23. Talk to that person right where he is.
24. Talk to that person in his own field of knowledge.
25. Work with one basic idea.
26. Write with one viewpoint.

MUST CARRY NEWS AND FEATURES FOR EVERYONE

The next important step is to give readers facts about people, organizations and happenings in which they are most interested. Local news heads the list in importance, but features appealing to women, children, sportsmen and other special groups as well as entertainment for the whole family are needed to build a well-balanced paper that will get and maintain a healthy circulation.

Local News Must Be Thoroughly Covered

Stories about people of the home community are the most important feature in building circulation. Hundreds of weekly and small daily newspapers achieve success mainly through their intensive coverage of local news.

"No event in a community served by a small home town paper is too insignificant to report completely, accurately, fairly and fearlessly," says Scott Schoen, publisher of the Redwood Falls, Minn., *Redwood Gazette* (circulation 5,076, population 3,813). "To cover such news for our twice-a-week paper requires considerable leg work, much use of telephones, going to meetings when we would prefer staying at home and much attention to other details, but it all builds up circulation."

Daily papers, too, have found this important. William K. Todd, business manager of the Rockford, Ill., *Star and Register-Republic* (combined circulation 83,003, population 92,927) says: "Readers want sound local news coverage, including important day-to-day political, civic and municipal happenings in the towns throughout the circulation area, plus good feature stories about the towns."

The good will of persons well known in the community, their relatives and friends may be cultivated by providing such features as: (1) a voting contest for the "Ten Best Dressed Women of The Community"; (2) a "Who's Who" of local leaders in the business, industrial and professional fields; (3) "Man of the Week"; (4) recipe section with pictures of contributors; (5) street quizzes with pictures; (6) weekly guest editorial with picture of writer; (7) annual list of county residents on state payroll; (8) list of babies born during month at local hospitals; (9) birthday congratulations to prominent local citizens; (10) series of stories on rising young businessmen of the community; (11) weekly or daily list of hospital patients received and dismissed; (12) daily or weekly weather chart; and (13) vital statistics concerning local community.

Human Interest Stories Are Important

The best-read stories encompass home, family and children—the cute sayings and acts of the town's kiddies, the antics of their pets and the hobbies of grown-ups. Small dailies and weeklies excel in this kind of reporting and win and hold subscribers this way.

Recognizing the circulation-building element of human interest stories and bits of minor news about people who live in the community, a number of metropolitan dailies are issuing weekly neighborhood sections that contain no other news than items of interest to the areas in which they are circulated. The Houston, Tex., *Chronicle* (circulation 202,888, population 596,163) issues five special neighborhood sections for the purpose of promoting home-delivered circulation and of providing economical and effective advertising media for merchants located in the areas in which the sections are circulated. No extra charge is made for these sections which are published every Wednesday and are slipped into the regular afternoon paper by carriers in their respective neighborhoods.

Concerning this project, J. H. Butler, general manager of the *Chronicle*, says: "Experience shows that as metropolitan cities grow there is a certain amount of local news that is crowded out of the regular paper. Giving real neighborly news to our readers once a week in their respective parts of the city makes for a closer relationship with us. Although our readers are part of the complex life of the big city, they want to keep up with their neighbors just as do the residents of a small town. The time has come to get back to the all-informative local paper."

Readers Want State and National News

Next to local news in interest is state news. The average reader wants to know about the proceedings of the state legislature, the activities of various statewide organizations, bureaus and institutions, the good roads movement, farm problems, health program, state politics, the state department of education, and the state's part in national movements. The extent to which a newspaper covers these items determines to a degree its circulation and influence.

People are interested also in national news. They want to know what is going on in Washington — about the proceedings of Congress, the White House conferences, the national economy, the national debt, controls on inflation and the decisions of the Supreme Court. When any national action will have a direct effect upon the lives of local people, they will expect a complete explanation of the extent to which they will be affected. If newspapers should fail to give news concerning these national matters, the public would seek information through other media.

Interest in International Affairs Is High

The close relationship of our nation with other nations has developed a great interest among Americans in happenings all over the globe. International relations, the United Nations, government aid to foreign countries, military operations, trade relations, and the

FARM & HOME

For and About Boone County Farm Families

Pests in Your TV?

Enjoying TV in your home is a natural thing these days. There are just about as many sets in farm homes as there are in the homes of their city cousins.

But along with the blessings there may be some mixed discomfort according to Philip Stone, chairman of the University department of entomology. We aren't attempting to tell you that some programs will bring you discomfort, but the warm inside of the set may just be the hiding place for some rather unwanted pests, the brown-banded cockroach.

We're not trying to criticize your house-keeping either. For no matter how spic and span you keep your house these pests can get into your set, hide and raise a family. How do they do it? It's easy, these tropical insects ride into your house when your set returns from the repair shop. In this way

the roach gets into some of the best sets made, taking his pick from set to set in the repair shop.

If you find the bugs in your set, dark corners, closets or elsewhere, they can be eradicated. It's about 4-inch long and likes dark ceilings and the upper corner of cabinets. You'll probably see small brown egg capsules deposited in these corners . . . a sure sign of infestation.

Chlordane is the most effective insecticide, says Stone. Apply the powder or spray to their hiding places, but don't spray the inside of your TV set. Use powder for the insects inside the set.

As Groucho Marx might say, "It's a common household word . . ." but you don't need to have them running around inside your set. They won't add to your TV pleasure.

Well Lighted Desk Saves Eyes, Makes Home Work Seem Easier

Next time you have to urge your school-age students to "go do your home work," remind yourself to see just how well you've lighted their study desks.

Many mothers, who wouldn't dream of serving unbalanced or inadequate meals to their children, fail to provide proper lighting for study. Yet eye-are among the most precious of possessions. University Missions Woodruff, specialist in home management, says that good study habits can be encouraged in students of all ages when desks are properly lighted.

MISS WOODRUFF suggests that you keep these points in mind when lightening study desks. Avoid goose-neck lamps which cause harsh, reflected glare back in the eyes when light is concentrated on white paper. Also, they fail to provide surrounding light for additional comfort.

Avoid distracting contrasts between dark finished desk tops and lighted books or papers by using a large pastel blotter.

Choose the right size table lamp for study. The bottom edge of the shade should be 15 inches above desk top. Minimum shade dimensions are: top 8 1/2 inches; depth, 10 inches; bottom, 14 inches. Select a shade that is light-tanned, but not

highly transparent, for greatest comfort.

CHOOSE any one of three different arrangements under the shade for generous and comfortable lighting results: A certified 8-inch diameter bowl—100-watt base with flared metal top—and a 25-150 watt white indirect bulb. A wide harp and 2-40 150-watt white indirect bulb, or a narrow harp with 150-watt white bulb.

Final ingredient is correct placement, so measure carefully. Place center of lamp 15 inches back from front edge of desk and 15 inches to left of work center for right-handed southpaws.

U. S. shipped more farm products overseas last year than any time in history. Only product that dropped below previous year was tobacco. Leading customer for wheat was Pakistan; for cotton, Japan; for fats oils and oleomils, Spain. Best all round customer, Britain.

Rural people have additional 150,000 hospital beds in 2,000 rural hospitals since Federal law was passed in 1948 providing Federal assistance for hospitals to serve rural areas.

Along the RFD

Some Still Use Almanacs

WHEN ASKED what he thought of the Farmers Almanac, M. O. Lane, Jr., Route 3, said, "I don't believe in it much, but I like to have the signs in my favor anyway."

Lane says that he doesn't often use the almanac, but that there is a sign for weaning calves at the right time to keep them from "bawling so much."

Lane believes that if a board is laid on the grass in the light of the moon, the grass will stay alive, but by the same procedure it will die in the dark of the moon.

M. J. STARK, Route 4, says he always keeps an almanac on hand and likes to read it. He adds that in the past the almanac has provided him timely information on proper planting dates for various crops.

According to Stark, the almanac also gives several economical and effective remedies for curing livestock.

"We keep an almanac hanging around the house all the time," said Glen W. d. o. of Arcadia. He added, "I believe there is something to the signs of the Zodiac for weaning calves and castrating pigs."

He added that he doubts if they will ever stop printing almanacs, but he feels the time for planting crops depends mostly on the weather.

Otto Klemmer, New Franklin, said, "I like to get hold of an almanac once in a while, but I usually just look at it—then put

it up. There may be something to the signs of the Zodiac, but I believe the best time to castrate pigs is when your knife is sharp."

MEADE LEE COOK, Route 1, McBaine, says "I wouldn't be without the Farmers Almanac. I follow the almanac when I wean my calves and pigs and haven't lost a one by following this procedure. He added that he also follows the almanac when he castrates his calves or pigs. Cook has 40 head of cattle and 100 hogs on his 371-acre farm.

When asked the same question, Mrs. Cook said, "I plant all my garden crops using the almanac. I don't think the almanac is much help in fishing though, I have never had luck fishing when I followed the almanac."

Mrs. Cook also goes by the almanac when she plants her flowers, and has had nothing but success.

University Sells Two Guernsey Bulls to Arkansas Breeders
The University recently sold two registered Guernsey bulls to two Guernsey breeders living in Arkansas.

Ross H. Mendenhall of Rogers, Ark., purchased Foremost Foot-Print Distinctor, and Ed and Pauline Webb of Bentonville, Ark., purchased Foremost Distinctive Justice. The sales were announced by the American Guernsey Cattle Club.

Farmers buy used tractors, just as many people buy used cars. De- partment of Agriculture says farmers buy three used tractors to two new ones.

827 Head Listed For Oct. 8th Sale Of Feeder Calves

A total of 827 calves have been listed for Boone County's 11th Annual Feeder Calf Sale, according to David A. Horner, sale manager. The Oct. 8 sale, to be held at the sale barn on the Boone County Fairgrounds, will have a top quality offering of Hereford and Angus cattle. Some Shorthorns and mixed cattle also will be offered.

A meeting of the feeder Calf Sale Committee and chairmen of the work committee for the sale will be held at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 3, at the sale barn. Final plans for the sale will be made at that time.

The calf sale is managed by local farmers, who are on the calf sale committee. According to County Agent Parker Rodgers, it serves two purposes: It offers a good market for feeder calves; and it gives each herd owner a chance to compare his calves with others offered and to thereby make plans to improve his beef cow herd.

U. S. lamb crop this year is about 1 per cent smaller than in 1956. Drought in Southwest reduced number of ewes, and ewes produced fewer lambs per 100 head.

Department of Agriculture researchers have tested more than 300 different kinds of rubber for 25 years to see if they contain rubber. Many contained small amounts of rubber, but none could be considered a new source of commercial rubber.

On This Month's Cover—Silage Cutting



When the snow flies next winter and Clarence Crawford's Holstein cows get hungry, chances are they won't stay hungry long because they'll be fed some of the silage being cut in the scene on this month's cover.

Crawford, who lives on Route 4, is on the tractor at left, while one of his neighbors, Sterling Seaman, is on the other tractor. Seaman and four of Crawford's other neighbors, Roy Smith, Dave Allen, Emmitt Ford, and C. W. E. helped Crawford fill his silo last week.

To fill the huge trench silo on the Crawford farm, they cut seven acres of corn, five acres of a special hybrid forage crop, and 14 acres of Atlas sargo. The silo is full now, and Crawford estimates it has 300 tons of silage in it.

Crawford, who produces and sells Grade A Milk, has a total of 50 Holstein and Jersey animals on his farm. The animals will be fed silage this winter, just as they have been each year since 1954, when Crawford moved to the farm. (Missourian Farm Photo by Bill Brantley)

USED COMBINES

- 2 JD No. 55 12-ft. self propelled
- 2 JD No. 25
- 1 JD No. 12A
- 1 Allis-Chalmers No. 66
- 1 Minneapolis Moline with motor
- 1 Massey Harris with motor
- 1 Woods Bros. with motor

USED CORN PICKERS

- 1 JD No. 226 two-row mounted
- 1 IHC No. 24 two-row mounted
- 2 AC two-row mounted
- 2 JD No. 101 one-row semi-mounted
- 1 Co-op one-row



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politics of foreign countries as well as our own constitute news of considerable concern to a large portion of the American population.

Great Interest in Public Affairs

A study of twenty metropolitan dailies in the Midwest bears out a fairly old hunch among newsmen that the American press devotes more non-advertising space to public affairs than to any other type of news. Completed under supervision of the Journalism School of the State University of Iowa, the study showed that 18.7 per cent — nearly one-fifth — of the general news and editorial space in newspapers went to stories about government and politics. Economic news consumed 10 per cent of the space, some 8.7 percentage points below the top contender in the slate of twenty-three content categories. Crime and vice, world government and politics, human interest, and accident and disaster news all grouped closely between 9 and 7.6 per cent of measured content.

Editorials Strengthen a Newspaper's Appeal

Readers want to know also the editor's opinion regarding important issues. An attractive and up-to-the-minute editorial page can be a strong factor in building circulation. Returns from a questionnaire mailed to Missouri weekly publishers by Harry Stonecipher, while a graduate student in journalism at the University of Missouri, revealed that 99 per cent of those newspapers contained personal columns of an editorial nature written by local staff, and 29 per cent of them published formal editorials. Politics and government were top comment; business and economics, education and the arts, safety and defense, society and religion were other subjects freely discussed. Fifty-six per cent of the 8,000 column inches of formal editorials under study fell into the local column category, 19 per cent were devoted to national and international subjects and 7 per cent to state subjects. The remaining portion was of a miscellaneous nature, including some reprinted editorials.¹ Newspapers may guide the thinking of their subscribers and win good will through editorial comment.

Profitable To Cater to Groups

Catering to special groups within the circulation area is fruitful in building circulation.

Farm pages, farm sections or columns prepared by county farm advisors are common in papers that circulate widely in rural areas (see Fig. 3.1), and help to develop a steady rural readership.

¹ Harry W. Stonecipher, *A Study of Editorials and Personal Columns in Missouri Weekly Newspapers*, Master's thesis, Univ. of Mo., 1955.

The Perry, Okla., *Daily Journal* (circulation 3,468, population 5,137) receives through a wire service grain and livestock market reports, and carries also a summary of local prices paid for wheat, poultry, cream and eggs, which is just as important to the farmers as the state livestock and produce report. Another market feature of still greater interest is a summarized report of transactions at the Wednesday sales conducted each week at the fair grounds in Perry. This is run under the heading, "Sale Siftings From the Weekly Perry Auction." It is prepared by the manager of the weekly auction and relates the total number of cattle, sheep, hogs, posts and bales of alfalfa sold at the auction and the top prices offered. Names of the large consignors and buyers also are given, making the feature worth Page One treatment because it contains names of residents who otherwise might never be mentioned in the newspaper.

Women read newspapers more carefully than men, and columns of material on subjects in which they are interested are presented in papers both large and small. "Most men are preoccupied with business careers, politics, world affairs, sports, adventure, crime news," says Pierre Martineau of the *Chicago Tribune* (circulation 935,943, population 3,620,962), "but women aren't. The average mass audience housewife lives in a world pretty much circumscribed by the confines of her home neighborhood, her church, her shopping center. For the housewife, the newspaper is an enormous reservoir of highly useful information. It tells her how to fix leaky faucets, what to do about her child's measles, and how to handle the family budget." And for that other third of the female population — those unmarried, employed, or in school or business — there is provided advice to the lovelorn and useful information on beauty care, business manners, social etiquette, weight reduction and the latest style of dress. Features that appeal to women readers definitely build newspaper circulation.

Men, too, respond to special attention. The metropolitan press meets the business man's reading demands with markets, stock quotations, real estate transfers, business transactions and sports, in addition to general news and weather. Politics and taxes, always of general interest, are subjects specially considered and widely discussed by men in election years. Consequently they receive columns upon columns of space in newspapers at those periods.

In their efforts to reach all classes and particularly to meet the competition of radio and television, newspapers are giving great consideration now to the reading interests of young people. The rapid increase in the sale of television sets and the rapt attention given television programs by youth emphasize the importance of such action. The Broadcasting Telecasting Yearbook-Marketbook, 1956-57, page 16, gives these estimated numbers of television sets in the United States year by year from 1947 to 1956:

YEAR	ESTIMATED SETS IN USE	PERCENTAGE GAIN
1947	8,000	
1948	250,000	302.5
1949	1,000,000	300
1950	4,000,000	300
1951	10,500,000	162.5
1952	15,750,000	50
1953	28,000,000	77.84
1954	33,000,000	17.18
1955	39,400,000	19.39
1956	41,000,000	4.05

Newspapers are studying what young people want in their newspapers and are providing it in order to maintain in youth the habit of newspaper reading. Various programs and promotions now being carried out to interest youth are discussed more fully in Chapter 15.

The peak of possibilities in building circulation is not reached until the reading interests and needs of persons of all classes and ages are measured and met.

News Should Be Handled Carefully

The extent of a newspaper's circulation is determined not alone by the quantity and scope of interesting news, but also by the way the news is handled. It is just as easy to offend readers by careless treatment of a person or event in the news columns as it is to please them with accurate and brilliant reporting. It is just as easy to bring disfavor upon a newspaper by leaving out something that should be printed as by putting in something that should not be published.

There is always the question of how the news should be prepared to best suit and serve the readers. How sensational should it be, or how conservative? Sexy pictures and lurid descriptions of murders and suicides will increase street sales, but what will be the reaction to such news treatment in the homes of the circulation area? To what extent should an editor be guided by local sentiment in taking a stand on controversial issues? These are questions which every editor and circulation manager must face. It might be well to call to witness on this question a number of successful publishers.

Common-sense rules and close attention to community affairs are the basic operating rules for the Newark, N. Y., *Courier-Gazette* (circulation 4,208, population 10,295), according to H. G. Howard, the publisher. "We stick as closely as possible to local stories with freshness, variety, and impartiality," he says. "We favor things we believe right and for the good of the community, regardless of whether the majority are for it or not, and oppose things on the same basis. It leads to a lot of disgruntled readers at first, but once they understand your adherence to the basic philosophy of standing four

square for what you believe, with the right of anyone to disagree right in the columns of the same issue, you gain respect and admiration."

"We naturally play our top stories with a view toward street sales in the street edition," says John F. Cahland, managing editor of the Las Vegas, Nev., *Review-Journal* (circulation 21,513, population 24,624). "But we tone down the headlines for the home edition. We try to be as gentle as possible with our readers, but if salacious and gruesome details are necessary to the meat of the story, we use them."

"We try always to practice the canons of good taste in the handling of news," says W. Earl Hall, editor of the Mason City, Iowa, *Globe-Gazette* (circulation 25,132, population 27,980). "We try first of all to be a newspaper in the best sense of the word. Our slogan is 'Printed For the Home — The Newspaper That Makes All North Iowans Neighbors.' Most helpful in building circulation is a complete coverage, with an emphasis on local area news."

Sensationalism Is Not Always Good

Arch W. Jarrell, editor of the Grand Island, Nebr., *Independent* (circulation 18,565, population 22,682) also believes that the careful handling of local news, well illustrated, is better than sensationalism for the building of circulation. "We endeavor so far as possible to publish a newspaper that parents won't be ashamed to show their children," he adds. "We print only the bare facts on divorce suits. Although we call rape, 'rape' and not 'criminal assault,' we do not use the name of the woman or girl involved."

"The proper blend of world, national, and local news so that readers will be well informed is the type most helpful in building circulation," says Dolph Simons, editor of the Lawrence, Kans., *Journal-World* (circulation 10,243, population 23,351). "We attempt to publish a 'family newspaper' but occasionally must shock readers with stark facts to properly report happenings. Where youth is involved in law violations, we do not publish the names of first offenders except for serious crimes. Divorce suits and trials seldom receive more than a brief notice."

The Danville, Ill., *Commercial-News* (circulation 34,509, population 37,864) circulates in seventy communities located in two states, and its circulation area overlaps those of three other important dailies. For these reasons it is sensitive to circulation requirements, according to Robert B. Wright, city editor.

"We strive to avoid lurid details in murder stories insofar as such avoidance is consistent with factual reporting," says Mr. Wright. "In general, suicides are briefed. We play down rapes and other moral offenses. Law violations by youths under 18 are published only in

case of felony. Salacious and gruesome details are not essential to good reporting. They pander to thrill-seekers and contribute nothing to information."

The terse clearness with which a newspaper presents the news and the manner in which it plays up or plays down the sensational has its effect on circulation. The publisher, therefore, is likely to give heed to the desires as well as the needs of his paper's readers. The community attitude, along with the publisher's journalistic standards, play a part in formulating a policy of news handling.

Advertising, Too, Has Reader Appeal

What is found in the advertising columns of the modern newspaper has almost as strong a bearing on circulation as what is offered in the sections devoted to news and news features.

Women readers particularly are interested in the advertisements of food stores, ready-to-wear shops, department stores, appliance stores and drug stores. Household needs must be met and the newspaper is the family's most convenient informant regarding available values at local stores.

Men are interested in the advertisements of sporting goods shops, hardware stores, implement stores and motor car and tractor agencies. Rural subscribers watch closely for the announcements of farm auctions.

All members of the family scan each issue for movie ads and announcements of other entertainment features.

The extent, too, to which advertisers give complete information concerning their merchandise and the degree in which their ads are made attractive have their effect on reader interest and response. Color in advertising, suitable illustrations and attractive use of space not only bring better results for advertisers, they also build circulation for the newspaper.

A strong selling point for any newspaper is its classified advertising section. Subscribers read the "want ads" much as they do the news columns because they abound in human interest news as well as provide answers to the most common of human needs.

Content Influences Sales

"Never forget," says Ben Reese, former managing editor of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* (circulation 396,603, population 856,796), "that content is the ingredient we are selling, or trying to sell. Content is the big influence on sales — not only in acquiring new subscriptions, but also in retaining the old ones. If content is lousy or mediocre, your task is complicated. You may suffer a heart attack in trying to overcome editorial deficiencies by crack salesmanship."

In an article full of practical suggestions in *Circulation Management*² Reese lists the following questions that every publisher or circulation manager should ask himself relative to the circulation situation facing his newspaper:

1. Has my newspaper pulling power for the circulation department?
2. Is it publishing the right features — features of real interest to my readers?
3. Is it trying to attract the interest of teen-agers, in the hope they will become accustomed to the paper and buy it when they have homes of their own?
4. Has the newspaper warmth and friendliness?
5. Is my newspaper informing the community accurately, in good taste and with responsibility?
6. Is it doing its best to improve the community, and to contribute to all parts of its social, economic, civic, educational and even spiritual life?
7. Is it helping to elect honest and capable officials, even to the school boards, regardless of party labels? Is it trying to get rid of incompetency or dishonesty in public office?
8. Does it invite the reader to step into the newspaper with anticipation, pleasure and confidence?
9. Is it acceptable at the family fireside?
10. Is it well printed and well balanced in news and feature presentation? Or is it a smudgy, careless conglomeration?
11. Does the reader understand clearly what our reporters have written, or what we have printed under a telegraph dateline?
12. How are we presenting pictures and captions? Are we using the right pictures? Are they big enough, or too small? Are they worthwhile from the point of general reader interest, or are they a waste of space, a waste of valuable newsprint?
13. Is my newspaper well organized on content? Do readers find things where they are accustomed to seeing them?
14. Is there variety and balance in content?
15. Do the contents provide an accurate reflection of the community in general and its activities of the last 24 hours?
16. Do we present news without fear or favor?
17. Have we impaired reader confidence by suppression of news — news about anyone, even ourselves, our editor, our publisher or our biggest advertiser?
18. Has my newspaper a conscience, and is it making that conscience clear to the readers?
19. Is there anything on Page 1 of interest to women?
20. Is there human interest news on Page 1 and throughout the newspaper?
21. Is our sports editor aware that television has brought a new crop of readers, namely women? And do we all remember that women spend the family's money and usually rule the roost, even to the choice of newspapers?
22. How much of the reader's time has been lost to television?
23. What adjustments have been made, or should be made, to meet the competition of television for the reader's time, the circulation dollar and the advertiser's dollar?
24. What effect has television had on comics, the good old standby in features?
25. Has my newspaper pulling power for the advertiser?

² *Circulation Management*, June, 1955, pp. 15-16.

The above questions, proposed by Reese, all help analyze the problems related to circulation, and suggest areas of improvement.

MUST KNOW THE COMMUNITY

Knowledge of the community's prospect of growth and advancement is as important as an understanding of its readership needs and the publishing techniques to be applied.

A study of the entire trade territory should be made so as to ascertain the principal goods and services that are offered, the number and size of the towns in the area, the schools, churches, mail routes and service centers. Of particular importance are the schools — their quality as well as their number. Nothing means more to a community than its young people. To what extent is the community providing good education, recreational facilities, Boy and Girl Scout organizations, 4-H Clubs and other important youth organizations? These are all conditions that affect a newspaper's circulation possibilities.

The economic condition of the community and the people who live in it also influence circulation. What is the assessed valuation of property in the town and county? How many persons own homes? How many new businesses have been started within the year? Is the population decreasing or growing? Is it a thriving business center or not? How progressive are the business and professional men of the community? Is there an active Chamber of Commerce, and are there service clubs? What are the marketing facilities and trade possibilities? Are the merchants doing all they can to promote growth? Is the community interested in selling itself to its home people and the outside world?

City's Financial Condition Is Important

The kind of city government and the city's financial condition are other points to be considered. What is the bonded indebtedness? What is the condition of the utilities, the streets, the sewage system, the fire department, the police department, the public buildings?

These are all factors in building circulation and developing a sound newspaper business, points that a person going into a new community to establish or purchase a newspaper will want to investigate thoroughly. Even the most firmly established community newspaper needs to review these conditions from time to time.

"Publishers, editors, and circulation managers must be well grounded in community history and previous record of performance," says Henry T. Larsen, manager of circulation and maintenance for the Racine, Wis., *Journal-Times* (circulation 30,694, population 71,193). "They must know intimate details of the community growth, expansion, evolution — its trials and errors, tragedies, disappoint-

ments, and achievements. But *above all* they must know the sources of new potential news markets. They must keep on digging, developing, expanding to cover fields not previously tapped. Most newspaper successes can be attributed to exploitation and development of fields not previously developed."

Should Feature Local History

Knowledge of the community's historical background and its general interests often helps a publisher to perform unusual acts that draw him close to his people and attract attention to his newspaper.

William C. Postlewaite, publisher of the Gatlinburg, Tenn., *Press* (circulation 1,675, population 1,301) and the Sevierville, Tenn., *Sevier County News-Record* (circulation 2,450, population 1,620), has developed a Mountaineer Historical Exhibit, which grew out of a series of stories carried in his papers regarding the pioneer mountaineer. Many old-time pictures were used to illustrate the stories and when they had served their purpose in the engraving room they were framed and put in a one-room exhibit with other pioneer artifacts collected by Postlewaite. Now the exhibit has grown to be a typical mountain village, consisting of three museums, an old-time blacksmith shop, a working moonshine still (with water, of course), a restored log school house, a water-powered grist mill, a log barn and a country store.

History is a circulation stimulant in any area. Many weeklies and small dailies located in the very shadow of metropolitan influence have developed healthy circulations despite almost thorough coverage of their immediate areas by city papers, by giving close attention to community history, interests and needs.

MUST BE ORGANIZED TO SERVE

Knowledge of the possibilities of circulation development must be followed with action. No newspaper develops a great readership through its appeal alone. Even though it be the best newspaper in the nation, means must be provided to acquaint the public with its features and services — the newspaper must be sold.

In these days of rapid communication and transportation, news is good only on the day it is published. It quickly loses its freshness and its market value. Therefore, the newspaper must be delivered to readers as promptly as possible.

When the Salina, Kans., *Journal* (circulation 26,525, population 26,176), instituted airplane delivery for that area, its circulation in sixteen towns of three counties doubled in three years. Arrangements were made with a licensed pilot to fly 180 air miles and deliver 1,500 papers per day, five days a week. The papers were wrapped in round

bundles, and each dropped from a height of 20 to 50 feet to a carrier waiting at the edge of town.

It is only when newspapers study carefully their community needs and provide means of answering them that they experience circulation growth. No other work connected with the publishing of a newspaper requires more alertness, enthusiasm and application to duty. Success in selling, delivering and collecting calls for careful organization and constant search for new methods.