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A design for a public relations index

BOSTON UNIVERSITY

School of Public Relations

Thesis

A DESIGN FOR A PUBLIC RELATIONS INDEX

BY

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

THE PROBLEM

The problem to be solved in this thesis lies in the creation of a design for a national clearing-house of information in the public relations field. The over-all project of which this thesis is a part grows out of a long-range program of research now in embryo form at the Boston University School of Public Relations and Communications.

A skeletal outline of the basic idea for the Public Relations Index was presented to the Director of the Division of Public Relations on August 1, 1949.

Three months later, the design of the Public Relations Index became a project of the Research Department of the School. It has been under the supervision of Virgil L. Rankin, Director of the Division of Public Relations.

The initial design which follows does not purport to be final in any sense of the word. The evolution of a finished plan is of necessity dependent upon many factors over which the School of Public Relations exercizes no control.

THE NEED

By all odds, the mid-century should be the golden age of understanding for business. Never before has the businessman spent so much time in trying to communicate with others, and never before has he had so much paraphenalia with which to do it. The apparatus is prodigious: 1,600 business periodicals, 577 commercial and financial digests, 500 business books a year, over 200 polling agencies and market research firms, 500 public relations counselors and 4,000 corporate public relations departments, 10,000 annual business conventions --- and dictaphones, public address systems, documentary films and comic books.

There is hardly a minute of his day when the businessman is not using this vast apparatus to talk to someone -- the consumer, the government, the trade, the public, the community, the worker (just in group meetings with his subordinates, it is estimated, he spends a quarter of his work week.) After hours, he is likely still to be at it -- on Chamber of Commerce work, getting in extra business reading, listening to another businessman's speech, or giving one himself.

But the businessman does not have a monopoly on mass communications, nor on what we call "public relations." Indeed, the new science, if so it may be called, is all around us. The need for it extends even into areas where the words "public relations" have never been whispered. And events on the international scene

indicate that if the midcentury should be the golden age of understanding for business, then certainly it must be the same for all nations and peoples, else we shall all perish.

Business has formed its Public Relations Society of America; now Bernard Baruch sounds the need for "a new and powerful Federal organism to direct .... all forms of psychological warfare,"[1] an agency of powers sufficiently specialized and of status so high as to report only to the President.

To most of us, the news is wonderful. To some, it presents a bewildering problem. For with all the businessman's new preoccupation with communications, for all the millions of dollars he has invested in the services of "expert" public relations and communications specialists, more and more as he looks about him the businessman is coming to wonder .... Is anybody really listening?

He writes an ad about his company's profits and if it's simple he's accused of talking down to people; if it isn't he is accused of talking over their heads. He spends thousands to find out if people would want his new product only to discover when he puts it on the market that they don't want it after all. He goes all out on a community relations effort and finds that the community thinks a lot better of a firm that did nothing at all. The more he tries to communicate with his employees, the more he comes to conclude that management and labor are two groups

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1 The New York Times, "Baruch Calls For Propaganda", July 8, 1950.

separated by the same language.

The evidence is frighteningly strong that he is right. Despite all these tremendous efforts, the employees, surveys indicate, are as misinformed as ever. "The surprising part", says the Harvard Business Review after a long-term study of the problem, "is that there seems to be no indication of progress at all."[2]

The assessment of total progress is not within the scope of this thesis; a partial assessment, though, of the factors heeding progress is the concern of everyone within the public relations field. One of these factors -- probably the most important, and certainly the most highly operative -- is Man: The Public Relations Man.

He defies description. On his shoulders has been placed the mantle once worn by the medieval soothsayer; to him has been charged the responsibility for reshaping industry's profile; and to become One with him, so many say, we must enter the realm of Superman. "The ideal public relations man," says a popular exponent of public relations, "is a kind of Superhuman being. He must be able to write like (revered author), think like (famous philosopher), have the insight and the objectivity of (great scientist) and the soul of (renowned humanitarian).

It is too much. It is too much to ask of one man, even of a public relations man. Yet still the need for such men -- or for the specialized

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2 Harvard Business Review, January, 1950.

services they render -- becomes more acute with each passing month. In the past two to five years, their functions have become increasingly specialized, and now the Public Relations Man has delegated sections of his services to other men: the larger public relations firms and corporate departments bristle with "experts" in research, media, communications, analysis, etc. Still, within each of these seemingly specialized areas, are even more specialized functions which require years of training to execute successfully. And, common to all the specialties within the one field of public relations is a growing inter-dependence -- a need for a more efficient integration of all the parts that together make up the whole.

Unlike the physical scientist -- the physicists, chemists and engineers -- or the doctors and educators, the public relations worker has had to be his own storehouse of information, and whatever the knowledge at his command, whatever the degree of precision he could bring to his work, all of it he learned the "hard way" -- through his own experience. No one will challenge the virtue of individual experience, but on a professional scale, it becomes not only cumbersome, but vastly inefficient as well.

Meanwhile, as specialty grows out of specialty and as departmentalization of effort becomes more common, the public relations field finds itself in the awkward position of being without a repository for its accumulated knowledge. And, the need for integration of the growing body of knowledge becomes more acute as time goes by.

Public relations, as a profession, has passed the stage of complete individuality of method and technique. At this point in time, significant trends and uniformities are apparent in the field. The task of tying them down to the characteristics of the context in which they operate is the basic function of the Public Relations Index.

The requirements were well stated by George Lundberg[3] when he wrote:

> "The question as to what fields of human endeavor may properly be dignified by the name of science is still largely a matter of controversy and opinion . . . but whenever uniformities and sequences can be demonstrated in any field, that field at once begins to come within the domain of Science."

It is this demonstration of "...uniformities and sequences" that the Public Relations Index is designed to accomplish.

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3 George Lundberg, Social Research (New York, Charles Scribners Sons, 1935), p. 39

CHAPTER TWO

DESIGN

METHODS

The primary methods used in obtaining information for this thesis were:

(1) Interviews with members of the public relations profession, including independent counselors, public relations personnel in industry, and persons charged with the public relations function in government.

(2) Consultation with the Director of the Division of Public Relations and with the Newsom Professor of Opinion Research.

(3) Analyses of letters and requests received by the Director of the Division from public relations workers throughout the country.

(4) Interviews with representatives of:

The Census Bureau

The Department of Labor

The Department of Commerce

The Department of State

International Business Machines Corporation

The Shaw-Walker Office Equipment Company

The Public Opinion Index for Industry

The Public Relations Society of America

PURPOSES

The basic purposes of the Public Relations Index are:

(1) To gather, process and analyze information about the distribution and administration of the public relations function in the American economy.

(2) To distribute the results of analysis to the public relations profession and to the business, labor, government and other organized groups it serves.

(3) To assess the major research needs of the profession and, where possible, to initiate public relations research in conjunction with the research departments of Boston University and of other research institutions, colleges and foundations throughout the country.

ULTIMATE FUNCTIONS

The intent of the Index design will be fulfilled when it is possible to offer these services to the public relations profession:

A Unit Report Service - through which public relations executives may obtain answers to questions relating to any phase or aspect of the distribution and administration of the public relations function in the United States. Reports will be individually tailored to the needs of the inquiring subscriber, and made available to the profession on the basis of membership and participation in the Index operation. The content of Unit Reports will be drawn from analyses of data obtained by sampling within each stratum of corporate, group and agency public relations activity.

A Summary Report Service - Paralleling the reports of the Public Opinion Index for Industry in the public relations field, Index summary reports will present research results on subject areas of interest to all practicing public relations personnel. Summary Reports will be distributed periodically to Index members as a second benefit of membership and participation.

Coordination of Research - It will be the third major function of the Public Relations Index to assess the research needs of the field and, where possible, to initiate such research. The Index will conduct surveys within the profession to define

the research needs of the field and to rank them in preferential order. Concomitantly, surveys will be conducted among research foundations and universities throughout the country in order to determine the nature and extent of current research applicable to the public relations field.

The Index will thus serve as a clearing-house for needed information about research incident to and allied with advances in public relations technology. Until an index of the social sciences is created, the Public Relations Index may serve as the one source from which public relations executives and scientific study directors may obtain information about the results of past research, the status of current studies, and the need for added research efforts as posed by workers at the action-level of public relations.

To further specify the nature of Index reports . . .

Unit Reports will be sent to member-subscribers of the Index in answer to specific questions about the functioning of public relations within given contexts.

For example, an Index member -- a counsel in St. Louis -- finds a client company in need of a program of economic education. He turns to the Index for help. He asks for information about similar programs used in companies that are comparable to his client's. On a form provided by the Index, the St. Louis counsel describes his client's firm as:

- a heating equipment manufacturing company
- under absentee ownership
- located in a city of 250,000
- employing 1400
- working in groups of 10 to 15 men
- supervised by 73 foremen
- unionized under the CIO

- together with other objective characteristics

Both independent counsel and the company's management feel that a program of basic economic education would aid in dissolving many areas of misunderstanding in the settlement of wage disputes, creation of pension systems and in the relations of the management with the rank and file workers of the plant. The client and the counsel seek information about the efforts others have made in economic education - not only in this particular industry, but in others as well.

After processing of the Question, the Index Unit Report sent to the inquiring counsel would include:

- descriptions of the types of programs now in use in companies within the client's industrial stratification
- descriptions of the special adaptations necessary for implementing economic education in companies of this size
- analyses of the specific objectives of each type of program
- techniques used for preparing workers for institution of the program.
- an abstract of the media techniques used to teach economics in an industrial setting
- estimates of the cost of the program per worker
- a list of sources for more detailed information
- a summation of current research on effects of similar programs

Index Summary Reports will be published and distributed periodically to the total Index membership. Each Summary Report will

have as its subject a particular phase or aspect of public relations that serves as a common denominator to the over-all public relations effort, i.e. stockholder relations, stockholder reports, aspects of press relations, of supervisory practices in industry, etc.

The reports will measure 8½ by 11 inches, contain from 50 to 75 pages, and they may be set in varitype and printed by the offset process. The Summary Reports should stress clarity of graphic presentation and simplicity of narrative; they should be written for both public relations executives and those members of management with whom the public relations worker interacts.

One of the first Index Summary Reports might describe the distribution of the public relations budget:

- by industrial classifications
- by professional classifications
- in comparison with total administrative budgets
- in comparison with advertising budgets
- in terms of size (capitalization) of company
- in terms of program concentration
- and with respect to public relations salaries

And, under the present system of Index coding, cross tabulations could be run to show trends, differences and similarities on twenty or more major items in the public relations budget with which most public relations executives are concerned.

SPECIFIC FUNCTIONS

The major functions of the Public Relations Index, functions which the Index must perform in order to accomplish the services to the profession previously outlined, are twelve in number. Not all of the specific functions which follow can be executed at the start; but as the Index operation grows to full capacity, these are the areas into which Index functions will divide:

1) To draw a representative sample of businesses, associations institutions and public relations units in the United States.

2) To establish a system of coding whereby it will be possible to choose automatically from the sample those public relations units having any combination of objective characteristics by which they may be identified for analysis.

3) To obtain from each unit-respondent information about how it is organized to administrate the public relations function.

4) To obtain and analyze printed, filmed and recorded matter used by each unit of the sample in programming for each of its recognized publics.

5) To gather and analyze public relations media in terms of cost, purpose, production, effects -- cross indexed against a classification of public relations subjects, i.e. subjects used for systematizing the Index Summary Files.

6) To obtain information about the use of opinion and attitude research and other forms of social research in public relations practice.

7) To obtain and analyze information about the continuing effort to educate the general and business publics to the nature, purposes techniques and effects of the public relations function.

8) To classify and analyze information relative to the training of public relations personnel - in business, in government, in colleges and universities, and in political parties.

9) To write and maintain case histories of public relations programs as implemented by individual businesses, associations, agencies and institutions.

10) To determine the most pertinent research needs of the profession as gauged by surveys of public relations practitioners.

11) To establish a system of classification for public relations data, a system acceptable to the American Library Association and to the Library of Congress.

12) To integrate the Graduate Thesis Program of the School of Public Relations and Communications with continuing research either undertaken or sponsored by the Index.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROFESSION

The success of the Public Relations Index will be directly proportional to the cooperation afforded by practicing members of the profession.

Ultimate support of the Index must come from the public relations profession and from the other organized groups the Index might serve. The Index could thus be established on a membership-subscription basis, or it could be supported by those it serves on the basis of grants, with no attempt made to assess each company or group for the services rendered it.

If the Index were established on a membership basis, membership should be open to individuals, corporations, government agencies, private associations and institutions throughout the country. Two classes of membership, I and II, might be established to differentiate between members who contribute information to the Index stockpile and those who do not. The former might then be credited for contributions of informations, such credits to be charged against fees for subscriptions to Index reports.

The basic requirements of the profession, in terms of actual contribution, would be that public relations workers be willing to transmit to the Index information about the public relations programs they implement.

CHAPTER THREE

ORGANIZATION

ORGANIZATION

The Public Relations Index could be organized as a permanent research unit of the Boston University School of Public Relations and Communications. The advantages of establishing the Index as a research unit within a University are several: the most important is that it would serve to remove any taint of commercialism from the effort. Public relations workers have demonstrated what might be termed a pathological unwillingness to divulge the "how" of their operations; however, several informal surveys conducted by persons interested in the development of a clearing-house of information in the field show that the profession is willing to tell all about its operations provided it can be assurred of strict confidence with respect to identity of companies and people involved.

Should the Index be set up as a research unit of the School of Public Relations and Communications, the first requisite to implementation of the Index plan is the creation of a Planning Board to made up of public relations professionals, representatives of management, government and other groups likely to benefit most from the operation of a clearing-house of information in the field.

The Dean and the Director of the Division of Public Relations could serve on continuos tenure.

The Planning Board's functions would be those of an advisory and planning body; among its first considerations should be the

acquisition of sufficient venture capital to launch the Index plan and carry its operations for a year.

The Index could be supervised by an Index Director who would be responsible to the Director of the Division of Public Relations and to the Planning Board. The Index Director would not be a member of the Board, but would meet with its members at pre-determined intervals to review progress and to chart directions in the evolution of the Index.

It is currently estimated that the Public Relations Index would require a staff of 35 to service a membership of 2,000.

The Index cannot be constructed, and then unveiled; the nature of the project is such that it must evolve, proving its worth - and its feasibility - in each stage of development. It is therefore considered unwise to attempt to launch a full-scale Index operation; rather, it is possible to begin with a small staff and a specific set of objectives for the first year, objectives which if accomplished would serve to point up the value of a larger operation to public relations workers throughout the country.

Thus, after the Planning Board had acquired sufficient capital to carry the Index for a year, it would be possible to implement the design of the Index in a single area. This could be accomplished by selecting two or three separate industrial classifications, such as Petroleum Production and Distribution, Air Transportation and Investment Trusts and Investment Companies, and then by studying the public relations of a sample of firms within each category. By concentrating in two or three areas such as these, it would be possible to produce results which

would be indicative of the long-range potential of the Index service -- results which would clearly demonstrate to executives in other industries the full range of service to them once the Index scope were expanded to embrace their fields.

If the Index were to be organized in a manner similar to that suggested herein, Index funds could be maintained separate from those of other research efforts of the University, yet the funds would be controlled by the Dean and the Director of the Division of Public Relations.

PUBLICITY

The most important requisite for success of an activated Index plan is cooperation on the part of public relations and business executives in every stratum of the economy. Therefore, the Index message must be communicated with care and with accuracy.

No publicity about the Index should be released until:

- the design is complete in every detail
- the design has been authorized by the Planning Board
- funds for implementation have been obtained
- the machinery for maintaining the Index has been tested

Index publicity could perhaps be designed to take full advantage of the psychology of involvement: all publicity about the Index would have as its goal the stimulation of interest in the Index, leading to cooperation in the gathering of information and to subscription to Index services; thus, the benefits to be gained by cooperation and subscription should be pointed up or made entirely apparent in all Index publicity.

A first step in that direction could be taken by conducting a survey within the public relations profession which would seek an assessment and preferentialization of research needs in the field. The survey questionnaire could be accompanied by a small brochure which would explain the nature of the Public Relations Index, show

the benefits to the subscribing public relations worker by giving an example of the Index Unit Report Service in action. The survey would serve two purposes: it would provide needed information, and it could stimulate interest in the Index on the part of the public relations profession. And, it would immediately begin to involve the respondent in the creation of the Index.

When the four factors listed above have been accomplished in fact, then the hard core of public relations workers in the United States, the P.R.S.A. membership, may be reached through the society's own medium, the Public Relations Journal. A similar and simultaneous publicity program of announcement might be effected by the American Management Association and by the sponsors of the annual Conference of Business Public Relations Executives.

Pinpointed publicity for the Index may be obtained by arranging for panel sessions on the Index at meetings of the P.R.S.A. and of other management-public relations groups.

The fact that an Index of public relations information had been established should be of use to most magazines beamed to management, to public relations workers and to advertising personnel.

PROCUREMENT OF INFORMATION

Information to be contained in the Public Relations Index may be procured in two general ways: by sampling within specific strata of a system of classification for all industries and professions, and by questionnaire and request from public relations units which do not fall into samples but which have public relations programs of interest to the profession.

Appendix I shows the system of classification for industries and professions in the United States; this system or one similar to it may be used as a basic stratification for Index sampling. By drawing representative samples of businesses, associations, public relations agencies and other organized units of public relations activity from the system of classification in Appendix I, it will be possible to obtain information about the distribution and administration of the public relations function in the American economy.

An initial sampling could show statistically to what extent the units sampled are organized for public relations efforts. A later sub-sampling could then be designed to create a panel of public relations units from which future information about programming could come.

In the sub-sampling process, it would be necessary to continue sampling until a given and pre-established number of cooperating respondents was obtained.

For each firm or public relations unit within the Index sample, it is possible to make up an IBM punch card which would identify all the objective characteristics of the unit for purposes of analysis. IBM punch cards would hold information about the kind of activity in which the unit is engaged, its size, capitalization, number of employees, a quantitative description of its organization for public relations, and a description of the kinds of public relations programming in which the unit is engaged. Appendix II shows examples of the coding system suggested for storing of Index information. The University maintains a full complement of IBM sorters, counters, calculators and print-tabulators, which can be made available for Index use.

From each cooperating respondent, the Index will procure samples of the printed and recorded material used in programming. Many of these samples will be of odd size, and some - visual aids materials, charts and instructional materials - will be bulky; thus, they may be microfilmed for Index purposes.

Steel filing cabinets may be separated into two divisions: Index Unit Files, and Index Summary Files. The former may contain information about individual companies, the latter may contain a classification of data by subject categories, ie., Economic Education, Stockholder Reports.

The use of two filing systems will require a system of numerical coding which will enable Index personnel to make cross-references between the two systems. A method for cataloguing public relations

data is now being worked out[1] as part of the thesis program of the School of Public Relations and Communications: if satisfactory, the system might well be used or adapted for the Public Relations Index. The system now in development will be made acceptable to the American Library Association and to the Library of Congress in order to guarantee a degree of standardization in the filing of public relations data.

In the sampling processes used to obtain information for the Index, questionnaires should be designed to dovetail with the system of punching used on the IBM cards which identify the public relations units sampled. The information returned by respondents may then be punched directly on the master cards, and tabulations may then be made both more cheaply and more efficiently than would be possible if the cards were set up separately.

By Theodore Blank

INTEGRATION WITH THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

As it is currently conceived, the Public Relations Index would be established as a research unit of the School of Public Relations and Communications.

As such, it would serve not only to establish the University and the School as the center for public relations information in the United States, but in addition, the materials gathered by the Index could be of use to students of the School. A successful integration of the work of the Index with that of the School would be both necessary and advantageous.

One of the most important services to be performed by the Index would be the initiation of research in public relations: some of that research could be accomplished by graduate students in the School. And, further, the research information compiled by the Index would be of value to students who wish to integrate their own graduate work and theses with work being done elsewhere. If the Graduate Committee and other officers of the School were agreed, parts of the Graduate Thesis Program, or the entire program, might be integrated with the functions of the Index.

A partial integration was attempted in January and February of 1950. Several graduate students expressed an interest in coordinating their research efforts with the Index effort, and in several cases,

it was possible to work out thesis programs which would be of independent value to the student and of intrinsic value to the Index. One such thesis involved the design of a system of classification for public relations materials.

Graduate students express an interest in writing theses which can be of use to them in furthering their public relations careers after graduation from the School. The answer to the question inherent in that statement is that theses which contribute knowledge desired by public relations personnel in the field will produce the result desired by the student. One question often asked at the School of Public Relations and Communications is: "What kinds of research are most wanted by public relations workers?" The question could be answered by a survey of the profession designed to preferentialize the research needs of the field. Appendix III contains an example of the copy which might be used in a brochure accompanying such a questionnaire.

Presented with a long list of research needs in the field as stated and preferentialized by members of the profession, graduate students would then have some measure of incentive to choose the research subjects contained therein. Prior to presentation of the list, the existence, structure and functions of the Index should be made clear to all students in the School. And, if possible, it would facilitate research if students were both allowed and encouraged to work jointly on research for theses. Of the several research topics suggested to the Director of the Division in the past year by members of the P.R.S.A., nearly all would require the efforts of more than one graduate student.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX I: Industrial and Professional Classification

1 AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, FISHERY & MINING

0 General Farms, Dairy Farms
1 Cash Grain Farms, Fruit & Nut Farms
2 Cotton
3 Livestock & Poultry Farms
4 Truck Farms, Crop Specialties
5 Agricultural Service Activities
6 Forestry & Fishery
7 Metal Mining
8 Coal Mining, Anthracite, Bituminous & Soft Coal
9 Non-metallic mining

2 CONSTRUCTION & Manufacturing

1 Construction, General Contracting
2 Construction, Special Trades
3 Food & Kindred Products
4 Textile Mill Products
5 Apparell & Other Finished Goods
6 Lumber & Lumber Basic Products
7 Furniture & Finished Lumber Products
8 Paper & Allied Products
9 Printing, Publishing & Allied Industries

3 MANUFACTURING

1 Chemicals & Allied Products
2 Products of Petroleum, Coal & Natural Gas
3 Rubber Products
4 Leather & Leather Products
5 Stone, Clay & Glass Products
6 Iron, Steel Products
7 Transportation Equipment
8 Non-Ferrous Metals Products
9 Electrical Machinery

4 MANUFACTURING

1 Machinery, (except Electrical)
2 Automobiles & Auto Equipment
3 Plastics, Misc. Mfg. Industries
4 Open
5 "
6 "
7 "
8 "
9 "

5 WHOLESALE TRADE

1 Service Wholesalers
2 Limited Function Wholesalers
3 Manufacturing Sales Branches
4 Agents & Brokers
5 Assemblers of Farm Products
6 Chain Store Warehousers
7 Open
8 "
9 "

6 RETAIL TRADE

1 Food
2 Apparell & Accessories
3 Filling Stations
4 Automotive Group
5 Drug Stores
6 Restaurants
7 Hardware
8 Lumber & Building Materials
9 Liquor

7 FINANCE, INSURANCE & REAL ESTATE

1 Banking
2 Investment Trusts & Investment Companies
3 Security & Commodities Brokers, Dealers
4 Insurance Carriers
5 Insurance Agents, Brokers & Service
6 Real Estate
7 Holding Companies & Investment Holding Companies
8 Finance, Not Elsewhere Classified
9 Open

8 TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATION, PUBLIC UTILITIES

1 Railroads
2 Street, Urban Railways
3 Highway Passenger & Freight Transportation
4 Water Transportation
5 Air Transportation
6 Warehousing & Storage
7 Communications
8 Heat, Light & Power
9 Water & Sanitary Services

9 SERVICES, BUSINESS & PERSONAL

1 Hotels
2 Personal Services
3 Domestic Services
4 Business Services
5 Automotive Repair, Garages
6 Hand Trades
7 Motion Pictures
8 Amusement, Recreation, Related Services
9 Open

0 PROFESSIONAL, OTHER

1 Medical & Other Health Services
2 Legal
3 Engineering & Other Professional Services
4 Educational Services
5 Non-profit Membership Organizations
6 Government
7 Public Relations Counsels
8 Open
9 Open

APPENDIX III: Proposed Copy for Survey Brochure

Late in the summer of 1949, a group of public relations executives told us:

"The need for a centralized clearing-house of PR information is one of the most crucial we face."

Thus, the idea of the Public Relations Index was born.

The twin tasks of actual design and creation fell to the Graduate School of Public Relations of Boston University. Careful, quiet surveys within the profession asked "If such a clearing-house were created for public relations information, what would be your conception of its ideal structure, its functions and its ultimate services to you?"

The answers came back nearly in unison - "We want one central source from which we can draw answers to specific questions about the administration of the PR function - in any industrial or professional context."

How should such an Index operate? "If we could be assured that our information - firm names, identities of individuals - were to be kept confidential, we'd like to contribute our materials, our case histories and the real story of our PR programs to one stockpile. Then, from objective analyses of the total body of information, we'd like reports individually tailored to serve our needs."

The Public Relations Index has been designed to fulfill these requirements - and more.

Take the sample case of a public relations counsel in St. Louis. His client is a heating equipment manufacturer employing 1400; union - CIO. There are 73 foremen, and both the union and the company publish weekly newspapers for the employees. Work in the plant has been reduced to an assembly-line operation; only a few - 50 to 75 - workers are skilled in the old "craftsman" sense of the word.

The St. Louis counsel finds the client company in need of a program of economic education. He turns to the Public Relations Index for help.

The objective characteristics of the company - size, industrial classification, number of employees, etc. - are filtered through the Index IBM system: IBM machines sort through the Index sample for all those firms most like the St. Louis company. Index personnel then turn to the Index Unit Files for complete case histories of each firm comparable to the counsel's heating equipment firm in St. Louis.

Programs of economic education in each of the sample companies are then analyzed, and a complete report is written for the Index subscriber, tailored to the needs of his particular client firm. The St. Louis counsel receives all available information on the subject: descriptions of different kinds of programs, their limitations, advantages, measures of their effects, and how they may be implemented to the greatest advantage.

The inquiring counsel had one specific question not uncommon in the PR field: "My client sees the value of economic education, but before he takes a step in that direction, he wants to know what other people are doing. He wants a picture of the trend."

The Index answers the question from its Summary Files - compiled from representative samples drawn within each industry and profession, stratified by public relations subjects.

To fully round out the economic education picture, the St. Louis counsel also receives an Index Summary Report on Economic Education. Altogether, he gets not only a report fitted to his specific needs, but also a comprehensive view of economic education on a nation-wide scale - one that allows him to select and adapt those features he likes best.

Index functions do not end with the mailing of reports to the St. Louis member. Let's assume the Index analysis showed a certain gap in our information about economic education - for example, that PR executives had not yet worked out a reliable "before and after" measure of the effects of one kind of program vs. another. The need would be immediately communicated to research groups with which the Index

keeps in constant touch.

This has been a partial picture of The Index in operation in the near future. Could questions such as these be answered completely today? The answer is "No."

It will take time. The time it takes will be directly proportional to the cooperation given the Index by public relations executives in every type and size PR operation in the United States.

Current estimates are that the Index will require at least two years to reach full operating capacity. So far, its design has been completed, and the files are slowly building. The remainder is in the hands of people like you.

Complete descriptive narratives of the design for the Index are available. They may be obtained by writing:

APPENDIX II: Coding for IBM Punch Cards

(Note: IBM punch cards contain 80 columns. It is possible to identify a company for Index purposes by using about half the card - 40 columns. The remainder of the card could be used to describe how the public relations unit is organized for administration of the public relations function. Another card with an identifying number could then be used to store information about how the unit actually programs its public relations -- information which would come to the Index in the form of completed questionnaires.)

Cols:

1-3 Industrial & Professional Class

4 Capitalization

5 Number of Employees

6 Number of Stockholders

7 Annual Sales Volume

8 Dealers or Sales Branches

9 Direct Customers

10 Suppliers

11 Manufacturing Branches

12 Advertising Budget

13 Number of Foremen

14 Number of Supervisory Personnel

15 Size of Sales Staff

16 Size of Plant Community

17 Regional Location (by U.S. Census Regions)

18 Size of Public Relations Staff

19 Public Relations Budget

20 Salary of Public Relations Director

21 Publics for which actively programming

22 " " " " "

23 Per Cent of Employees Holding Stock in Company

24 Background of Public Relations Director

25 Use of Survey Research

26 Media Frequencies