



SUCCESSFUL COMBINATION—
Engineer Nyquist, Manager Skoog.

PRODUCT PLANNING

Lesson in Pace Setting

G.E.'s Radio and Television Department in Syracuse had found it competitively necessary to convert from wood to metal cabinets in its low-cost "Pacer" TV line.

The G-E Electronics Division's Rockford, Ill., cabinet plant had been turning out superior wooden cabinets, but was relatively inexperienced in the metal-forming field. Yet R&TV needed metal cabinets and needed them fast!

Under the direction of Plant Manager Stanley Skoog and Plant Engineer Ben Nyquist, the Rockford plant came up with a unique, low-cost metal cabinet design for the 21-inch "Pacer" line. They installed machinery and delivered cabinets within two months.

The prohibitive time and cost of retooling for all-metal production was eliminated by designing metal cabinets with wooden frames, knob panels, and chassis

shelves. Thus, the Rockford people could continue to use their valuable wood-working skills and much of the equipment already in the plant. An added advantage: design changes can be made by simply re-fashioning the wooden portions of the sets.

The Illinois cabinet plant increased its business as the result of the switch to metal. The plant continues to make all-wood console cabinets for higher-priced sets.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Hot Off the Press

For 37,000 science teachers and the same number of social studies teachers, two new G-E booklets, "The Story of the Turbine" and "General Electric's Answer to Four Why's" have been prepared by Public Relations.

From the requests currently pouring in for additional copies, it is predicted that over 350,000 "Turbine" and over 400,000 "Why's" will be distributed before December 15 to high school students. The four "Why's" are:

- Why stick to your studies?
- Why work?
- Why study English?
- Why read?

Another booklet on "Why Study Math?," "Why Look Into Engineering?" and "Why Study Science?" will be off the presses in November. The booklets are available from Dept. M., Bldg. 2, Room 117, Schenectady.

G.E.'s famed series of comic books (Adventures Inside the Atom, et al) is best-selling in Europe now, too. Reprints (translated where necessary), are appearing in magazines or newspapers in Denmark, France, New Zealand, Finland, Brazil, Italy, and Norway. G.E. donated reproductions to UNESCO for distribution in Europe.

DISTRIBUTION STUDY: Out to Get the Facts

During the next few months, an interviewer representing General Electric may call on you, your neighbor, or the major appliance dealer in your town to ask questions about consumer buying habits.

The mere fact that such interviews are under way sometimes gives rise to false rumors. If you hear that G.E. is planning to get cozy with discount houses, or any similarly absurd conjecture, you can help avoid misunderstanding by explaining what is really going on.

The interviews will initiate the second phase of the Company's two-year Consumer Goods Distribution Study Project. The study was set up last spring within the Management Consultation Services Division upon request of Executive Vice President Roy W. Johnson, head of the Appliance and Electronics Group (see *Monogram*, April, 1954).

Exploratory discussions have been held with G-E personnel, independent marketing research and consulting organizations, advertising agencies, and freelance economists. Result: an over-all research plan just presented to the G.E. Review Board, and the announcement of Phase II, comprising a great deal of leg-work, in which interviewers will collect distribution data.

Members of the 10-man study group will interview upwards of a thousand typical retailers around the country. Practically all major appliance distributors and a representative group of G-E factory and field sales people will be asked their views on the present problems in the consumer goods field. An independent agency will quiz several thousand consumers.

From the answers, the task force plans to plot trends which will give hereto-

fore unavailable insights into optimum distribution organization and the buying motivations for retail white goods and TV receivers.

Here are some of the things G.E. wants to know:

1. What are the logical product groupings, consumer shopping patterns and retail marketing practices, which will enable the Company to take full advantage of the buying habits of major customer groups for each logical product array?

2. What organization, facilities and relationships at the wholesale and factory sales levels (field and headquarters) will best serve retailers handling each compatible group at minimum cost to the Company?

Principal emphasis will be devoted to refrigerators, freezers, ranges, automatic washers and TV receivers since these will constitute the majority of dollar and unit volume over the next ten years.

C. G. Klock, Study leader, points out (and so does *Business Week* in its lengthy report of the Study in the October 2, 1954 issue) that this is real pioneering into the jungle of supposition surrounding consumer durables purchase psychology. If the G-E expedition can find well-defined

Klock's team has been selected from a broad variety of marketing backgrounds: R. N. Beaudry is from Air Conditioning Division; W. H. Bloodworth from General Purpose Control Department; J. E. Horak from G.E. Appliances; J. W. Puckett from G.E. Supply; K. M. Mueller was formerly with Willys Motors; and C. J. Coward, was formerly with Kelvinator. In addition, the task force has three graduates of the Marketing Training Group: E. J. Fleisher, W. C. Hultman and R. B. Lennox.
