INFORMATION AND EDUCATION SESSION

THE PRODUCT — WHAT IS IT IN 1971?

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The title given this morning's program—"Today's Wildlife and How It Should Be Sold"—and the title given my part in it—"The Product." What Is It in 1971?"—both employ terminology lifted from the lexicon of modern commercial advertising and marketing. Now, that is all right with me, even though I have long argued, unsuccessfully I'm afraid, that the resources with which we are concerned posses intrinsic, human values which cannot be measured in dollars or cold economic statistics. We *do* have something to sell to our publics, and before we can discover *how* it should be sold we do have to be sure we know exactly what its appeals and attractions are in light of today's market conditions and the publics' wants and demands.

The emphasis we have put on "*Today's* Wildlife" and "What It Is in 1971" in the forementioned titles, however, suggests that there has been some fundamental change in our product in the recent past. Such an inference, I believe, is not exactly correct. Quantitatively, we may have less of some species on hand and more of others than before, but basically a deer is still a deer and a warbler is still a warbler and a pileated woodpecker is exactly what one was ages ago. Physical, biological evolution simply has not progressed fast enough to *change* our product in this context.

What change really has taken place, and it appears to have been truly revolutionary rather than evolutionary, has taken place in the market place. What may be the same old product physically, may indeed be a brand new product from the standpoint of its marketability, and if this is so then it has to have a profound effect upon how the product should be sold.

When I first entered this field of work, which does not seem like too many years ago—at least to me it does not—hunters, and a very few non-hunting naturalists, were still the only people who were displaying any active interest in the preservation and management of fish or wildlife or their habitats. Our organizations and their programs were geared to the satisfaction of the needs, desires and demands of the hunting and fishing public, and this tradition is still very much in evidence. Our laws were designed to protect game, and game fish. In my own state every single mammal not classed legally as game or fur-bearing was, classified as a "predatory or undesirable species." Think of that: *every* species not protected and managed for the hunter and trapper classified as predatory or undersirable. Then, while many insectivorous birds were recognized as desirable, there was a long list of birds classified as predatory or undesirable, including every species that might in any way prey upon any other species which the hunter wanted reserved for himself. The idea very definitely was: if it does not catch bugs, and if it does not provide a trophy of some sort—a pelt, or meat on the table—what good is it?

Aldo Leopold, in his essay on "Conservation Esthetic" which was published in his *Sand County Almanac,* said: "The trophy-hunter is the caveman reborn. Trophy-hunting is the perogative of youth, racial or individual, and is nothing to apologize for." Leopold then went on to deplore, in the modern picture, the trophy-hunter (and by inference the trophy-hunter society) who never grows up, in whom the capacity for isolation, perception, and husbandry remain undeveloped, and who must reduce to possession and appropriate to exclusive use, in order to enjoy.

And this is exactly the kind of hunter—the exclusively trophy-hunting type—and exactly the kind of "public" to whom we have tried to sell our programs and our products in the past, and to whom much of our selling effort is geared to sell them today.

As Leopold said, trophy-hunting is nothing to apologize for, particularly in the exuberance of youth, and I am not in any way apologizing for it today. But for many, trophy-hunting in any of its many forms is a stepping stone to the development of greater perceptions and appreciations of the whole, vast tapestry of outdoor resources and the web of life in which both wildlife and human life are interwoven threads. And we must realize that today there are thousands upon thousands of people who, brought up in an urban or suburban environment, without the readily available opportunity to enjoy the experiences and develope the skills of hunting and fishing, have by-passed *this* phase almost completely and prefer other non-consumptive outdoor activities and experiences in which wildlife is nonetheless an essential ingredient.

While this is a recent and *generally* desirable development in the evolution of wildlife use it does present a new problem. Currently the revenues which protect and preserve both game and non-game species are almost wholly generated by those who fish and hunt, our sportsmen. We might ask, what is the future of all wildlife if fishing and hunting, per se, should cease to exist entirely?

I believe if Aldo Leopold were alive today he would be surprised at the degree to which hunting, for the purpose of killing game and creeling fish, has been augmented by the development of appreciations of other values and the enjoyment of other experiences—or, in other words, how much hunting has been augmented by the development of other uses of our product.

Our product itself may not have changed drastically, but the uses to which it is put, the demands it can meet, the needs it can fulfill, have changed.And so from a marketing standpoint we do have a new product in the 1970's.

Today an annotated lifetime checklist of birds can be as much of a trophy as a mounted pheasant in the den. A big, native trout carefully played and carefully released on a fish-for-fun stream may be deemed superior to a creel full of dead, hatchery-reared fish. The sight of a deer may be as stimulating to the summer camper as to the Nimrod in the fall. The bird watcher often stalks with all the skill of the bowhunter, and the photographer about to "shoot" his first bear may tremble with all of the excitement of the neophyte rifleman. Today there is legislation in the draft stage that would provide for federal aid in the management of non-game wildlife species; and some states have initiated programs of non-game wildlife management, and hired biologists to assign specifically to such programs.

Fish and wildlife resources in this country were originally identified almost exclusively with hunting and fishing. They were seldom enjoyed in any other way. They were taken for food and for fur, primarily, back in the days when people walked mainly to get where they wanted to go, and when they picnicked and camped along the way mainly because there were no motels. As most people do, they learned to enjoy practicing these skills, which were first developed out of necessity and later became enjoyable traditions. Our product—fish and wildlife management—came on the market when the *only significant* enjoyment of the outdoor environment amounted basically to a reenactment of the traditions of the frontier experience—reenactment of the strenuous, hunting and fishing, outdoor life. And it was on the basis of that use of the fish and wildlife resources that our product had to be sold.

But since then we have lived in the most revolutionary time in all human history. What has been going on has been called "the revolution in rising expectations." People today expect their environment to meet many needs. They work in it, study and learn in it, raise kids in it, and relax and play in it. And above all they expect to live a high quality

life—to have high quality living experiences in it that go far beyond the mere reenactment of frontier traditions.

People are going to go right on expecting greater and greater satisfactions from their environment. Meadows and streams, fields and forests, mountains and wetlands, are environmental resources, and so are fish and wildlife—both game and non-game—and their scarcity or abundance affects the quality of the human environment and its ability to meet a whole array of human needs. And all this is true of fish and wildlife resources whether people choose to catch or shoot them; or study them; or photograph them; or just see or hear them; or are content just to know that they are still there and that man is not alone on this planet. The spectre of a "Silent Spring" has an untold effect in generating the current awareness of environmental problems.

The product we have to sell in 1971 is a stimulating, exciting, satisfying interaction with our outdoor environment, in which the participation of other living creatures in some way is vital to the quality of the human experience.

Our product in 1971 is no longer just something that comes wrapped in fur or feathers, or wears scales and fins, anymore that the product of a theater is composed of the actors and actresses that walk upon its stage, although they are certainly essential to the delivery of the product itself. But the product is not a thing, but an experience—a worthwhile, exciting, satisfying experience in the outdoors in which participation of wildlife in some manner is an essential ingredient. It may be a hunting or fishing experience, but it may just as well be a looking, or a listening, or a learning experience—or a photographing, or a drawing, or even a journalistic experience—or a combination of several such experiences, separately or all rolled into one. It can also be a *husbandry* experience. Everything from wood duck nesting box projects and other habitat improvement efforts to the winter feeding of songbirds can be highly satisfying experiences to those who participate in them.

The degree to which such experiences are worthwhile, stimulating, meaningful, or satisfying to the user depends upon the user's developed perception and his or her own creative ability to take advantage of available wildlife resources to satisfy his or her own experience needs. But our real product is a human experience in which wildlife participates, and not the wildlife itself. Perhaps we can somehow help our customers and potential customers improve their own ability to obtain the highest order of satisfactions from the product we offer. If we can do this, our market will expand and our business will succeed.

CHANGING COMMUNICATIONS FOR CHANGING TIMES

By IRVING SMITH KOGAN

President, Irving Smith Kogan & Co., Inc. and Vice President, Hicks & Greist Advertising Inc.

I am here in a dual capacity . . . first, as a person active in the related fields of public relations, publicity and journalism, and second as an advertising man involved in the sale of goods and services. In this dual role I would like to share with you this morning some of my thoughts on the role of communications in wildlife information and education.

I would like to change the title of my remarks. With Mr. Seamans permission, let's use the title, "Changing Communications for Changing Times." Or if you prefer, "What are some of the Communications problems facing I&E personnel today?

The initial communication problems are probably right in your own home state . . . an annual bass fishing contest to promote . . . or the water level in a reservoir sinks to a new low . . . or the deer season is about to open, which means a safety program for hunters.