

Emphasis On Package Programs

Seek Grass Roots Level Appeal

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BEFORE anything is said about Mutual's plans for future programming, it is important to make these points about "America's Largest Network."

Mutual covers more than the big cities. It is a grass-roots network numbering more than 500 stations. It reaches a vast audience that is unmeasured by Hooper or any other survey. It includes more than 300 single-stations markets with strong and loyal audiences.

Thus, Mutual is a flexible network that can be geared to the needs of any type of advertiser. It can deliver to any sponsor a network tailor-made for his product. We know that programs can also be tailor-made to fit the needs of any advertiser.

Our job in the program department is to devise programs that will hold listeners. But in doing so, we will not be unmindful of the merchandising, publicity and promotion possibilities of each show. For instance, we have proven our effectiveness in the so-called "kids' strip." Now it's our job to build programs in this category that will have "built-in" merchandising and promotional features. We are doing just that in two new shows: "Bobby Benson and the B-Bar-B Riders."



Here we have taken a show that was a highly successful 15 minute strip back in 1932. It ran for five years commercially and sold a lot of cereal. We have modernized it into a half hour complete feature story. We recognize that "cliffhangers" for boys and girls are outdated. We know our juvenile audience has been conditioned to expect a well-constructed thirty minute drama. "Bobby Benson and the B-Bar-B Riders" is a fresh, exciting, compelling series of western shows appealing not only to our loyal juvenile audience, but also, to adults.

We plan to go on the road more than we have in the past. If the mountain won't come to Mutual, Mutual will go to the mountain—or to the prairies or seashore, for that matter. As an example, we can take national favorites like Lanny Ross and send his delightful, daytime musical show on a tour of the towns and cities and—if desirable—we'll even set up a platform and originate the show in a super market with Lanny himself acting as salesman for his favorite coffee or cake. And to our way of thinking, that's the most effective type of selling on the air. Lanny is a familiar and beloved personality. He's a particular favorite of our expanding daytime audiences. We believe, they'll buy and keep on buying, when he tells 'em to buy the product. And one of the chief reasons is, he can project 1949 copy that is simple, sincere, and effective.

We intend to build more and more programs that can be similarly merchandised at the local level. We will place more and more emphasis on personalized selling. We think the day is

passed when a commercial message can be tossed off fore and aft. Our aim will be to make it possible for advertisers to identify a favorite character with his product. Mutual is particularly strong in mystery fare. A part of future planning is to devise unique methods of helping the advertiser to integrate selling copy. Ways and means of making mystery shows, with their high popularity, more effective commercial vehicles. And we feel certain that this can be achieved without sacrificing the entertainment.

We feel that it is our challenge now to take full advantage of pure radio. We're not going to forget to utilize the vivid imagination of the American radio listener . . . the one dimension that is radio's and radio's alone in the field of advertising entertainment. Radio is an exciting and compelling medium—it's our job to exploit it to the hilt in the face of new competition.

And . . . we mean television. It's no ogre to us . . . it's a part of us. And we believe that after our new media has settled itself down for a long run. It most certainly will not have the field to itself, but will have to compete with its healthy parent . . . radio.

Because Mutual is a large and flexible network, it must cater to a wide variety of interests. As mentioned, we have built a strong following for the "kids' strip." A new program in the daytime hours is aimed at an adult audience—it is the well-received "Your Marriage," featuring the columnists, Samuel and Esther Kling. It's a bold, forthright handling of an overly fictionalized theme. Yes, it shocks, but it's very real and honest in the style demanded by 1949 listeners. In the nighttime hours, we will continue to stress dramatic shows long on suspense and action and designed, as always, to draw heavily on the listeners' imaginations.

Another new program for which Mutual has great expectations is the "Gabriel Heatter Opportunity Show." It is a talent show, but one unlike any now on the air. This is not a mere exploitation of new faces, but sincere effort to make the word "opportunity" stick. Winners of "Gabe's" show are the recipients of an actual contract guaranteeing them a paid slot in the schedule where they can be given every opportunity to prove themselves. Mutual is motivated in this direction, recognizing as does the whole Radio and Television industry, the continuing need of new talent.

The term "package" is often loosely used. We are doing our best to tighten up the "Mutual Package." Our aim is to make every program vehicle the strongest possible sales agent for the client—a package containing not only the fundamental ingredient of fine entertainment, but also a complete plan for effective merchandising at the local level and strong springboards for publicity and promotion. We feel that this is the kind of radio advertising campaign that will do the job—yes, and do it better than any other media.