A RECONSIDERATION OF THE PERSONAL SELLING FUNCTION IN RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS

DISSERTATION
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

The character of the personal selling function in many types of mass-market retail establishments is undergoing substantial change. These radical departures from traditional types of salesperson-customer relationship are being consciously and dynamically planned and implemented. Fundamental changes in customer buying habits, effective development of other means of retail selling, and retailing problems have made merely passive acceptance of gradual change in this area insufficient. The trend in retailing is toward less participation by a salesperson in many transactions and an accompanying extension in the buying activity of customers. So fundamental and far-reaching a trend as this merits detailed examination. It has been the purpose of this study to investigate theoretically and empirically the development of "selling simplification," defined here as the specialized process of planning and controlling integrated selling situations in order to facilitate greater participation by the customer and to make more effective any participation by selling personnel. ¹

¹ This definition and others relevant to this retailing trend are fully developed in Chapters Three and Four.
Such a development has broad implications for many aspects of retailing in addition to the effect upon the performance of the selling function. Institutions, other functions, products, people employed, and customers are affected by this diminishing participation of personal salesmanship in stores. Certain major questions of profound economic and social significance which seem to give unity to this treatise also are raised:

Are current attempts to simplify the retail selling function, and the growing customer acceptance of the consequences, merely a reaction to adverse pressures without any positive benefits?

Will traditional salespeople ultimately disappear in mass-market retail establishments?

Does the extension of selling simplification at the retail level of the economy involve a radical change in the economic function of retailing, with mass-market retailers becoming mere transferers of merchandise and with little or no differentiation remaining between them and the merchandise they sell?

MOTIVATION FOR STUDY

The entire field of retailing is undergoing critical examination by those actively engaged in the field as well as by members of the academic profession. Social and economic changes in the United States have stimulated much investigation into the very character of retailing. More specifically, the economic responsibility which retailing fulfills is receiving deep consideration. A recently-published study of some magnitude indicates that a committee composed of almost seventy retailing leaders
was assigned "the important task...to place retailing in its proper relation to the American economy as a whole and to urge policies by which retailing can at all times contribute to both stability and forward progress in the economy."  

This present concern with the economic role of retailing rises, perhaps, out of the very extent of change now taking place in the field. While always a highly competitive field, retailing today is experiencing changes of great latitude and consequences which intensify this competition. Many speak of the "Retail Revolution" or, at least, of a "Retail Renaissance."

Selling Simplification Only Part of a Broader Re-examination of Retailing

The current trend of selling simplification must, then, be viewed as part of a larger situation of change. A complete re-evaluation of the means of contributing to economic progress is taking place throughout retailing. Paul Mazur, a noted writer on retailing problems, clearly emphasized the important economic function of retailing in sustaining a high level of production and employment in this country when he said, "Distribution as a function

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of our economy has surely come of age; and upon it there is imposed a man-sized burden. For it is the task of distribution to deliver to the American people the substance and services out of which those standards are formed. As president of the National Retail Dry Goods Association, Wade G. McCargo, wrote, "A new concept of distribution (is emerging)—a concept which is placing retailing at the forefront of industry, responsible for awakening and creating the markets which uphold production and continually raise our American standard of living."

Importance of the Selling Function in Retail Stores

While only a part of a widespread re-examination of retailing, the attention being directed to the improvement of the selling function is most notable. It is the point of sale, the well-publicized last three feet—the length of the customer's arm—which is the pivot of all retailing efforts. Retailing leaders call for much more attention to selling than to buying. There is growing recognition that so-called non-selling functions should, in fact,

3 Paul Mazur, "The Standards We Raise," Twenty-Fifth Annual Boston Conference on Distribution, Boston, 1953, p. 27.

become sales supporting operations since "selling is an indispensable part of every transaction and is the basic reason for the existence of stores." 5

**Extensive Nature of Present Trend of Selling Simplification**

The process of selling simplification concerned, as it is, with the basic function of retailing justifiably evokes "a great fever" of interest and attention in the trade. Effects of this dynamic process are evident in every segment of retailing. Growing recognition of the capacity of non-personal means of selling and the accompanying systematic coordination of them with personal selling have brought about radical changes in the traditional nature of salesperson-customer relationships in every type of retail store. Mazur, while recognizing the difficulty of speculating about future methods, does suggest,

What detailed techniques of improved selling will be developed over the next generation are, of course, not known. However, it may be possible to discern some of the general directions these developments may follow. ... Self-service may develop in limited areas of retailing; but self-selection, with the product and its sales story presented emphatically and appealingly to the buying public, will certainly cover a wider area and should increase sales productivity and help expand domestic markets. 6


In a 1953 account of "selling forces" in the United States, it is observed, "The self-service idea has probably been the most important single force in retailing in recent years."\(^7\) The customer self-selection method of merchandising has taken a firm hold in retail stores of every type and description throughout the country. "It ranks," one trade magazine has stated, "as the most important retailing innovation of the past 20 years and has resulted in substantial net profit gains for many diversified kinds of outlets..."\(^8\)

**Need for Scientific Approach**

It is in a setting of an intensified current interest and activity regarding changes in the retail selling function that this treatise has its roots. The development of this process lacks certainty and accuracy. Existing fear and anxiety about the future of this fundamental retailing trend prompt a purpose for this work which is larger than a mere accounting of its extent at a particular time. Fears are engendered somewhat by the very words used in describing the trend. There are many semantic difficulties and prejudices with respect to the use of the term, "self-service," a stigma engendered by


its major identification with super markets. Many retailers are frankly worried about the possible elimination of the human element in retail selling and, accordingly, rise to condemn, in a rather blanket fashion, all attempts to simplify retail selling.

The lack of agreement upon the very nature and direction of this retailing trend has not only caused anxieties; there is also much confusion. Most retailers do not have sufficient facts regarding possible improvement of their particular situations and in the attempts of others to aid them, many sincere efforts are thwarted. One estimate of the situation has warned, "The trend is so well recognized that the retailer, trying to think his way through the problem, finds himself deluged with advice and help from every corner of the retail and manufacturing fields."9 A leading authority on the subject also indicated this problem when he said, "...all of us find ourselves swept along on a rising tide of simplified selling with all its many ramifications. The problem today is to keep from being rushed into making mistakes..."10

10 Fidley Williams, Self Selection (Talk before the sales promotion division and visual merchandising group of the National Retail Dry Goods Association), Cincinnati, May 19, 1953.
PAST RESEARCH CONCERNING SELLING SIMPLIFICATION

If the term "research" is used broadly to denote the "process of conscious, premeditated inquiry," there has been much research concerning the retailing development of selling simplification. While it has not always been true, a sincere interest in information about this process has been evident since 1950. This desire exists in every segment of business activity which is affected as well as in students of the subject. As yet, however, no integrated, basic understanding of the topic has appeared in either the printed or spoken word.

Sponsors of Research

Retailing companies certainly are doing much of the research in this area. Since they are directly affected, retailers, especially the large ones, have sought a wide variety of information in order to introduce a greater certainty into policy decisions and into the actual development of selling simplification. Indicative of this research interest of retailers is the statement of Sears, Roebuck and Company: "The problem of increasing sales by making it easier for the customer to buy is one that must be constantly

re-examined. Research and development is a recognized function of store planning and display..."12

It has been estimated that well over two thousand experiments in the use of "self-service methods" were made in 1953 in stores other than supermarkets.13 Another estimate held that retailers had set aside 25 million dollars for 1953 in order to develop self-selection and other money-saving techniques.14 While such generalized estimates of the extent of retailer research activity in this area are subject to criticism, they serve, nevertheless, to give some perspective to the existing situation.

In addition to the research conducted by retailers, much has been done by other business concerns. Retail trade associations and trade publications have given attention to the trend through encouragement of sharing of actual experiences, preparation of operating manuals, and conducting and sponsoring of research projects. Manufacturers and distributors of consumer goods have made their contribution through research projects sponsored and conducted by them as well as in aiding the work of

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retailers and retailing groups. Manufacturers of fixtures, equipment, and packaging supplies, which are so important to the development of the selling simplification process, have financed basic and applied research in this area and have also provided planning and merchandising services to retailers. Lastly, various facilitating agencies (e.g., advertising agencies, consulting firms) have devoted research to this trend.

Types of Investigations

Further insight into the nature of previous research which has already been done can be provided by indicating the types of investigations pursued. A complete listing of individual projects would not only be impossible but somewhat meaningless here. Reference to particular reports and articles will be better made throughout this treatise. Most of the research efforts appear to involve one or more of six general methods.

First, there have been attempts to measure the extent of simplified selling in various types of retail stores or for particular lines of products, by means of mail questionnaires and/or personal interviews. Second, numerous formal and informal discussions about the trend and its various aspects have contributed additional knowledge, especially through free and critical sharing of experiences. Third, consumer/customer surveys have
been conducted in an effort to determine, among other things, the effect of the trend upon "impulse buying," customer acceptance (preference) for self-service operations, the existence of customer complaints regarding selling service.

Fourth, analyses of selling operations have been made by means of such techniques as sales record analysis, customer counts, and shopping reports on sales personnel. Fifth, attempts have been made to conduct "controlled experimentation" in retail stores where changes in sales and expenses are related to variations in the use of a single selling tool, e.g., mass display, package, shelf position. Sixth, there has been use of the observation method in retail selling situations, a method which is becoming much more thorough than the very common practice among retailing personnel of visiting "exceptional" operations in other stores.

NATURE OF RESEARCH FOR THIS STUDY

Methods Employed

The research for this work was primarily qualitative in nature. Three major types of research were pursued in an endeavor to place the current retailing trend of selling simplification under the microscope and subject it to a searching diagnosis. At any one stage of the investigation, the methods were in simultaneous use.
First, published material was critically examined to provide background and perspective for all other efforts. This method also provided a continuous re-enforcing of concepts and relationships stimulated by direct association with individuals and actual developments in the field. As part of the review of published material, reference to marketing and retailing books and journals provided a theoretical and historical analysis of the personal selling function in retail stores. Analysis of trade publications furnished information regarding actual experiences with selling simplification as well as additional explanations and interpretations of various aspects of the development. Published material also included reports of research and reprints of speeches on the subject.

Second, field investigatory work was conducted intermittently for about a total of six weeks. Interviews and observations were made in selected retail establishments and offices of multi-unit organizations, predominantly in Columbus, Ohio; Chicago, Illinois; New York City, New York; Detroit, Michigan; St. Louis, Missouri; and Washington, D.C. The following lines of trade were included in these investigations: Department stores, limited-price variety stores, drug stores, hardware stores, apparel specialty stores, and food super markets. Interviews were made with line and staff executives and technicians directly involved with selling simplification as well as with members of general management. Officials of trade associations and
personnel of manufacturing companies were also interviewed. Some access to actual research data of these companies was gained with the assurance of necessary secrecy. The field work was supplemented by correspondence.

Third, inductive reasoning was continuously applied, independently and with others, to the many particulars uncovered in the multitude of material read, discussions stimulated, and observations made. This theoretical research contributed considerably to the conclusions presented. While induction was always primary, deductive reasoning also contributed to the concrete and firm manner in which the treatise is written. At all times, conclusions were evaluated against such criteria as already established principles of marketing, opinions and judgment of experienced people, effectiveness in a given situation, and ordinary good judgment of the author.

Difficulties in Research

Certain difficulties were encountered in this research. The general research problems found in the social sciences and marketing in particular were faced. "The social sciences," one student has written, "have to be distinguished from the physical sciences, not only because the phenomena with which they deal are more complex, because their data are less exact, and because the experimental method...is generally not available to them, but also because they encounter problems of orientation
which are peculiar to them and from which the physical sciences are free."15

The social nature of marketing does not lend itself well to experimentation as a means of verifying definitely assumed hypotheses because the numerous variables cannot be closely controlled and social situations cannot be duplicated.16 There has been, furthermore, a low regard for reliable research in the field of retailing, a situation only now showing signs of improvement. A trade editor has lamented, "Lots of retail executives talk about the value of research but obstacles almost invariably crop up between the utterance of these brave words and their execution that causes them to be honored mainly in their breach. ...There's too much fear of scientific methods and of the corollary intellectual approach."17

Difficulties particular to the subject and objectives of this treatise should also be noted. There is, first, the great lack of standardized terminology. "One of the problems," a student of the subject observed, "that exists in any new development in a field is the problem of

terminology, particularly, I think, if that development is taking place in many lines of retailing with the many different selling and operating conditions. Such a situation introduced difficulty in establishing a rapport with others. Part of any discussion on the topic involved either securing agreement to dispense with all semantic aspects or adequately explaining what one did not mean.

An indication of the variety of terms used is apparent in even a casual examination of writings and speeches on the subject. In 1946, one account listed all of the following names which had been "coined" to describe the changes then taking place: self-service, modified selling, modified self-service, simplified selling, streamlined selling, fast selection, easy selection, preselection, quick service, semi-self-service, visual merchandising, and organized selling.

Furthermore, the terms are used so indiscriminately that one student has been stimulated to write, "Maybe a rose by another name does smell more sweetly! That must be the reason so many clever terms are being coined as synonyms for self-selection and even self-service. Even


'simplified selling' tends to be soft-pedalled; perhaps because the 's-s' somehow suggests 'self-service.' A common beginning for a speech on the subject many times has been, "Self-service, self-selection, simplified selling, quick service--call it what you will--." The second difficulty particular to this study was that little previous research has dealt with all of the aspects of selling simplification. It was a very practical, and, sometimes, expeditious matter that those involved with the problem concerned themselves with the use or improvement of only one or two of the several factors involved in the process. The beneficial qualities of packaging would be emphasized at one time, the importance of advertising at another, the advantages of the check-out system at still another, etc. Depending upon the stage of the development in a particular retail selling situation or upon the specific interest of the business, there was an orientation which inhibited an appreciation of the broad or fundamental character of the simplification process. A third difficulty encountered was the lack of reliable or comparable quantitative data. It was difficult to say that certain consequences were solely a result of specific changes in the selling situations. The bases used to indicate relative improvement were certainly not 20. "Quickies on Quick-Service Fixtures," Grey Matter (National Advertisers' Edition), Vol. 24, No. 16, August 15, 1953, p. 1.
consistently good or bad and, therefore, comparison was limited. There was also some reluctance to provide quantitative information for publication. In some cases, however, permission was granted to study the data in order to secure a more fundamental appreciation of the problem.

CHARACTER OF STUDY

Conceptual Nature

Because of the difficulties noted above, it is necessary that this work be primarily conceptual in nature. It is also desirable that a conceptual treatise on this retailing trend be written. Much of the value of this work lies in satisfying the important need for bringing together, making explicit what may already be known. The trend of retail selling simplification, it is believed, has advanced in thought and practice to the stage where an integrated, basic study is desirable as well as possible.

This work is offered fully acknowledging that many of the conclusions expressed, if viewed individually, will be immediately recognized as rather unrevealing, "accepted" in nature. It is hoped that the frame of reference, the systematic presentation of a new point of view will fulfill an important function at this stage of development. There exists full accord with the sentiment expressed by Katona when, in his first published work on psychological analysis
of economic behavior, he anticipated, "Future research is bound to be stimulated if the outlines of the structure are clearly perceived, missing links pointed out, and the integration of new pieces of evidence made possible."  

effectively solved in individual businesses. In order to make worthwhile decisions within the areas of this general framework, retailing companies will have to secure specific facts about their customers, merchandise characteristics, salespeople, other selling forces, etc.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

Within this general character, there are eight major objectives of this study. While the burden of their fulfillment lies ahead, they can be summarized at this point as follows:

1. To trace historically the development of means of selling simplification and to provide a quantitative account of the extent of planned customer self-selection in retail establishments. (Chapter 2).

2. To formulate a realistic terminology and theoretical perspective for the development of selling simplification, broadly conceived (Chapter 3).

3. To develop a new theory of retail selling consistent with and related to selling simplification (Chapter 4).

4. To re-examine theoretically but nevertheless from a retail management viewpoint, all the retail selling forces in the light of selling simplification (Chapter 5).

5. To identify the pressures which are currently operating to increase the tempo and to broaden the pervasiveness of this retailing trend (Chapter 6).

6. To determine the nature of benefits which can materialize and the factors which limit the extent of selling simplification in retail stores (Chapters 7 and 8).
7. To provide a scientific approach that can be applied by executives and technicians involved in the process of selling simplification (Chapter 9).

8. To interpret broader economic effects which the extension of selling simplification in stores may cause (Chapter 10).
CHAPTER TWO

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SELLING SIMPLIFICATION

An account of the historical development of the process of selling simplification can help to provide proper perspective for an understanding of the nature, causes, and implications of this retailing trend. It is also beneficial to indicate, in a somewhat quantitative manner, the extent to which the extreme consequence of this process, i.e., customer self-selection, has prevailed the field of retailing by 1954. Thus, the framework of this study which is conceived in the following chapters can assume more realistic significance.

HISTORICAL STAGES OF MODERN DEVELOPMENT

The showing of merchandise for sale has a history more ancient than that of organized retailing itself: The first home artisan to expose the product of his craft to caravans or casual passers-by practiced fundamentals of display. There is, moreover, evidence that a Paris department store of about 1860 practiced selling simplification in a fashion quite similar to that of non-food
stores in the 1950's. With complete exposure of all items and wide customer aisles and traffic squares, customers in this store appear to be making their merchandise selections and taking them to a central cashier. Therefore, it would be difficult to trace historically the entire development of all aspects of this retailing trend.

It will be sufficient, for purposes of this study, simply to recount briefly the modern development in the United States of two major elements: open display of merchandise and the use of specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling. As it will be indicated in the forthcoming chapters, these two features of modern retail selling have had the greatest impact upon the character of personal salesmanship in stores. The five distinct stages in this primary thread of the modern development of retail selling simplification consist of the following:

1. Period of Inception.
2. Supermarket Birth and Growth.
3. Temporary Expansion During World War II.
4. Permanent Extension in Non-Food Stores.
5. Scientific Development of Selling Simplification.

1 From a print owned by Lee Court, formerly Display Manager of Wm. Filene's Sons, Boston department store.
Period of Inception

E. B. Butler, the founder of Butler Bros., was reported to have suggested in 1878 the use of open display with broad assortments of every-day 5¢ items in the first catalogue (a 1¢ post-card) of this wholesaling company.²

In 1879, Frank Woolworth introduced 100 per cent display; whatever he had to sell, he put out where people could see it, touch it.³

However, one student of the subject has reached outside the retail store to suggest that the development of the variety stores was not the first evidence of interest by customers in the self-selection of goods.⁴ It is contended that the mail-order catalogue, which attained its first real stature in 1872, was, in effect, the earliest modern means of aiding the customer in making her own choices without the aid of a salesperson. Ironically, a large publisher of manufacturers' catalogues currently advertises its service as a means of adapting to industrial selling the "easier-to-buy" principle of self-service super markets.

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Early recognition of problems of customer "walk-outs" and a fervent desire to reduce costs brought on the second basic development. Clarence W. Saunders opened his first Piggly Wiggly store in Memphis, Tennessee, in September, 1916. While the history of self-service dates back to about 1912 when a few merchants in southern California called their particular self-help type of operation "self-service," it is recognized that Saunders perhaps had more to do with the popularization of self-service than anyone else. He patented his highly-regimented system of one-sided display fixtures and check-out counter and thus was able to extend the system throughout the country in franchised independent stores as well as in stores owned by his parent company.

Super Market Birth and Growth

It was, however, the birth of the super market which gave the self-service manner of operation its greatest impetus. Here, too, the origin was in California where drive-in and open-air markets were gaining popularity in the second decade of the current century. Primarily, the


7 Dipman, op. cit., p. 332.
expansion to the Midwest and East of these huge exponents of self-service was a product of the depression period and the first super markets were accordingly crude and inadequate.

Michael Cullen's first "King Kullen" opened in August, 1930, in an abandoned garage in Jamaica, New York; the first Packers warehouse operation, which sold largely distress canned foods, opened in Detroit in December, 1931; and the considerably well-publicized "Big Bear" was opened by Roy Dawson, a former associate of Saunders, and Robert Otis in the abandoned Durant automobile factory near Elizabeth, New Jersey, in December, 1932. In November, 1933, the first large self-service market in a building designed and built specifically for that purpose opened in Cincinnati, reportedly using for the first time the term, "Super Market" in its name.

The super market, with self-service as the sine qua non of its operation, passed the real test of its validity in the East. From that time on, the method spread rapidly, with all food chains re-vamping their operations. This type of operation, together with the smaller superettes which also emphasize self-service, is dominant in food

8 Ibid.
distribution. Moreover, the effect of the supermarket growth has not been confined to food stores. The great success of these stores has had a profound effect upon the operation of non-food stores; it looms as a major pressure for the more general extension of retail selling simplification.

**Temporary Expansion During World War II**

The trend to self-service in the grocery field was quickened during the Second World War.\(^\text{10}\) Non-food retailers were forced to turn to selling simplification in order to alleviate major problems of merchandise shortages, high wage rates in other industries, and necessary use of salespeople inexperienced and unfamiliar with the merchandise or stock arrangement.\(^\text{11}\) It was in this period that many of the various methods of encouraging and facilitating customers to do more of the job of selecting merchandise in non-food stores were first designed and implemented.

Through selling simplification, retailers were able to make possible a reasonable adjustment to wartime conditions.

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Service standards were maintained far better with simplified selling than would have been the case with the same size and caliber of sales personnel without it. One store indicated it did 25 per cent more business with 750 salespeople, supplemented by checkwriters and cashiers, than it did when it normally employed 1450 salespeople.12

When stores found that temporary wartime selling simplification enlarged their productive capacities, there was stimulus for its permanent extension. Few, if any, of the retailers who made wartime changes in their selling methods returned to exactly the same type of operation engaged in before the war. The following reasons for the enduring effects of wartime selling simplification have been suggested:13

1. Some of the ideas proved extremely effective and were retained, even where there was enough competent help available, because they were "good selling aids."

2. Some customers preferred to serve themselves.

3. Many retailers planned to meet intensified post-war price competition through the more efficient use of selling and non-selling personnel so as to cut payroll costs.

4. There were fewer returns and mark-downs when customers made their own choices.

5. Those retailers who expected to compete on a service basis regarded selling simplification

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13 Hawkins and Wolf; op. cit., pp. 2-3.
measures as aids to their salespeople in giving greater customer satisfaction.

Permanent Extension in Non-Food Stores

There was, nevertheless, a hesitancy on the part of non-food retailers, especially those who emphasized a service appeal. It was believed that wartime selling simplification was only reluctantly accepted by customers as part of their "contribution to the war effort." It has only been since 1950 that simplified selling wholeheartedly nurtured in non-food stores. There are noteworthy exceptions: S. Klein's (1907) and Ohrbach's (1923), both in New York City. While forecasts of the application of self-service and self-selection techniques to many non-food items in many non-food outlets were still scorned in 1950, four years later this trend is a generally accepted reality.

It is readily observable that selling simplification has been applied throughout retailing; every type of store and every type of product has been affected. The most radical changes in the use of personal selling have been in mass-market stores, but the effects of the trend are also apparent in some stores predominantly catering to higher-income customers. In one architect's words, this extensive nature of the development has been stated as follows:

The architects are showing that the cost-cutting self-selection and self-service methods can be
accomplished without sacrifice of the ease and
elegance demanded by even a luxury store. This is
one of the biggest increments of the last decade's
revolution in store design—the skills of modern
design have substituted the luxury of a controlled
physical environment for yesterday's luxury of
service. Modern design has also been able to extend
this new kind of luxury—the luxury of service by
things instead of by people—to a shopping
environment for practically all income groups. 14

A statement by a spokesman for the architectural firm
which directed the designing and construction of Northland
Center for The J. L. Hudson Company in suburban Detroit,
Michigan, lends emphasis to the breadth and depth of the
current selling simplification development: "The principle
of self-selection was upper-most in the design and
merchandising fixtures; therefore the principle controlled
the design of Northland Center. Generally, the shopper
has access to all merchandise and can bring his selection
to a sales person to complete the transaction." 15

Scientific Development

By the 1950's, there were signs that the development
of selling simplification had entered a period of intensified
scientific growth. Leaders of the super market industry
emphasized the need for a more enlightened development in

14 "What makes a 1940 Store Obsolete?" Architectural

15 "Self-Selection Key-Notes Hudson's New Northland
this type of operation. Non-food retailers were concentrating more resources on research in this area than ever before. The stimulus for the coming improvements is inherent in the very growth of the trend. As methods of securing simplified selling become more widespread and more effective, customers become more readily conditioned to further innovations. Furthermore, increased use and effectiveness of selling simplification intensifies competition and brings about more rapid changes by the retailers.

Just what will be the ultimate direction of further growth is, of course, difficult to say. There seem to be two aspects of this stage of scientific development. First, additional and, perhaps, more rapid improvements in present means of selling, with much greater emphasis upon integrating them into a more effective total selling operation, appear certain. The second area of development should be in the extended use of mechanics and even electronics on the retail floor. In a rather challenging series of articles, one advertising agency official indicated very forcibly the possibilities here. He termed the use of mechanics and electronics the "Second Retail Revolution" and ventured the following:

A substantial percentage of retail store units will barely be touched by the Second Retail Revolution even by 1975; and some will remain untouched by it as the 21st century begins. ...Our giant retailers, who control the major
share of total retail volume in those merchandise categories that are most strongly advertised, will turn to the new concepts as rapidly as technology, finances, and consumer habits permit.16

Mechanical means of selling have appeared. There is the growth of vending machines with some attempts to use them in stores and adjoining them when the stores themselves are closed. A number of more extensive automatic merchandising experiments have been reported. These include a moving belt or moving platform concept where customers sit still while merchandise passes before them; a "store in the round" which is a carousel arrangement where the entire store revolves; a "from-the-car shopping" food store; and the use of closed-circuit television before seated customers who record selections through automatic means. Mechanical and electronic modifications of specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling have been similarly reported. Also notable are the later experiments of Clarence W. Sanders—his mechanical food stores: the "Keedoozle" and the more recent "Food-lectric."

PRESENT EXTENT OF PLANNED CUSTOMER SELF-SELECTION

It is impossible to give any exact amount of the

present extent of this retailing trend. Figures which
purport to express the range of selling simplification
in retail stores are limited in reliability and validity.
Differences in terminology, the various degrees of
simplified selling which exist, and the very dynamics of
the trend limit the general usefulness of such data.
Furthermore, over-simplification of the subject has at
times resulted in meaningless conclusions.

Nevertheless, some measurement of current planned
customer self-selection is desirable as a foundation for
this treatise. One of the few over-all quantitative
estimates of the extent of the trend suggested that self-
service in 1953 accounted for a minimum of 35 billion
dollars in annual retail sales and may account for as
much as 45 billion dollars—or from perhaps 20 to 25 per
cent of the total retail volume of about 180 billion
dollars, with perhaps half of this volume being done in
grocery super markets.17 An estimate of such magnitude
perhaps justified the following dramatic observation by
a student of the subject:

Self-service is sweeping over the field of retailing
with the steady, inexorable pressure of a giant flood.

17 S. O. Kaylin, "The Impact of Recent Developments in
Retailing," Twenty-Fifth Annual Boston Conference on
Distribution, Boston, 1953, p. 76.
One by one, the citadels of over-the-counter selling are being engulfed, forcing distributors to sink or swim. ... Even mammoth department stores are sensitive to the trend.18

Self-Service Operation in Food Stores

In food stores, self-service has by 1954 become the "normal" mode of selling. Dominance of this manner of customer food buying is indicated in the results of a special survey made by the A. C. Nielsen Company in the summer of 1953. At that time, "it was determined that of all food stores, 33 per cent of the number of stores in business were operated on a self-service basis, and that these 33 percent of stores did a whopping 71 per cent of all food store business."19 Furthermore, self-service operation was found in 88 per cent of all chain food stores, with the other 12 per cent being small stores which do only 3 per cent of the total chain volume.20

In the magazine's twenty-first annual survey of grocery distribution, Progressive Grocer estimates that 49 per cent of the grocery stores are of the self-service type (at least in the grocery department) and these do about 82 per


20 Ibid.
cent of the total grocery store sales. Moreover, most of the stores not self-service are of the type known as "semi-self-service;" counter-service stores gradually are becoming a negligible factor in grocery distribution. The American Institute of Food Distribution, Inc., has warned that a grocery store doing business of more than $5,000 a month may find its days numbered unless it switches to self-service operation. There is also evidence that this method of operation is being rapidly extended to all other food departments of supermarkets, i.e., meat, produce, dairy, delicatessen, and bakery.

**Non-Food Stores and Customer Self-Selection**

In non-food stores, considerable extension of simplified selling is taking place. This widening development in 1954 is most observable in drug, hardware, and limited-price variety stores. The application of selling simplification in department stores is also very apparent even though it has been more limited and gradual in these stores. The

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trend is not limited to these types of stores, however. Research for this study also found self-service operations to exist in women's and men's clothing and accessory stores, bakeries, pet shops, jewelry stores, furniture and appliance stores, shoe stores, lumber and building materials stores, book and stationery stores, music (record) stores, and automotive accessory stores.

In the drug field, there is a marked increase in the number of stores which are actually termed "self-service" operations. As in other types of stores, the growth is through conversion of existing stores and the opening of new ones. The most recent of three annual surveys in the field by American Druggist (employing for the first time the definition that a self-service drug store is one in which 50 per cent or more of the selling area is devoted to merchandise which is accessible to customers) found 6,994 such stores (14.6 per cent of all drug stores in the nation) 59.5 per cent more than the 1953 study which used a less inclusive definition.\(^{24}\) It was reported in 1953 that more than 34 per cent of the chain drug stores had been set up or converted to some form of self-service within a period of two or three years.\(^{25}\)


\(^{25}\) Kaylin, loc. cit.
In the hardware store field, the status of self-service operation has been sharply clarified through a recent survey of the Market Research Department of National Cash Register Company. Giving perspective to its work, the study states, "according to the National Retail Hardware Association and later borne out by our own survey, approximately two-thirds of the hardware stores in the United States today are of this pattern (i.e., have installed some degree of self-service)."

There is no over-all estimate of the extent of self-service operations in the limited-price variety store field. What evidence is available suggests rapid development and extension of the use of specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling. After a little more than four years of experience, more than one-half of the some 168 stores in the Ben Franklin Group, the voluntary chain sponsored by Butler Bros., has been converted to the use of the check-out system at exits. The president of F. W. Woolworth Co. in early 1954 indicated the major tactical change made by this national chain when he said, "We see no reason not to proceed with opening new


self-service stores and converting old stores." With only three self-service stores at the beginning of 1953, this chain had ninety-one at the beginning of 1954.

The true extent of the trend to simplified selling in the department store field is obscured somewhat by the special problems and the more gradual development there. Attempts to simplify selling procedures in department stores have been going on through the postwar years and since 1952 they have become very widespread. There even exist self-service operations which are today spectacular in the very uniqueness they assume among department stores, e.g., Ohrbach's, Klein's, and Hearn's in New York City, and Wieboldt's in Chicago.

One of the most thorough research and planning programs in this area is being done by Sears, Roebuck and Company which operates a national chain of specialty, general merchandise, and department stores. This large retailer has been gearing many of its selling arrangements for customer self-selection for some 20 years or more. In 1952, experimentation was begun on what the company chooses to call "Quick Service," a development involving the installation of cash-and-wrap desks throughout the stores.


(area checking) to supplement sales personnel. In early 1954, the Quick Service Program had been introduced in 120 of the stores of this company and it was estimated that it would be operating in half of the some 700 stores in the chain within another year.

**Growth of Vending Industry**

Somewhat parallel to the extension of self-selection methods in retail stores is the growth in the use of vending machines which eliminate salesperson participation through mechanical devices. It had been contended that automatic merchandising was properly only a supplementary or complementary method of retailing. More recently, attempts have been made to expand the use of vending machines as a primary method for distributing "nuisance" or convenience items in retail stores, especially in terms of continuous availability.

While the total volume in 1953 was less than one per cent of total retail sales, it has been predicted that some 2,800,000 vending machines of all descriptions will dispense products with an aggregate retail value of $1.5 billion in 1954.\(^{30}\) This means of automatic selling is

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used primarily with only three basic products: tobacco (17 per cent of the cigarettes are bought from machines), confections (20 per cent of the candy bars), and beverages (25 per cent of the soft drinks).\textsuperscript{31}

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
CHAPTER THREE

THE NATURE OF SELLING SIMPLIFICATION

The development of selling simplification raises questions about the nature of the selling function in retail stores. Continued use of traditional merchandising techniques seem incompatible with a development of such significance. It has been found that no application of this process is fully successful without a thorough appreciation of its character and purpose. Hesitancy and inadequacy of action generally result from an inaccurate or incomplete understanding of the problem and possible solution. It is surprising that previous research has failed to provide a valid and logically consistent framework within which the development can be given proper orientation and meaning. The objective of this and the following chapters is to satisfy, at least partially, this major void which has deterred greater and more certain progress.

Selling—the focus here—is essentially psychological for it involves the eliciting and satisfaction of a decision to buy in the mind of the customer.¹ A study of

¹ For similar statements, see Harry D. Kitson, The Mind of the Buyer, New York: The MacMillan Company, 1921, -40-
selling simplification accordingly requires psychological analysis of action, i.e., selling. A psychological approach can stress the appreciation of the complete picture, in which each separate influence is assigned its proper place. The analysis, furthermore, can seek to guard "against oversimple, misleading emphasis on this or that factor, and against the neglect of other factors which may prove more important."²

Before suggesting the consequences of a psychological analysis of retail selling in the light of selling simplification, standardization of some basic terms is necessary. A study of the retail selling function is primarily concerned with the customer who is the purchaser of the merchandise.³ At all times, the interest is upon how the customer buys (i.e., the manner of buying), rather than why the customer buys. The customer may or may not be the consumer, i.e., the user of the product. Buying is used in the broad sense to denote the totality of one's behavior.


³ The definition of this and some of the other basic terms at this point are patterned after those suggested in William Applebaum, "Studying Customer Behavior in Retail Stores," Journal of Marketing, Vol. XVI, No. 2, October, 1951, p. 173.
as a customer. Therefore, shopping—the visiting of business establishments in order to inspect and/or purchase goods—is an element of customer buying behavior.

Habit is an inclination or tendency for some action, acquired through repetition. Each customer has his or her own buying habits which show themselves in either facility of performance or in decreased power of resistance. On the other hand, customer buying behavior patterns represent the design or type of habitual behavior of a large number of customers. Customer buying habits or behavior patterns, furthermore, "are not permanently fixed, and certainly not sacred, even though some habits tenaciously resist change." 4

THE FUNCTION OF PERSONAL SELLING IN RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS.

The selling function is being recognized as primary in retail establishments. Nevertheless, there is no substantial agreement regarding its character. Many writers fail to differentiate between the unity of purpose and the variety of means by which the function is performed. When personal salesmanship is isolated out as only one specific means or tool of selling, its importance is generally defended upon historical and/or cost bases. There has been little concern for evaluating the relative

4 Ibid., p. 173.
contribution and necessity of particular means, personal and non-personal, of selling. One student of the subject has been prompted to voice the opinion that, "More nonsense has been written about retail salesmanship than about any other phase of this vast industry of retailing."\(^5\)

**Uniqueness of Selling in Stores**

Retail store selling is a unique type of selling effort for it can be differentiated from others in that the customer has taken the initiative by coming into the store. Not only does the customer seek out the seller but usually, at least for primary purchases, the customer has a specific want and at least an approximate idea about the means of satisfying it. Accordingly, writers have noted that retail selling is easier than other types.\(^6\) Such statements, however, are relative and do not give insight into the actual character or difficulty of the selling task in retail stores. Since the customer comes to the retail store, it is also logical and possible that retailers make greater use of non-personal means in order to increase the effectiveness with which the selling function is

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performed. There can be a greater and more effective use of fixtures, demonstration equipment, signs, and even mechanical and electronic devices than when the seller directly seeks out the buyer.

How, then, can retail selling be defined properly? From the viewpoint of the individual firm, retail selling is a highly particularized function. The form which it takes will vary with the policy of the store and the effectiveness with which the selling situation is planned and controlled. Generally, however, the definition of retail selling as "the art of helping the customer to define his need (want) and to select the articles which will satisfy that need,"7 is significantly realistic for adoption in this work.

**Personal Salesmanship as Part of Retail Selling**

Retail selling, thus defined, may or may not be performed through personal salesmanship. It is an error to fail to differentiate between retail selling and retail personal salesmanship or, simply, salesmanship. While salespeople may engage in other activities, e.g., merchandise handling, display work, buying, their primary purpose is to sell. Thus, "salespeople" and "salesmanship" are used synonymously here to connote the **personal** means

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7 Charters, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
of helping and influencing customers to buy. The salesperson in the retail store is only one selling force; there are others—non-personal means—which function with salespeople and independently of them.

It is reasonable as well as desirable to characterize personal salesmanship as only one of several means of performing the retail selling function. Frequently, the retail sale is made without the assistance of a salesperson. This situation exists in stores which consciously emphasize self-selection methods of buying and in those which do not. Such a concept need not greatly impair the status of personal salesmanship. In fact, it gives greater promise to efforts to re-define the retail salesman's role and permit greater effectiveness at a higher level, even if narrower range, of human activity.

Once this relationship between retail selling and personal salesmanship has been noted, it would be reasonable to expect a definition of personal salesmanship here. However, no adequate determination of the role of personal selling has been accomplished. Recourse to definitions already in existence has only emphasized and re-emphasized the confusion between the function and one of the primary means of performing it.

There is a great need for psychological and, perhaps, sociological study of the nature of the salesperson's participation in the retail selling process. Personal salesmanship must be realistically and usefully defined
in true perspective as only one of the means of selling. Unless efforts are directed to such an end, the increasing effectiveness of non-personal means of selling may well make personal salesmanship unnecessary someday. There are already some who emphasize that simplified selling and self-selection are "stepping stones" to an inevitable self-service operation. Such a prognostication could help to get people resigned to the "inevitable." It would be much better, however, if it were to act as a strong challenge to action in order to preserve and strengthen a realistic contribution of retail salespeople.

There seems to be too much talk and not enough action in justifying the role of personal salesmanship in retail stores. There is little comfort in static statements such as, "Even in the relatively few cases in which stores have been able to supplement people with machines, they have not been able to supplant people with machines."8 The need for job analysis of retail selling positions has long been recognized, but there still remain "so many points of view as to what is meant by better salesmanship that it is becoming a problem to establish a common understanding."9


Job analysis for retail salespeople has yet to provide a meaningful description of "selling effort." It is, therefore, not surprising that some training efforts and aspirations in the area of retail salesmanship have even retarded improvement.

THE PROCESS OF SELLING SIMPLIFICATION

The process of selling simplification has become a major concern in present efforts to improve the effectiveness of the selling function in retail stores. The process appears to be in accord with the general continuing belief that, "The enterprise most successful in selling...will be the one that uses the best judgment in selecting and combining the selling instruments, the greatest skill in applying each element, and the greatest ability in administering the total combination."10

It is reasonable that retailers should be primarily concerned with the simplification of selling efforts. First, the striving for simpler operation grows out of the recognition that retail store selling is potentially easier than other types. Second, there is a growing recognition that retail selling has become overly-complicated. A

student of the subject has made the following observation:

The history of most stores in the past fifty years has included innumerable steps by which customers have been pushed farther and farther away from the temptation to buy freely. The old Yankee notion store, the hardware shop of our father's day, the country grocery store...gave reasonably free access to merchandise. ...But, as the years went on, and retailing became a big business and therefore self-conscious and full of pride, many things happened to remove the customer from contact with the merchandise.11

**Meaning of Selling Simplification**

The essence of simplification is an "attempt to conduct all activities and to perform all functions of an enterprise in the least elaborate manner consistent with any given purpose."12 Each activity and function, as it takes place, and each policy or method, as it is proposed, should be questioned in light of its relationship to the others. A philosophy of simplification should contribute to the preservation of a consistent or harmonious interdependence of activities in any business endeavor.

Selling simplification can be viewed as an attempt to direct a more general business philosophy to the selling function. The process is best viewed as a store-wide concept and, therefore, subject to major policy decisions.


even though it must be applied in terms of specific selling situations. Furthermore, selling simplification is basically a *merchandising* concept. Application of selling simplification eventually necessitates a modification of all aspects of merchandising in a retail store.

There have been only a limited number of attempts to define succinctly the terms so widely employed in this retailing trend. One authority, J. Perry Smith of Marshall-Field & Company, has been particularly recognized for his contribution to the basic understanding of this development. On two separate occasions, Smith has publicly proffered definitions of the terms. He has said:

A more generic term than self-service, however, would be simplified selling. This term can be properly defined as an arrangement of goods which invites a customer to select merchandise and complete the transaction with varying degrees of aid from a salesperson, depending on the nature of the goods and the policy of the store.\textsuperscript{13}

Later, he suggested a broader concept:

Simplified retailing can be defined as a coordination and simplification of all services, facilities, and merchandising activities to invite and encourage customers to select merchandise and complete the transaction with varying degrees of aid from salespeople, depending on the nature of the goods.\textsuperscript{14}


The most recent (1954) attempt to interpret the development has been in the report of the "Simplified Selling" Subcommittee of the National Retail Dry Goods Association Committee on "Dynamic Retailing in the Modern Economy." In the report of this committee, it is stated, the best known experiments...involve self-selection and some go so far as self-service. As a result, there is a tendency to discuss selling simplification rather narrowly, as if it were synonymous with self-selection or self-service. The purpose of this report is to emphasize its broader implications.

Simplified Selling...includes every device or technique that reduces the barriers and complications that get between the customer and the merchandise she wants to own. The end in view is not to curtail customer service, but to improve it.

The above definitions appear to be the more complete and the more generally accepted to date. However, there are certain inadequacies inherent in them. First, there is an illogical confusion between "selling simplification," i.e., the process, and "simplified selling," the consequence or objective. There is, second, no differentiation between the physical arrangement and the operational aspects of the development. In connection with food stores, it was pointed out some time ago, "...there is a vast difference between self-service arrangement and self-service operation. A store may have all its packaged merchandise arranged for

self-service, yet some customers may not wish to wait on themselves, nor may the proprietor desire to have them do so."\(^\text{16}\)

Third, these and other attempts to provide a terminology for "something much broader than self-service" tend to embrace too much. The introduction of the very broad term, "simplified retailing," is not justified and, in fact, detrimental to a proper delimitation of the subject which is necessary for more productive analysis and interpretation. Fourth, the inclusion of a negative perspective—as in the NRDGA Subcommittee Report—is erroneous and misleading.

In the light of the deficiencies of existing definitions, it was deemed necessary in this study to formulate one which would more accurately reflect the meaning and purposes of the broad concept of selling simplification. This has been accomplished partly by selecting the best elements of the definitions presented above and eliminating their objectionable features and partly through original field study of selling simplification in a large number of retailing companies. Accordingly, the concept has been more accurately defined as the specialized process of planning and controlling

integrated selling situations in order to facilitate greater participation by the customer and to make more effective any participation by selling personnel. The development of such a process recognizes the effect of changes in the patterns of customer buying behavior and, at the same time, capitalizes upon the continuing improvement of non-personal selling forces, as either aids to personal salesmanship or replacement thereof in any particular selling situation.

Inherent in the extension of this process is the growing appreciation, by both retailers and their customers, of the worthwhileness of non-personal means of selling. Greater knowledge of customer buying behavior patterns and greater skill in the use of non-personal means make the extension of selling simplification practical. Traditional methods of selling, with their great dependence upon salespeople, need not be continued any longer without practical justification.

**Setting for Selling Simplification**

The setting or environment for the application of the process of selling simplification is appropriately confined to the selling situation and not to the entire retail operation. The selling situation is the physical and psychological environment in which an individual sales transaction takes place, between the time when the customer enters the store or department and the time when
he leaves it. The selling situation is "the center of the art of retail selling." If there is homogeneity in the merchandise sold in a particular retail establishment, there is one selling situation. Where there are a number of different product lines, especially where these are individually departmentized, a store consists of a number of particular selling situations.

It is in the selling situation where the customer is directly engaged in the purchase of merchandise; where the several selling forces operate in influencing or simply aiding the completion of the transaction. The buying action is determined at this point, on the one hand, by the total make-up of the person at the moment, and, on the other hand, by the total situation in which he finds himself. While a detailed discussion follows in the next chapter, a composite selling situation can be simply depicted as seven interdependent factors. (See Figure 1).

**Orientation for Selling Simplification**

In order to be successful, selling simplification must be continuously oriented to the customer. It has long been agreed, "In the long run, the success of any


18 Kornhauser and Lazarsfeld, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
FIGURE 1. THE COMPOSITE RETAIL SELLING SITUATION
marketing device depends directly on the degree to which it performs the necessary marketing functions without waste, and in the interest of the consuming public rather than in the interest of either distributors or producers." 19 Nystrom has emphasized, "The consumer's point of view is fundamental. It may be changed and is constantly changing, but unless the retailer is able to make his business accord with it, he stands little chance of continuing in business." 20

Selling simplification, furthermore, must be founded upon a customer orientation for practical reasons. The extension of the development is inherently dependent upon the extent to which customer participation is encouraged and facilitated. While emphasis generally has been placed on the serving and pleasing of the customer as the basis for successful salesmanship, the development of selling simplification magnifies the need for such an orientation. Otherwise, the process might result in greater detriment to the business than if no action toward simplified selling had been taken.

Too many times the propriety of a customer orientation


and viewpoint has been neglected. One student of the subject has cautioned that "too much simplified selling has been planned and premised on the basis of the merchant's own thinking, rather than on the premise of what the customer actually thinks and does when he is in the store." Some retailers have learned from their experience with selling simplification to forget what they think they know about stores and instead to concentrate on how the customer liked to buy and what he wants to know about goods.

Necessary emphasis upon the way in which the customer wants to buy should not distract from the importance of viewing the environmental setting for selling simplification as a selling situation. The situation should be analyzed, planned and controlled from a customer's point of view, but that does not mean that it should be described as a buying situation. It still remains that it is the integrated operation of all selling forces by the retailer which enables various patterns of customer buying behavior to materialize. It is still the retailer who must actively realize the economic and social responsibilities of retailing through efficient selling forces.

The Concept of Simplified Selling

The consequence or objective of retail selling simplification has already been described as "simplified selling." Selling refers to the totality of the store's major function. Generally, simplified selling is achieved through the integration of non-personal and, many times, simpler means of selling. This does not mean that the use of personal salesmanship is de-emphasized in all situations. There are, to the contrary, various degrees of salesperson participation which an analysis of particular selling situations might indicate to be desirable. Personal selling may be intensified in some situations. In others, this selling force may be minimized or even eliminated from the situation.

Simplified selling, furthermore, signifies simplification of the actual performance of the selling function. Use of the term should not imply that there is a simplification of the planning and controlling of the selling forces which work to produce simpler selling. In fact, as the use of personal salesmanship diminishes in a given selling situation, the need for effective integration and coordination of the selling becomes greater.

It is important to recognize the above distinction for otherwise the term will seem incongruous. Selling simplification can introduce many problems which complicate selling for the retailer and buying for the customer.
Greater customer participation in sales transactions assuredly results in a retailer being able to place less reliance upon a salesperson to compensate for deficiencies in the activities which precede the sale. Furthermore, the more participation by the customer is made necessary in a given selling situation, the more buying ability is required of the customer, especially where non-personal means are inadequate.

The application of selling simplification, it should be remembered, is primarily concerned with the nature of the relationship between the customer and selling forces in a sales transaction. Simplified selling—the objective—is gained through the encouragement of greater customer participation and, accordingly, the lessening of personal salesmanship, the most critical of the means of selling. To the extent that desired customer participation is facilitated, there is "easier buying;" to the extent that personal salesmanship is prudently utilized, there is improvement in the performance of retail sales personnel.
The necessity of a customer orientation in selling simplification has already been emphasized. A theoretical understanding of the nature of the buying process is desirable in order to appreciate the full significance of simplified selling and its accompanying effect upon the customer's participation in the sales transaction. Since a sale is made or not made in the mind of the customer, and not in the seller's mind, the selling process is properly conceived as more of a buying process. Moreover, as customers participate more, the overt behavior tends to be theirs rather than the seller's.

EXISTING THEORIES OF SELLING

In the past, three general theories of selling have been developed:

1. The theory which describes and emphasizes the establishment (by the seller) of conscious states in the buyer's mind—attention, interest, desire, action, and satisfaction. These states must be successfully experienced by a customer. The action of the customer is solely dependent upon a seller's efforts in a given situation.

2. The situation-response theory where the concern is with the situation which includes factors external to the customer and also factors within him. Derived from behavioristic psychology, this theory has usually emphasized appeals to the customer, even though internal factors are recognized. One sequence of steps which has been suggested in connection with this theory involves: catching attention, holding attention, fixing impression, and provoking response.

3. The third theory views man as a dynamic being with his buying decisions very largely dependent upon the internal factors within him, summed up in the word, wants. The customer is assumed to be very active because he has a want to be satisfied. The salesman's job is to aid the customer in his endeavors to solve his problem. Four stages are here suggested: want, solution, action, and satisfaction.

Past writings regarding selling have generally been founded upon one of these theories. In selecting the third theory, Strong has sharply criticized the others.

The situation-response theory, he contended, is too difficult for a layman to comprehend, to keep both internal and external factors before him. At the same time, he held that the first theory erroneously included mental states of "interest" and "desire." Whenever one of a prospect's wants is called to his mind, his attention and interest will be automatically secured and the two states are thus "essentially relevant" and need not be specifically studied. This noted authority concluded:

Selling with such a formula in mind, (want, solution, action, and satisfaction) becomes a process of calling to the prospect's mind some one or more of his wants and then showing how they may be satisfied by buying the seller's goods. The term "action" implies that the seller must more or less force the issue at the end; also that the prospect must not only buy but use the commodity, and that the seller must make sure he can and will use it correctly. "Satisfaction" is, finally, most important because unless the goods measure up to expectations, there will be no repeat orders. 2

While the want theory of selling is basically significant to a realistic study of present-day retail selling, there are certain aspects which must be criticized. As Strong has expressed the theory, different stages of selling seem to be phrased somewhat inconsistently—while "want" and "satisfaction" seem to exist in the customer's mind, "solution" and "action" appear to be functions of the seller. Furthermore, "action" can imply the totality

2 Strong, op. cit., p. 358.
of the experience (i.e., the sale itself) and, thus, this element should be more specifically named.

DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW THEORY

The following attempt at a theoretically consistent and valid foundation for analysis of retail selling and, more specifically, selling simplification, has sought to retain the best of existing theories, always keeping in mind empirically observable customer behavior. Since attention and interest are automatically a part of the customer's want determination, the first theory is discarded. The other theories do serve as the basis for this conceptual presentation of retail selling. Two assumptions of the discussion here must be emphasized: Consistency seems to be served best when the customer's orientation is preserved throughout. In addition, a valid integration of both the customer's mental process and overt behavior in buying is practically useful. The new theory can be appropriately termed the "Mental Buying Process- Behavior Pattern Theory."

The Mental Buying Process

From the viewpoint of the conscious states which take place in the mind of the customer during any specific purchase transaction, the buying process can be better
described as:

1. **Want Determination**—the conscious recognition and defining of a want (or need), in relation to a particular type of product.

2. **Decision to Buy**—the conclusion to buy, i.e., to satisfy the already conscious and defined want in the particular selling situation and at that particular time.

3. **Selection**—the actual determination of the specific means, i.e., the product, of satisfying the want.

4. **Satisfaction**—the extent of gratification provided the customer at the time of purchase (i.e., in how well the purchase was made) and later directly through personal consumption or indirectly through consumption by another.

These states of mind in a given buying process of the customer may not occur distinctly from one another. The customer may complete two or more states at approximately the same time. The sequence in which the customer takes up each of these facets of a purchase transaction, on the other hand, will normally follow the pattern suggested: want determination, decision to buy, selection, and satisfaction. Not all of these states consciously occur in the selling situation itself; one or more of them may be experienced—partially or completely—prior to the customer's entry into the store or department. Many times, the want may have been at least partially

3 There is no implication here as to the means of bringing about the several states of mind; it is felt that all six retail selling forces can serve to affect the several states of the buying process.
determined before the customer is in the selling situation. At times, the decision to buy and even the mental selection of the particular article may have also been already initiated or completed. It is often the case that where there is brand insistence, the customer may even experience some feeling of satisfaction before coming into the selling situation. These states of mind are not necessarily equal in length of experience.

Customer shopping done in order to make buying possible can be realistically distinguished as consisting of three different types. First, shopping may be done as a basis for the determination of the customer's want. The customer has yet to define fully the want for which he seeks satisfaction. Second, there is the shopping which is done as a part of the selection state in order to provide a basis for the decision to buy and the selection itself. This type of shopping is performed in regard to those products generally termed "shopping goods." Third, the customer may do shopping when, after defining his want and deciding to buy, he has been unable to complete the selection of a specific product. The want was not satisfied in the particular selling situation, either completely or in a compromise fashion and the customer thus had to go elsewhere.

While the state of deciding to buy is believed to precede the selection state in the buying process, a
selection will not always follow once there is a decision to buy. Generally, there are two major reasons for a failure to select a particular product: ineffectiveness on the part of the store and inadequacy on the part of the customer. The first type of factors inhibiting customer selection include an out-of-stock position, inadequate information, poor personal selling, (e.g., discourtesy, "high pressure," inability to sell), etc. Customer causes of failure to complete a selection include insufficient funds, insufficient time, etc.

Two examples of possible simultaneous completion of two or more of these states follow. In the case of true impulse buying or gift purchases, the several selling forces in the retail selling situation may operate to bring about a want determination at the same time the decision to buy and the selection occur in the customer's mind. A vivid illustration of such a situation is where the sight of a Coca-Cola vending machine can immediately bring about a determination of the want (i.e., desire for satisfaction of thirst with a soft drink), the decision to buy (i.e., to satisfy the thirst at that time and place), and the selection of the product (i.e., Coca-Cola). An illustration of this situation in gift buying is where the customer comes into a store or department with only a need for a gift, unrelated to a specific type of product, and a particular product serves to bring about simultaneously the want determination, decision to buy, and selection.
The decision to buy and selection may occur simultaneously in the mind of the buyer. Such might be the case where brand acceptance is high, i.e., brand preference; where the assortment is limited; where sizes are so standardized that the customer is confident of fitness; or where the purchase is so repetitive that the decision to buy is habitually followed by the selection of a particular product.

Patterns of Customer Buying Behavior

The customer's buying behavior can now be related to conscious states in the mental buying process. A more significant understanding of the different types of simplified selling situations can result. All past efforts have used—without acknowledging the fact—references to how the customer buys (e.g., self-service self-selection) in order to connote different types of salesperson participation or different methods of arrangement.4 It is

more reasonable, however, that the various types of selling situations be primarily differentiated upon the nature of the customer participation which they permit and encourage. The terms have little meaning—to retailers or to their customers—when they are used to connote different types of selling arrangements or differences in salesperson participation. In the new theory developed in this study, attention is focused upon the different ways in which a customer may externally perform the buying process. These different ways are termed "patterns of customer buying behavior."  

Thus, the theory of conceiving selling from a situation-response viewpoint can be made more meaningful. The emphasis is not upon differences in appeals or in tasks of the store which produce a single response, i.e., the purchase. The emphasis, rather, is upon the different responses which can occur in a given selling situation. Coordinated with the modification of the want theory of selling already suggested, a modified situation-response theory can bring to full significance this theoretical analysis of retail selling.

5 Applebaum earlier grouped customer buying behavior patterns in relation to place of purchase, items purchased, time and frequency of purchase, method of purchase (e.g., cash-and-carry), and response to sales promotion devices. See William Applebaum, "Studying Customer Behavior in Retail Stores," Journal of Marketing, Vol. XVII, No. 2, October, 1951, p. 173. However, no previous classification as to the manner of purchase as is suggested above was found.
Different patterns of response exist because customers are conditioned, facilitated, and encouraged to buy in various ways. While the physical arrangement of the retail selling situation will generally circumscribe the extent to which the customer can participate in the transaction, the established functional character of the selling forces is the primary determinant. The situation may be arranged to facilitate a given pattern of behavior, but the retail company may not choose to encourage such a response. Therefore, it is reasonable to place more emphasis upon the individual store's policy regarding selling simplification.

The tendency in retail selling simplification is toward the customer's performing as much of the buying process as is possible, without the intercession of personal salesmanship. From what has already been said about the planning and control of the major selling forces and the nature of the customer's particular buying set, it is obvious, nevertheless, that different patterns may be desirable in different selling situations. Moreover, in a given selling situation, it may be desirable to permit the customer an option as to the manner in which he will perform the buying process, especially where all of the merchandise does not normally lend itself to one buying pattern. The situation can be functionally characterized to facilitate
two patterns and the customer can be encouraged to choose the one which he desires or is capable of performing.

The major patterns (together with the possible modifications introduced by the manner in which the "mechanics" are handled) of buying behavior which a customer can be conditioned, facilitated, and encouraged to execute in a given merchandise purchase, consist of the following:

1. UNCONSCIOUS/UNDEFINED WANT BUYING
   a. Without specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling.
   b. With specialized facilities.

2. PRE-DECISION
   a. Without specialized facilities.
   b. With specialized facilities.

3. PRE-SELECTION
   a. Without specialized facilities.
   b. With specialized facilities.

4. SELF-SELECTION
   a. With a salesperson.
   b. With area checking.
   c. SELF-SERVICE, i.e., with a check-out at the exit.
   d. Mechanical buying, e.g., purchases from vending machines.

The relationship to the suggested conscious states in the mental buying process is immediately obvious. The differentiating factor between the four major types of patterns is the point at which a salesperson enters the buying process, if at all. If the first pattern, i.e., unconscious/undefined want buying, exists, the salesperson has come into the transaction at a very early state in the
mental buying process of the customer, i.e., before the want is fully determined. The want has not been consciously experienced at all or has not been defined in terms of a particular type of product. No selling force has consciously affected the customer prior to his contact with the salesperson. This pattern generally does not exist in the primary purchases made in a retail store. It may, however, take place where the customer requests assistance in defining some conscious want, e.g., gift buying; in salon-type situations; and, of course, where the salesperson does suggestion or related selling after a primary transaction has been completed.

In the second pattern, i.e., pre-decision, participation by the salesperson is initiated after the want is determined, but prior to the culmination of a decision to buy. While the customer has defined his want with the assistance or influence of non-personal means, he has yet to decide to satisfy the want at the particular time and in the particular selling situation. Thus, the salesperson participates in the decision to buy and selection of the specific merchandise.

In pre-selection, the salesperson comes into contact with the customer before the selection of the specific product is completed in the customer's mind. Here, the customer has defined his want, decided to buy, and may have even narrowed the selection by means of non-personal
selling forces. The salesperson, in such a case, may then help or influence the completion of the selection by finding and/or securing the particular item, by answering the customer's questions, or by trading-up the customer, i.e., stimulating the purchase of additional quantities or a higher-priced item.

In self-selection, there is no active salesperson participation. The customer does the entire selection and only where no specialized customer payment and merchandise handling facilities exist does the customer need to contact a salesperson. The overt selection response generally occurs simultaneously with the completion of the selection state in the customer's mind. Only where the merchandise is inaccessible to the customer does the customer complete the selection in his mind without physically selecting the item.

In the case of mechanical buying (actually self-selection where the product, its package, interior display, and facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling are unified in a vending machine or some other form such as Saunders' Keedoolzle), physical selection is delayed by the necessary use of the mechanical means. In other cases, self-selection may be impossible because of limited presentation of merchandise, e.g., feature or assortment display; only pre-selection is, therefore, possible since the salesperson must secure the merchandise for the customer.
The splitting off, in some form, of the "mechanics" of the sale from the responsibilities of the salesperson modifies the nature of the four major patterns of customer buying behavior. In the case of unconscious/undefined want buying, the customer may have to take his merchandise to a cash-and-wrap desk or check-out counter in order to complete the sale. This may also be necessary in the case of pre-decision and pre-selection. While the salesperson participates in the buying process, he does not complete the sale by taking the money or recording the charge and wrapping or bagging the merchandise.

In self-selection, the salesperson does not contribute to the buying process. He may be necessary to the completion of the transaction where there are no specialized facilities. Where these facilities exist, the customer not only completes the buying process without personal salesmanship, but also takes the selection to a non-selling person. Since the term, "self-service," has been traditionally associated with the use of the check-out system at the store's exit, it is so restricted here. Self-service is generally a less flexible manner of permitting self-selection than where area-checking is utilized and its differentiation is desirable for this reason also.

UNPLANNED OR "IMPULSE" BUYING

Inadequacies of Existing Concepts of Unplanned Buying
Further analysis of the want determination state as defined previously can provide insight into the existence of unplanned or "impulse" buying by retail customers. There has been little consistency in the choice of a basis upon which "impulse" purchases are differentiated from others. At one extreme, the concept has been based upon a commodity classification, e.g., "impulse goods," generally low-unit value items which are considered a subdivision of convenience goods. At the other extreme, there is used a very inclusive concept of "unplanned decisions" (purchases planned in a general way, substitute purchases, and items purchased "without any previous plan"). The distinguishing basis is the place where the selection state occurred (i.e., in the store rather than previously in the form of a written or mental shopping list). These purchases have also been characterized on the basis of a lack of deliberate choice in the purchase, i.e., one bought on the "spur of the moment," with rapidity. It has, moreover, been suggested that customers are buying

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8 See, for example, Applebaum, *op. cit.*, p. 178.
"impulsively" when there is less personal persuasion.9

Such concepts of impulse buying do not contribute much to the practical pursuit of an increase in this type of buying, which has long been recognized to be profitable. A valid and useful definition must first distinguish between two types of situations where the customer buys "impulsively." On the one hand, there can be impulse buying where the customer has unusual discretionary purchasing power and other spending will not be affected. On the other hand, impulse buying can take place where the customer merely buys items at one time or in one store or department which were not anticipated, with an adverse effect on spending at other times, in other places. Such a distinction recognizes that there will continue to be a possibility of impulse buying, even though there is a leveling off of discretionary purchasing power.

A More Realistic Concept of Unplanned Buying

What is a realistic conception of "impulse buying?" Is there really the large proportion of impulse buying suggested in published studies?10 Furthermore, what is


10 The most well-known studies of impulse buying are the five which have been done periodically by the DuPont Company, the latest of which reports that 70.8 per cent
the contribution of the various types of retail selling forces to impulsive buying (whether because of unusual discretionary purchasing power or not)? Historically, it is agreed that there was little impulse buying in the days of the general store. One description of the early situation has suggested somewhat sentimentally:

Great Grandma was a different kind of customer. She did her thinking about buying at home as she went about her daily chores. When she noted that her supply of petticoat lace was running low, she jotted that fact down on a shopping list. Probably as much as 95 per cent of her purchases were preplanned, premeditated. Mighty little impulse buying for Grandma. Her needs were the needs common to most people and if she didn't see what she wanted on the retail shelves she asked for it in the sure knowledge that it was in stock.11

The retail selling forces—there were only the presentation of the unpackaged merchandise and the clerk (not even called a "salesperson") in those days—did little more than to make possible the selection of the particular merchandise to satisfy the already conscious and defined want. In a few cases, the customer might be reminded of

Footnote 10 (cont'd.) of buying decisions are made in the supermarket itself, whereas only 66.6 per cent and 51.8 per cent were store decisions in 1949 and 1945, respectively. (See DuPont Film Department, op. cit., p. 7) One study; reported in "When Seals and Labels Were Brought Into Step," Sales Management, Vol. 71, No. 7, Oct. 1, 1953, p. 60; contends that impulse buying ranges from 31 per cent of sales in specialty stores to 75 per cent of sales in variety stores and bakeries; with 69 per cent and 40 per cent of sales in food stores and department stores, respectively.

11 W. E. Sawyer and A. C. Busse, Sell as Customers Like It, New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1951, p. 73.
a want which she had forgotten to note on the shopping list or, perhaps, be shown a new product, for which she had no conscious want. It was not the task of the selling situation to help the customer in determining her wants.

If the above conception of the origin of selling in retail stores is accepted, qualms about both the absence of creative salesmanship and over-estimation of impulse buying are illogical. The responsibility of retail stores has always been to facilitate the selection state in the customer's mind. To the extent it now does more, i.e., contributes directly to want determination, the retail store has profitably enlarged its function. A conception of impulse buying upon any basis other than the nature of want determination done before the customer enters the selling situation only misconstrues the responsibility of the retail store.

Impulse buying, then, is not reasonably restricted to particular types of goods or to the contribution of only non-personal means of selling. Impulse buying also is not reasonably broadened to include all purchases where stages of the buying process have not already been completed prior to the customer's entry into the store or department. Furthermore, the speed or impetuosity of the customer's buying process is essentially irrelevant. All of these conceptions of impulse buying suggest an unrealistic understanding of the primary purpose of retail stores.
Impulse buying or, more significantly, unplanned buying can more properly be conceived as applying only to those purchases for which the customer had not consciously considered the want prior to being in the selling situation. Certainly, there is nothing unplanned or impulsive about purchases for which the customer has fully determined the want before coming into the store or department. Where a want is conscious but undefined in relation to a particular type of product, e.g., "meal shopping," it also does not seem correct to define the purchase as unplanned. Reminder buying— as differentiated from suggestion buying—is inappropriate of being thought of as impulse buying.  

There is practical justification for confining the conception of unplanned buying to only those situations where the customer buys to satisfy a want of which he was not previously conscious. The efforts of a retail store can be more profitably channelled in line with this refinement. This definition of unplanned buying can bring

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12 Impulse buying has been divided into reminder buying (where a customer sees a product and remembers that the supply at home is exhausted or low) and suggestion buying (where a customer sees a product and visualizes a need for it). See, for example, Leroy B. Steele, "The Responsibility of the Package in Self-Service Selling." The Package as a Selling Tool (Packaging Series No. 19) New York: American Management Ass'n., 1946, p. 25.
about more realistic attempts to stimulate wants of which there was no previous consciousness. Moreover, it seems that selling simplification is in accord with this differentiation in the objectives of the retailer. More effective integration of the six major retail selling forces can favorably influence the extent of unplanned buying in a particular selling situation in two ways.  

First, exposure of merchandise and pre-selling activities can be used more advantageously, especially to facilitate customer self-selection. Second, there can be a greater opportunity for creative personal salesmanship, a primary purpose of this type of selling force being directly involved in eliciting unplanned purchases.

13 These selling forces were listed in the previous chapter and the following chapter consists of a detailed discussion of their individual functional character.
CHAPTER FIVE

FACTORS OF THE SELLING SITUATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SELLING SIMPLIFICATION

Within this chapter, specific attention is devoted to seven basic interdependent factors that can exist in any given selling situation: the customer and six retail selling forces, previously enumerated as follows: the product, pre-selling activities, interior display, packaging and labeling, personal salesmanship, and specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling. This has been done in a theoretical framework, but in a manner to indicate the application of concepts from the viewpoint of practical store management.

The concern here is with the functional character that each of the selling forces can take. While questions about the effectiveness of particular selling forces are important, it is necessary here to assume reasonable effectiveness of the individual means of selling. Thus, there is emphasis upon the usefulness of determining what means to use, what nature they should take, and to what extent they should be used. If the various selling forces are better integrated, it is likely that more consideration also can be given to increasing their effectiveness.
The trend in the use of retail selling forces today is toward the functional, i.e., to have form follow function. Thus, it is reasonable and logical that this analysis of retail selling emphasize the operational aspects, rather than the physical arrangement, of a specific selling situation. Attention is focused upon the manner in which the several factors can act and interact to bring about simplified selling. It has already been noted that the physical arrangement for and the operation of simplified selling must be carefully differentiated. While any store can use most, if not all, of these selling forces, there are factors which limit the functions which they perform in particular selling situations.\(^1\)

This general approach is not altogether new. It is primarily a theoretical and unifying conception of what has actually taken place in some practical applications of selling simplification. In many stores, however, the process has not been consciously applied; changes in the character of the selling function have gradually taken effect through efforts of manufacturers and through the waning or defaulting of personal salesmanship. Where changes have been planned, moreover, there has been many

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\(^1\) In addition to the policy of a retailing company, there are other factors, discussed in Chapter Eight, which limit the extent of simplification in particular selling situations.
times a pre-occupation with only one or a few of the factors in the selling situation and the need for adequate integration of all factors has not been consciously recognized.

THE CUSTOMER'S PARTICULAR BUYING SET

The first consideration in a psychological analysis of a retail selling situation is the customer. The term, "buying set," seems appropriate as it is desirable to think of the customer in a given selling situation as possessing a preparatory adjustment or readiness for a particular kind of action or experience, i.e., a buying behavior pattern. "What a person is at any moment," it has been stated, "governs what he does in the given circumstances. What he "is," on the side of action possibilities, comprises 'motives' and 'mechanisms.'"2

The customer's particular buying "set" is composed of these two different types of processes: on one hand, by attitudes which may be conscious or unconscious (motives) and, on the other hand, by knowledge or capacities for action (mechanisms). Briefly then, there are certain factors which

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provide an attitude toward a particular manner of customer buying behavior and others which provide a familiarity or capacity for a particular pattern.

Generally, changes are taking place in customer buying habits and have been taking place for some time. A more complete analysis of what can realistically be termed a cultural change in the American people appears in the next chapter. Here, it is sufficient to note that mass-market customers in 1954 buy more homogeneously and increasingly desire to buy more independently of salespeople.

Specific factors, other than favorable effects of pre-selling activities, which can contribute to a customer's particular set as she or he appears in a selling situation include:

1. Desire for price differential on particular merchandise.

2. Immediate desire for convenience, ease of buying.

3. Immediate desire for speed of transaction.

4. Secondary nature of the purchase, i.e., impulse buying or a purchase which is incidental to some non-buying experience.

5. Purchase is made frequently.


7. Adverse attitude toward salesperson's participation in the purchase of specific merchandise, e.g., personal items, perhaps musical records.

The above factors are phrased as they might exist in bringing about a greater willingness and readiness for
increased participation in the transaction by the customer.

One additional observation about the customer as a factor in the selling situation is significant. In writing about the need for packages to be seen and experienced as a whole, one student of psychology has recognized the importance of the gestalt, an impression in one's mind, to the selling situation.³ The belief that people perceive things as a whole, rather than as a mere sum of individual parts is surely applicable to the entire selling situation. While the several factors of the situation will be analyzed individually, it must be kept in mind at all times that it is the totality of the situation which is fundamentally important. The need for careful integration and control of the selling situation is continually implicit in the conclusions which follow.

THE PRODUCT

The first retail selling force is the product. The product is obviously a factor in every mass selling situation, but it is not always an active selling force. Where the product is visible to the customer and especially where it is accessible to the customer, this

factor takes on a very dynamic character. Exposed merchandise exerts an immediate influence upon the customer, without being dependent upon other factors. In this analysis, the specific concern is with the active contribution which the simplicity of a particular product can make to simplified selling. There seems to exist a direct relationship: the greater a product's simplicity, the more a given selling situation can be simplified.

Product complexity should not be considered a static or given factor. The validity of judgment as to the necessity of personal selling efforts (and the feasibility of simplified selling) merely upon the existing nature of a product was not supported in this study of simplified selling situations. Decisions based on either the general classes of goods (i.e., convenience, shopping, and specialty) or a particular list of product attributes are unrealistic. First, modifications can be made in a product in order to provide greater simplicity. Second, complexity inherent in a product can be offset many times by the use of non-personal means. For example, even heavy merchandise items which cannot be carried by customers and which do not lend themselves to selling-stock display have been geared to self-selection. In stores of Goldblatt Bros., Inc., signing instructs customers to take (to a cashier-wrapper) cards--giving merchandise description and price--which are found in
The Product Itself

The product, as a factor in the selling situation, is to be broadly conceived to include not only the product itself, but also the price of the product and the product line of which it is a part. There is simplicity in the product itself when there is standardization, lack of perishability, absence of style factor, ease of use, lightness of weight, absence of bulk, no need for adjustment to customer, no need for guaranties, no service requirements, no legal restrictions upon the use of product, etc. To the extent that such factors exist, there is greater likelihood of extensive selling simplification.

Price of the Product

Simplicity in the price of the product can also facilitate selling simplification. It is generally recognized that the lower the price, the more appropriate a product is for simplified selling. Stability of price

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is also a favorable factor. Stability can be provided through the one-price policy, a single-price policy, customary prices, resale price maintenance, and price lining.

The Product Line

There is, moreover, the effect of the product line upon selling simplification. Retailers who have been emphasizing efforts for simplified selling have come to agree that there must be greater simplicity in merchandise assortments. A report of a committee of retailers has emphasized:

It is easy for the customer to make a quick selection from an assortment in which there are clear-cut price, quality and use distinctions. By and large, selling simplification implies simpler—that is, narrower and deeper—assortments. A proper concept of merchandising to space is likely to suggest reduced assortment. A determination to let merchandise presentation handle more of the selling job will also require a tighter more clear-cut assortment policy.

In general, it is desirable to display enough to give the customer adequate range for selection, but not so much that it becomes difficult for him to decide. It takes the customer some time to see the differences clearly enough

5 The word assortment relates to the range of choice once a customer's want for a type of article has been defined while variety generally implies different kinds of products. (See Maynard and Beckman, op. cit., p. 153).

to discriminate between various grades. When there is a multiplicity of nearly identical items, the customer will be further confused by her inability to differentiate between them. Values need to be clearly defined if customers are to wait on themselves. Narrower assortments will also minimize the possibility of an out-of-stock position, a major obstacle to customer self-selection. In merchandise assortments, then, the tendency is toward emphasis upon depth rather than breadth, at all times striving for an assortment narrow enough to allow for easier and quicker customer selection, deep enough to be in stock during peak selling periods, and broad enough to be complete for the store's market.

PRE-SELLING ACTIVITIES

The third factor which can operate in a particular selling situation is the selling force engendered by pre-selling activities which have taken place previous to the customer's entry into the situation. Use of the term, "pre-selling," is not intended to differentiate between these activities and selling. "Pre-selling" connotes those selling activities which have occurred previously or beforehand and not activities of another purpose which have taken place prior to retail selling. Pre-selling activities are part of retail selling and reduce the amount of selling which must be done within the physical
selling situation itself. Through advertising, window display, previous experience, and word-of-mouth expressions by other consumers, the customer's attitudes and knowledge can be affected. These activities can actively condition the customer for his or her participation in the actual transaction. A direct relationship generally exists between the strength of pre-selling—for the product and for the customer participation itself—and the potentiality for extensive selling simplification.

Pre-Selling of Merchandise

Pre-selling of merchandise does more than extend the stage of the customer's buying behavior before his actual entry into the selling situation. This selling force also can affect that part of the buying which takes place within the selling situation. When customers have a decision to make between brands, their knowledge, attitude, belief, and opinion about different brands can accelerate or retard their decision; the consumer's acceptance of a brand is definitely linked to the speed with which he can select an item and complete a purchase.

Unless there is effective primary demand for a specific type of product, use of non-personal means is limited. "The importance of personal selling in performing the entire selling function," it has been observed, "varies in accordance with the ...newness of the product... Rarely has any radically new product ever been launched
successfully without major reliance on personal selling.\footnote{7}

The intensity of the selective demand for a product, moreover, contributes to simplified selling. Fortunately the use of brands, which is an essential for most advertising, makes it possible to rely on the standard quality of such merchandise, and identification enables one to avoid repurchase of unsatisfactory brands. One student of the subject has concluded, "The larger the percentage of total retail done in any merchandise category by pre-sold brands, the larger the percentage of total retail that will ultimately be done self-service.\footnote{8}"

**Effect Upon Brand Acceptance**

When Copeland first wrote of the different degrees of attitude which a customer might have in purchasing branded merchandise, he emphasized,

> The difference between no standing at all in the mind of the consumer, consumer recognition, consumer preference, and consumer insistence, is one of the degrees to which the selling process has been carried with the consumer before he visits a retail store to make his purchase.\footnote{9}

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Under selling simplification, brand recognition can take on greater significance than possible under full reliance on the salespeople. In light of the tendency to expose most, if not all, of the merchandise, the brands are immediately effective. The customer does not have to request a particular brand; he has already been exposed to all in stock.

The sponsor of the brand—whether it be the manufacturer or a distributor—is able to benefit directly upon the customer's entry into the selling situation. Pre-selling is capitalized upon, regardless of the degree of brand acceptance attained in a particular customer's mind. If the consumer's previous acquaintance with the brand has been favorable, or if the manufacturer's or dealer's advertising has made a favorable impression, other things being equal, the recognized brand will be selected from among other unrecognized brands or from among unbranded merchandise. Where there are several recognized brands exposed to the customer, his brand preference becomes important. For some products, there is the highest degree of acceptance—brand insistence—where the customer will accept no substitute unless it is an emergency.

Brand acceptance—regardless of degree—becomes a more active selling force insofar as a salesperson is not depended upon for exposure of merchandise. Favorable recognition of a specific brand is indicative of both an
attitude (motive) and knowledge (mechanism) and, accordingly affects the customer's participation in the transaction. An increase in the number of brands recognized by a customer does not destroy the benefits of pre-selling; it merely makes more desirable a building of brand preference.

Pre-Selling of Customer Participation

There is also the possibility of engaging in pre-selling for the manner in which the customer is to participate in the transaction. The objective of simplified selling can be implemented through direct conditioning or acclimating of the customer for the type of selling he is to face in a particular selling situation. The customer's experiences in buying the product in other types of retail establishments as well as in similar establishments, in this sense, can act as a primary pre-selling force. Individual retailers can engage in selective means through an educational program for the particular customers of their stores.

INTERIOR DISPLAY

The selling force of interior display is to be interpreted to include six basic elements: layout and space allocation, the physical environment of the selling situation, fixturing and mechanical equipment, merchandise presentation, merchandise classification and arrangement,
and signing. Interior display, as a retail selling force, is properly conceived as more than the artistic presentation of single items of merchandise separated from the basic stocks. An authority on merchandise presentation has emphatically pointed out,

> Display is going to take on an entirely new meaning. In fact, it should have a long time ago. The esthetics of display are going to be relegated to where they belong, perhaps in a fashion show, but not particularly on the selling floor. Display is going to be confined to proving the values that are built into the merchandise.10

From a functional viewpoint, interior display tends to be planned and controlled around the presentation of merchandise—the focus of the customer's interest in the selling situation.

**Layout and Space Allocation**

The artistic approach, as well as the dominant department idea in planning layout and allocating space, assumes less significance in selling simplification. Selling departments with complementary merchandise can be more appropriately located adjacent to each other, so that customer purchases in one department can automatically and psychologically encourage customer purchases in the adjoining departments. Space can be allocated advantageously—ly in proportion to sales potentialities. The customer's

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participation in the sales transaction also is facilitated when merchandise is so grouped in "shopping centers," with primary emphasis upon relatedness of consumer use. The customer's wants seldom come singly; they normally come in related groups. Such layout can help to cut down on customer fatigue.

Within the general plan of relating merchandise departments by the nature of the products, another basis can be used to advantage in simplified selling situations. A customer can be further encouraged and enabled to buy in accordance with a particular buying behavior pattern when merchandise is also arranged by the manner of selling for which it lends itself. Goods that can be bought by pre-decision are located in one department, those that can be pre-selected in another, and those that can be self-selected in still another. In this way, a customer who has self-selected one item is "at home" in buying another product in a similar manner. This manner of layout also can be practically useful from the retailer's operating viewpoint. In simplified selling situations, merchandise tends to be arranged according to its compatibility with a given type of customer buying pattern where there is no great injury to layout based on relatedness of merchandise, i.e., within a given department. Extended use of mechanical and electronic devices on the retail floor, however, may necessitate a change in emphasis.
Physical Environment

The physical environment can be planned and controlled for more simplified selling. Informality of atmosphere tends to be the objective. The size and shape of the physical area, lighting, color, and air-conditioning are the major elements which can be used to advantage in selling simplification. All of these factors can encourage and facilitate the customer in his or her buying. They become more important as they are depended upon to provide directly greater sales appeal, facilitate finding and appraisal of merchandise, and make the buying experience more convenient for the customer. The use of light in self-service drug stores, for example, has been increased to provide three to four times the intensity in full-service stores. In the case of air conditioning, it also can compensate for the heat caused by intensified illumination and protect the exposed merchandise from soilage and deterioration.

Fixtures and Mechanical Equipment

Fixtures and mechanical equipment can help to make maximum exposure of merchandise feasible. One architect has stressed, "Fixtures are designed solely to display and sell...They are a part of whatever atmosphere the architect is endeavoring to create and should never
overpower the customer. This functional character is best expressed in fixtures which serve as an accessory to the items they display. They should never be a distracting element because of bold color or radical styling. A fixture is primarily necessary to display merchandise in an organized and controlled manner. Proper fixture design—in terms of convenient height, width, and perspective—can also serve to facilitate customer handling of merchandise.

Merchandise Presentation

The fourth element of interior display is the manner of merchandise presentation. Other than in those situations where there is no visible merchandise (i.e., the customary arrangement in salon-type situations), merchandise presentation can take the form of feature display, assortment display, selling-stock display, or mass display. Selling simplification tends to place emphasis upon full merchandise accessibility.

Where there is no exposure, the customer is wholly dependent upon the salesperson to bring out merchandise for his or her examination. In the case of a feature display, the customer is enabled to inspect one or two

best sellers in a given line of goods. It is possible to extend simplified selling still further where there is an assortment display, i.e., a sample of each variety of merchandise type is exposed. There can be full customer selection, i.e., self-selection, where a display of most of the selling stock exists. Finally, in mass display, there is an attempt to provide a special promotional appeal, either through an actually greater quantity of merchandise or by making it appear so.

**Merchandise Classification and Arrangement**

The use of a particular type of merchandise presentation does not alone determine its full effect upon the customer. Unless the merchandise is classified and arranged—regardless of the manner of presentation—in terms of customer interests, the desired result cannot be realized. Merchandise classification and arrangement from the retailer's point of view, i.e., primary emphasis on brands or price lines, cannot generally contribute to extended customer participation.

On the other hand, when the merchandise is effectively arranged from the customer's viewpoint, the customer's mental selection and, perhaps, physical selection can be largely completed before a salesperson is involved. Merchandise features or attributes—from the customer's viewpoint—include size, color, silhouette, purpose or use, fabric, fragrance, and brand and price.
In the past, such recommendations have emphasized classification based upon an order of importance for these various merchandise features in the customer's selection.\footnote{See, for example, E. R. Hawkins and Carl E. Wolf, Jr., Merchandise Display (Industrial Series No. 61), Washington, D. C.: Office of Domestic Commerce, Dept. of Commerce, 1946, pp. 6-8.} For any type of merchandise, it was contended, presumably the longer the customer was willing to postpone a decision on any one feature, the more willing he or she was to compromise on that feature, i.e., the less important it was to the customer.

The benefits of merchandise arrangement from the customer's viewpoint can be better realized through primarily classifying the merchandise in terms of sequential decisions in the customer's buying process. As a customer buys, it seems that the attributes of the merchandise are considered in a particular order--there is one feature which is decided upon first, another second, and so forth. Accordingly, merchandise can be separated by the different choices of the first feature, e.g., different colors, sizes, and then further subdivided in the order in which other attributes are considered. The customer is thus guided by the merchandise arrangement in completing as much of the purchase as possible without the aid of a salesperson, perhaps the entire transaction. An emphasis upon the sequence in which the

\footnote{See, for example, E. R. Hawkins and Carl E. Wolf, Jr., Merchandise Display (Industrial Series No. 61), Washington, D. C.: Office of Domestic Commerce, Dept. of Commerce, 1946, pp. 6-8.}
merchandise features are considered makes no pretense about what is most important to the customer; it simply says that the merchandise attributes which are considered first must be dominant in the arrangement.

Brand recognition or preference, for example, may play a very important part in the customer's purchase, but it may be more reasonable to classify and arrange a particular merchandise line by color, purpose, and then by fabric before featuring the different brands. Unless there is brand insistence, the customer generally may not consider this attribute until after he or she has defined his want, decided to buy, and even narrowed the selection, upon the basis of other attributes. While price may be most important to a woman buying a dress, she generally gives previous consideration to silhouette, size, and color before making a selection according to price. At any one stage in the buying process, the merchandise feature being considered is important to the customer. The customer's proceeding is dependent upon full, or at least approximate, satisfaction at each stage.

It can be observed that the merchandise arrangement in a supermarket is generally in accord with the sequential stages of the buying process. Furthermore, it seems reasonable to suggest that an analysis oriented to the sequence in which merchandise attributes are considered by a customer will be more practicable. The order
in which attributes are considered can be more reliably ascertained than can any order of importance which exists in the mind of the customer. Observation of customers as they buy as well as analysis of the merchandise by the retailer can help to indicate this sequential order. When "best sellers" are separated from the other merchandise in the line and the two groups are studied, this sequence may be readily apparent from the contrast in attributes possessed by the two groups. There need to be no assumptions made about an hierarchy of values. Decisions regarding merchandise classification should thus be more effective.

Signage

Signing also takes on added significance in selling simplification. When the location of merchandise departments and the major lines within a department are clearly identified, the customer is aided in locating desired items. While customer participation will be facilitated by the very exposure of merchandise and by keying departments through the use of color, adequate signing for merchandise location can give the customer added assurance. It will not be necessary to see the merchandise to know that it is or is not what it appears to be.

There are situations where merchandise on adjacent open-display fixtures would appear at first glance to be identical or similar but actually are not. Separations
by price, size, silhouette, and other attributes may not be observable to the customer without a direct examination of the merchandise. When the merchandise is similar, the customer should be invited to inspect the full assortment for better selection. Signing can accomplish these things. On a given fixture, the various divisions in the merchandise arrangement can be clearly indicated by signs.

Merchandise information through signing can do much to encourage and aid the extension of the customer's part in the transaction. Questions can be anticipated and answered; comparisons made easier through an emphasis upon "reason-why" copy. Certainly price is a basic part of informative signing. Furthermore, simplified selling can be facilitated through the use of size and color harmony charts where the product is complicated by lack of industry size standards, or where color harmony is especially important.

The last element of display signing is the promotional emphasis which can be provided through larger or more elaborate signs. Items can be highlighted and dramatized through effective integration of signing with other elements of interior display. Generally, promotional copy tends to be short, with major emphasis upon attention-getting ideas.
PACKAGING AND LABELING

The fourth major selling force which can operate in
a selling situation is product packaging and labeling--
equaly important to selling simplification. This
selling force can aid the customer by containing the
product, identifying the product, informing the customer,
protecting the product, and by promoting its purchase.

Containing Function

The primary function of the package has been to contain
the product, whether it be liquid or solid. Other functions
have become of even greater significance, especially in a
simplified selling situation. Over-packaging, moreover,
can be detrimental. If packaging is not required because
of product qualities or is not necessary to the fulfillment

13 The phrase, "packaging and labeling" is used broadly to
connote any material or device which is affixed directly
to the product. The use of "pre-packaging" to indicate
performance by the manufacturer rather than the retailer
is not only illogical but is also an impediment to
proper analysis of the functional character of this
factor. There does not need to be any implication as
to the performer of this selling activity; whether
packaging is done by the manufacturer or the distributor,
it appears the same as it acts as a selling force
upon the customer. Moreover, packaging by the manu-
facturer may be more desirable, to the extent that it
can be more economically done and can engender greater
customer confidence. Packaging, in this sense, does
precede the wrapping or bagging of the merchandise for
customer carrying or delivery, i.e., "packing."
of other functions, labeling and tagging which does not separate the merchandise from the customer can be more facilitative to simplified selling. As in the case of the rapidly disappearing showcases, packages can serve to keep rather than sell the merchandise. It seems that while exposed merchandise "stops" the customer, the customer must stop and examine enclosed merchandise.

The containing function of the package can take on added meaning in simplified selling situations. It may be necessary for the protection of the merchandise and its display. The increasingly-recognized benefits of multiple-units stimulate more packaging. There is a greater need for the packaging of items which may cause customer embarrassment, either in selection or in use. Packaging here can compensate for the embarrassing features of the product's particular likeness. These three needs can act to modify the normal tendency toward minimum packaging, but do not change the importance of offsetting the containing function of packaging for many types of products.

Identification Function

Product identification is directly implemented whenever the product is unpackaged, especially where the desired merchandise qualities are recognizable to the customer. When the product is packaged, the contents can be revealed through the use of transparent materials or "see through windows." If the product does not lend itself
to the available transparent materials, graphic illustration of the contents or the product in use is surely desirable. The exposure of an assortment of the items can also compensate for necessary or desirable packaging.

Other factors of product identity can be made readily observable to the customer. By means of labels, tags, or the printing on the package, size or quantity, color, price, brand, and grade or description of the contents can be provided the customer. Without this information, extensive customer participation is difficult. In addition, customer confidence seems to be engendered more readily where this information is provided on the packaging and labeling of the manufacturing resource. A technician of one large retailing company which distributes much of its merchandise under private brands has observed that its customers appear to place more confidence in the information provided by packaging and labeling of the resources, e.g., size and color identity, than in that of the tags and labels added in the stores.

Information Function

Packaging and labeling can also serve to anticipate and answer the customer's questions about the merchandise, once it has been identified. The concern here is with information which does more than identify the product. Effective fulfillment of the informative function can enhance the basic value of the product by providing the
consumer with helpful knowledge for use, care, or enjoyment of the merchandise. Information can be provided to give factual assurance to the customer that a prudent selection is being made. Accordingly, a customer's buying decisions can be facilitated; the act of buying, it should be remembered, is only a means to later consumption.

**Protection Function**

Packaging and labeling can be protective. Merchandise can obviously be protected against soilage, damage, destruction, deterioration, and the mis-mating of paired items through packaging and, at times, better labeling. The tendency to greater exposure of merchandise makes this protection of merchandise by packaging and labeling more important. This function can be advantageously impressed upon the customer through such statements as "Packaged in the factory, untouched by human hands until opened by you." The use of packages and labels also can help to minimize the increased possibilities of pilferage of merchandise. Small items, which are normally easier to pilfer, can be enlarged through carding, multiple-unit packaging, etc.

The merchandise display can be protected through effective packaging and labeling. The development of uniform elements and uniform placing of them can do much to assist the customer in necessary inspection of merchandise.
Buying decisions can be facilitated and open display of merchandise better preserved. The somewhat usual practice of rambling through merchandise assortments in order to identify information which is not immediately apparent can, for example, be minimized. The customer can also be aided in returning merchandise to its proper place on the fixture. In these ways, there is protection against the possibility of an uncontrolled display inhibiting the selection process.

Industry practice is certainly different from what appears desirable here, especially where the product has not been distributed through super markets. Identifying marks are generally on the inside of unpackaged merchandise and, many times, away from the customer's convenient examination, e.g., sizing on the inside waist of men's pants, on the toe of men's socks, on the inside of gloves. Similar lack of convenient location and uniformity of identification location is apparent in packaged items. It has been suggested that a survey of retail stores will reveal that 80% to 90% of the exposed merchandise doesn't show at a glance the price, the size or any other pertinent information needed to make buying decisions.

**Promotion Function**

Packaging and labeling can also be very important as a promotional force to simplified selling. Each price line of the merchandise can be effectively differentiated through individual colors and qualities of the packaging-
labeling. While no attempt should be made to deceive the customer, the quality of the product can be enhanced by packaging and labeling, e.g., covering of men's suits with transparent materials, transparent packaging of produce, attractive merchandise labels and tags. The design of the package can also make selection and later use of the product more convenient and perhaps provide a re-usable container; thus, promoting its sale.

PERSONAL SALESMANSHIP

Personal salesmanship can be the critical selling force in simplified selling and yet, as it has already been implied, its functional character is not too definable. Certainly, this retail selling force will be generally preceded by other selling forces, and it must take place in light of the customer's particular buying set. While platitudes regarding the importance of salespeople have been plentiful, there has been little realistic determination of the salesperson's part in a simplified selling situation.

Role of Salesperson

Many have accorded personal salesmanship only transitional significance. Such a feeling is indicated in the following conclusion:

What does all this mean to the retail sales clerk? It means his duties are shifting. As the trends
toward self-service and pre-selection continue, the clerk will perform the functions of an attendant more than a salesperson.\textsuperscript{14}

Since "somebody has to be there to put the stock in order after each customer has 'served himself,'" one architect has decided, "you might as well let that person be a salesperson."\textsuperscript{15} It is possible, then, that increased effectiveness of other means, including control of the merchandise display itself, may well make personal salesmanship obsolete.

A representative of the new Fedway stores, where the purpose of merchandise presentation is to facilitate simplified selling, has observed, on the other hand, "The salesperson is not less important in this set-up; on the contrary, she is regarded as too important, for what she knows about merchandise and about customer needs, to have her time used unproductively."\textsuperscript{16} From this viewpoint, personal salesmanship is aided by the other means which serve to free the salesperson altogether from some transactions and partially from others.


There are still other considerations in the use of personal salesmanship. Some retailers defend the presence of salespeople as the only personal contact with their customers. They observe that sales personnel give an unique character to a retail store, a character which cannot be provided by other selling forces, whether or not people are used to implement them, i.e., cashiers, stock people. Some have sought to justify salespeople as a means of controlling pilferage. There is, furthermore, the belief that non-personal means are too general and unadaptable to an individual customer's wants and particular buying set.

Nature of Personal Salesmanship

It is in the light of the above considerations that the role of personal salesmanship must be studied. Generally, two principal types of personal selling have been distinguished: creative selling and service selling, the latter assuming the "highest degree of significance" in retail stores.\(^\text{17}\) In a widely-used text on retail

\(^{17}\) Maynard and Beckman, op. cit., pp. 443 & 446. Here, creative selling is defined as "arousing demand for new products or new brands or models of products, influencing changes in patronage...and causing changes in concentration of purchases of particular commodities or lines of goods," and service selling is defined as "consummating a sale to a customer who has already made up his mind to buy and who knows at least approximately what he wants." (See also Brown and Davidson, op. cit., pp. 505-509.)
salesmanship, which suggests that there are four types of retail salespeople (salesclerks, stockkeepers, pressure persons, and merchandise advisers), it has been forcibly cautioned,

...a clear distinction must be made between clerking and salesmanship. If the retail salesperson considers his job as one of merely "waiting on" customers who know just what they want, over-the-counter selling is indeed simple, requires little intelligence, and eventually may be done by an automatic vending machine. On the other hand, if the retail salesperson looks upon himself as a merchandise adviser, an expert in his line, whose responsibilities are to help customers define and fulfill their wants and to stimulate their desire for other goods, his job is a difficult one, embodying real salesmanship.18

Here again, there is no realistic determination of what is "real salesmanship."

Upon the basis of research for this study, it is believed that three types of personal selling activity exist in retail stores. In addition to creative salesmanship, there is service rendered which can be rightfully called service salesmanship and, finally; service which merely makes active customer buying possible. Creative salesmanship can still be effective in simplified selling situations: a salesperson can bring about purchases of additional quantities of a desired item, or of items

related to the product already desired when the customer came into the department, and of items satisfying additional previously unrecognized wants.

Service salesmanship, it seems, is more appropriately limited to connote that part of the selling function performed by salespeople which contributes directly to the selection stage of the mental buying process, where particular merchandise is chosen to fulfill an already conscious and well-defined want. The other type of activity performed by selling personnel is that which consists merely of somewhat passive service, e.g., finding the particular merchandise, securing the item, performing the "mechanics" of the sale, cutting merchandise such as piece goods or ribbons to desired size, fitting ready-to-wear.

The factor underlying the successful performance of all of these three types of personal salesmanship is the influencing of the customer to satisfy his or her want in the particular store or department. Courteous interest in the individual customer has been described as a primary means of retail salesmanship. It may be the salesperson's major instrument of eliciting this decision to make a

purchase in the particular selling situation in which the customer finds himself and the factor which differentiates personal salesmanship from other selling forces. Certainly no salesperson or, for that matter, "non-selling" person who is observed by the customer can be "neutral" in a selling situation; one's very appearance either contributes to or distracts from the customer's buying. The question is therefore raised: Are salespeople necessary to provide this particularized courteous interest in customers or can it be provided by other people, people who are not purported to be salespeople?

Effects of Selling Simplification

What can be the effects of selling simplification upon personal salesmanship, as defined above? First, it is possible that the salesperson may become even more passive in his approach to the customer. In order to permit other selling forces to facilitate his task or even make his participation in a particular transaction unnecessary, the salesperson can advantageously refrain from immediately contacting the customer as he or she appears in the store or department. The salesperson may only approach those customers who do not appear to be completing their purchases quickly. A greater degree of passiveness on the part of the retail salespeople may be part of a long-run trend in retail selling which has seen the store's "barker" generally replaced by advertising, a
step which Wanamaker conceived as assuring that no
customer was to be strongly urged to buy.\textsuperscript{20}

It is quite possible that greater benefits can be
derived from personal salesmanship \textit{if the customer becomes}
the party who makes the decisions as to whether and when
personal selling should be done. The nature of the sales-
person's part in the transaction, \textit{i.e.}, whether there
should be creative selling, service selling, or mere
service, can continue to be determined by the salesperson,
in light of the store's policy, but performed only after
the customer has evidenced a desire for personal salesman-
ship.

The degree of effect upon the timing of the sales-
person's participation in the buying process can vary
between particular situations. Some retailers have gone
to the extent of forbidding any direct approach and may
even ask customers to use little bells placed through the
selling environment in order to request personal
assistance. Some retailers simply ask their salespeople
to refrain from asking, "May I help you?" and, instead,
ask, "Did you find what you were looking for?" While
somewhat depreciating to the effectiveness of the selling
situation, such an approach does represent an attempt to

\textsuperscript{20} Paul W. Ivey, \textit{Elements of Retail Salesmanship}, New
provide "on-the-spot" salesmanship, without necessitating that the salesperson be obligated to attach himself to a particular customer.

A more realistic and natural customer approach for salespeople in an environment of simplified selling can be a merchandise one. Generally, in a simplified selling situation, the customer has already been exposed to merchandise prior to direct contact with the salesperson. A merchandise approach can, therefore, minimize the possibility of diverting the customer's attention from the merchandise. Such an approach can generally make more practicable service or creative selling, rather than mere service by the salesperson, and still not tie a salesperson to a particular customer when specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling exist.

In peak periods of selling, where customers may outnumber salespeople by more than ten to one, any question of the desirability of a direct approach by the salesperson becomes a moot one. The salesperson is just too busy to be able to approach even all of the customers who may be benefited by his participation, let alone all customers. That this situation will exist in peak periods is fully observable in salespeople's normal tendency of trying to concentrate on those areas where there is merchandise for which selling--creative and service--is likely to be beneficial. The absence of
specialized facilities for payment and merchandise handling may impede this otherwise normal tendency.

A second change in the role of personal salesmanship may be the diminishing importance of service selling and service aspects and the parallel increase in creative selling. Other means can do much to minimize and, perhaps, even eliminate salespeople participation in the selection of merchandise for which there is already a conscious, defined want as well as in the mere servicing of the sale, e.g., securing the merchandise. Other means can also do much to make possible increased effectiveness of creative selling through providing more time for it as well as through reinforcing the salesperson in his attempts at creative selling. Since non-personal means can do a creative selling job, personal selling effort can be more reasonably restricted to service selling and service in those situations where creative selling by salespeople is believed to be undesirable.

Selling simplification may have a third effect upon personal salesmanship: bringing the salesperson out into the customer aisles. The elimination of clerk aisles and counters can result in a different type of salesperson-customer relationship. There can be a more personal and congenial relationship nurtured by the directness of the contact. Furthermore, placing the salespeople out in the aisles can contribute to greater area selling, where the
salesperson is not fixed to a given department but can act in several related departments.

SPECIALIZED FACILITIES FOR CUSTOMER PAYMENT AND MERCHANDISE HANDLING

One of the last steps taken in selling simplification is the splitting off of the merchandise handling and payment activities from the salesperson's responsibilities. These specialized facilities, then, can become the sixth major selling force, insofar as selling is broadly conceived to include both merchandise selection and the necessary "mechanics" of the sale. In connection with an account of wartime experiences, the use of such facilities was termed, "perhaps the most revolutionary." These facilities, while an outgrowth of the special salesclerk desks, i.e., "salesclerk wrap," represent a very fundamental modification in the retail selling situation.

Need and Purpose of Specialized Facilities

There is no general agreement as to the desirability of such specialized facilities. Many feel that the benefits of simplified selling depend in the main upon the encouragement and assistance extended for greater customer participation in the selection of merchandise

21 Hawkins and Wolf, op. cit., p. 75.
and need not involve the removal of the "mechanics" of the sale. 22 There are also those who recognize the problem but de-emphasize its significance. They concentrate almost all of the simplification efforts on the selection stage of the transaction, adding that "once you've taken the major step of exposing your merchandise, you can do anything you want with the mechanics." 23

There are, however, retailers who are emphasizing and working to bring about more adequate and proper use of specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling. Through the specialization of the performance of the mechanics of the sale, such facilities generally can speed up the performance of this part of the transaction, free the salesperson for creative and service salesmanship, encourage customer selection of more merchandise, and permit more economical operation by consolidating several purchases in one handling of the mechanics. While the customer may believe she is entitled to all the time she wishes to make a selection, every second required to document and conclude the transaction seems like eternity. The selection phase of the transaction seems productive to


the customer in her "problem-solving," but the completion of the mechanics of the sale seems only incidental and is borne as a necessity, to be completed with speed and accuracy.

Even in recognizing the need for speeding up the mechanics of the sale, there is not always a readiness to use specialized facilities. Because the salesperson's time is conserved in the process of helping the customer select merchandise, the exponents of open selling point out, somewhat illogically, that the clerk in the selling department has plenty of time to complete the entire transaction. Studies of hardware and variety stores made by The National Cash Register Company give plentiful substantiation of the erroneous nature of this conclusion. In the report of one of these studies, it is contended that "semi-self-service" (simplified selling aspects for merchandise selection without a central check-out system) can have the following weaknesses:

1. Salespeople are a service bottleneck at peak periods.
2. Selling time is wasted.
3. Sales are lost.

24 See, for example, "Speeding up System," Stores, Vol. 34, No. 3, March, 1952, p. 36.
4. Expenses continue to rise.

5. Losses are occurring through pilferage, forgotten charges, temptation, lack of information and control.

**Nature of Specialized Facilities**

In addition to the use of front-end check-out system, feasible only in one-or, sometimes, two-level stores, there can be a system of "area checking," where cashiers are stationed strategically throughout the store. The system of dividing the performance of the payment and merchandise handling duties between the salesperson and another person, e.g., a "check-writer," has lost its former popularity. This system is somewhat illogical in requiring a salesperson for each transaction. Customers do not seem to understand why a salesperson must be contacted and then not be able to complete the "mechanics" of the sale.

While there has been some speculation about future modification of the larger, multiple-level stores to permit the use of the check-out system, most of present efforts in these stores are being directed in two different store patterns. In one, salespeople who help or influence the customer in his buying do not complete the "mechanics" of the sale, but direct the customer to a cash-and-wrap desk for payment and merchandise handling. All customers here must use the cash-and-wrap desks, even
though salesperson participation in the purchase itself may be optionally available. While the check-out system has generally been used where there is no personal salesmanship, there have been efforts to use a front-end check-out in this pattern. In the second pattern, salespeople who come into direct contact with customers complete the entire transaction and the cash-and-wrap desks are used only by those customers who do not desire salesperson participation in merchandise selection.

Area checking can be adapted to changes in the flow of customer traffic. Different patterns of customer buying behavior can be emphasized during the day in order to achieve more economical and efficient operation. In peak selling periods, for example, the customer can have the option of self-selection with the use of cash-and-wrap desks (i.e., need not contact a salesperson) or of having a salesperson participate in the transaction. In the slow periods, many of the desks can be economically closed and a broader functioning of the full-time sales personnel can be encouraged. Intensification of peak selling periods in many mass-market stores is stimulating just such an operation.

The use of specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling is no simple matter. The location of the desks must be effectively planned so that customers will be encouraged to use them. Relocation of
merchandise may be desirable. Prominent identification and directional signing also loom important. At the point that these activities are specialized, some thought must also be given to the desirability of providing equipment to help customers carry merchandise in the store, e.g., baskets, carts. Customers must be carefully educated in the use of the particular type of system since these facilities represent the most radical change in the operation of many stores.

INTERDEPENDENCE OF FACTORS IN SELLING SITUATION

The interdependence which exists in the various factors of any particular selling situation requires additional emphasis. Always acting and re-acting upon the customer's particular buying set as he or she appears in the situation, the six selling forces continuously complement or supplement one another. It is the totality of experience which makes the buying process possible. There must be a harmonious balance maintained between the several factors. Otherwise, the benefits of an improvement in any one factor can be limited by dissonance of others. True simplified selling results only where there is no deficiency which inhibits the customer's participation. Great care must be taken to assure that the customer's every need for information and help is satisfied; furthermore, the potentiality for creative
selling—on the part of all selling forces—must not be minimized.

Interdependent Effects of Selling Simplification

More than the above, change in any factor of the selling situation will affect the others. No radical changes in the character of personal selling could be planned with much certainty of success were it not for the enduring development of non-personal means of selling. In fact, not only have these radical changes been made possible, but many of them have been made necessary by these developments. Changes in the personal selling function, in turn, appreciably affect many of the other selling forces as well as other aspects of retail operation.

Some of the interdependent effects of a modification in a particular factor may already be obvious to the reader. Nevertheless, specific illustrations of this interdependent relationship between the factors may be helpful:

The greater the customer familiarity with the product, the greater product standardization, and the greater the degree of brand acceptance, the less personal selling effort is required in the selling situation itself.

26 For a discussion of the effectiveness of non-personal selling means as a pressure for more extensive selling simplification, see Chapter Six.
It is the store display of merchandise and/or personal salesmanship that converts customer brand preference into actual purchases.

When the customer is to extend his part in the transaction through the mechanics of the sale, there is a need for every item to be price-marked.

Packaging can minimize the wrapping requirements by permitting bagging or merely tying with cord and can also help to reduce costs of in-store marking of merchandise.

The uniformity with which merchandise is displayed places a heavy responsibility on the package to attract the attention of the consumer.

To facilitate their mechanical production and their display, package shapes and sizes become standardized. What distinguishes one package from others in its same general class is the way it is sealed and labeled.

Increased effectiveness of packaging and labeling can desirably help to make signing less necessary for customer participation.

Personal salesmanship can be improved by packaging and labeling as the consistency of the identification and information provided by this selling force can function to "train" salespeople.

Package design can only be effective to the extent it is conceived with the actual display in mind; that is, wherever possible, fixture conditions should be taken into consideration before packaging an item.

When the customer is given the option of fully completing the transaction with the use of specialized facilities for payment and merchandise handling or of having the participation of a salesperson, an appeal to the customer's desire for convenience or speed of buying can be appropriate without any emphasis upon price differences.

**Possible Independence of Benefits**

The benefits which can be derived from changes in
the several factors of the selling situation are not solely dependent upon the pattern of customer buying behavior which is encouraged and made possible by the functional character of the total situation. While individual changes in any one factor will generally reinforce changes in the others in any integrated situation, benefits can materialize from a change in only one factor. Examples of the advantages of individual changes in packaging, signing, merchandise presentation, merchandise arrangement, etc., are numerous. One retailing authority has said of packaging developments,

One thing that need not concern the package designer is the danger of waste or loss if his package completely meets the requirements for self-service even though the product is not now sold by self-service. Any factors which will facilitate self-service will be equally effective for other kinds of selling.27

On the other hand, while a package designed for a self-service or self-selection store will perform just as adequately for a "service" store, one which is not so designed can only be effective in stores where there is considerable dependence upon personal salesmanship.

CHAPTER SIX
PRESSURES FOR SELLING SIMPLIFICATION

It is necessary to understand the pressures or constraining influences which retail stores face in order to appreciate fully the practical significance of selling simplification. Five major conditions exerting pressure upon retailers in early 1954 are described in this chapter: the need for more economical distribution, changes in customer buying habits, increased effectiveness of non-personal means of selling, operational problems of retail establishments, and organizational problems of retail establishments. It would be difficult to identify the origin of these influences with a particular period of time. They are not altogether of recent origin. However, some of the pressures are intensifying and some are being consciously experienced by large numbers of retailers for the first time. They have brought about many changes in retailing; the extension of selling simplification is only one of the possible effects.

Whether these pressures are causes of original attempts to simplify retail selling or results of earlier selling simplification does not appear to be important. What is important is that all of them are operating to bring about intensification of selling simplification in
stores. Every mass-market retailer is affected by most, if not all, of these pressures. The intensity of the influence varies with the individual retailer. The extent to which these pressures are present is an indication of how necessary selling simplification may be for a particular store. It is also indicative of the degree to which the selling function should possibly be simplified.

THE NEED FOR MORE ECONOMIC DISTRIBUTION

A general pressure affecting retailers is the awareness that greater benefits from a system of mass production depend upon achieving mass distribution. Mass distribution, in turn, calls for more economical distribution, especially retailing. While efficiency and economy of manufacturing processes are generally taken for granted, the same is not true for retailing. Generally speaking, there have been no important gains in employee-hour productivity in retailing. Such gains as have been achieved seem to appear almost exclusively in non-selling activities. In order to achieve a more aggressive and efficient system of distribution, retailers have turned to many of the techniques which have been used to bring about mass production. The primary emphasis always has been upon better and more economical performance of marketing functions.

Selling simplification represents a means of applying some of the techniques to the selling function. All of the
several non-personal means of retail selling are properly characterized as efforts of mechanizing the selling function. Simplified selling can do much to make volume operation economically possible. In addition, it is an expression of scientific management. To the extent that selling simplification is successful in **effectively** aiding, supplementing, or displacing personal salesmanship, sales productivity in retailing can increase and costs can be lowered. At all times, the effectiveness of this process must be judged in terms of its effect upon service to customers.

**CHANGES IN CUSTOMER BUYING HABITS**

Much selling simplification has been a product of fundamental changes in the manner in which customers desire to buy in retail stores. This pressure is primary from the perspective of simplified selling. Other conditions exerting pressure upon retailers in 1954 could not be minimized by selling simplification were this development not compatible with present customer capacity and attitudes. The following conjectures regarding customer behavior apply especially to mass-market customers. They are based upon observations of shopping behavior, discussions with people active in retailing and others who have given consideration to the matter, and from an examination of published material.
Greater Homogeneity in Buying

Two characteristics of present buying habits appear fundamental. First, mass-market customers tend to act more uniformly than before. While not always predictable, there is a diminishing variability in the results of buying experiences, in both what is purchased and in how people buy. There are several causes which seem to account for greater homogeneity of customer buying habits. The population is taking on a peculiarly American pattern in many aspects of life and buying has not been an exception. There is a growing standardization of merchandise and, with no further greater immigration expected, it is probable that this country's otherwise expanding population will have fewer and fewer inhibitions about accepting mass fashions.

The conditioning of customers by pre-selling activities has introduced a greater readiness to accept branded items, especially the strongly advertised ones, regardless of the selling situation in which they are purchased. There has also been a considerable change in the distribution of family income. The dominance of the middle-income class has been intensified since World War II. In addition, the great increase in suburban population and its simplicity of living has contributed to a greater homogeneity in buying habits.
Greater Desire to Buy Independently of Salespeople

Second, even though salespeople are available, mass-market customers seem to want to make more buying decisions without their assistance or influence. This tendency exists as a part of and parallel with the tendency for more homogeneous buying behavior. There is some inclination to view buying in terms of a "problem-solving" experience, from which customers can derive personal satisfaction of having done it well.¹ Customers thus tend to rely upon personal salesmanship discriminately and depend more upon non-personal means of selling. Customers seem to prefer to make the decisions about the need for personal salesmanship and the point in the buying process at which it becomes desirable rather than have them made by the store.

If a customer in a particular selling situation feels that participation by a salesperson is desirable, the time spent in "tuning in" the salesperson to the customer's buying process will be felt to be beneficial. Otherwise, personal salesmanship may be an inhibiting factor in

¹ A recent statement of this hypothesis can be found in Wroe Alderson, Problem Solving and Marketing Science (Parlin Memorial Lecture), Philadelphia, 1954. See also the discussion in "People: What's Behind Their Choices in Buying, in Working," Business Week, No. 1302, August 14, 1954, p. 57.
attaining satisfaction from the experience. The customer also is likely to take greater pride in the experience when he has "bought" (i.e., made a purchase without a salesperson's participation) than when he has "been sold." Since the customer generally confuses personal salesmanship as representing all retail selling, buying independently of salespeople can be a more personal achievement. Whether made primarily upon rational or emotional motives, the decision appears to be solely the customer's.

This greater personal independence in buying seems to have come about because mass-market customers are both able and willing to buy without salesperson participation. Their ability to do this has certainly been increased through the use of non-personal means of selling already available. The higher level of general education in this country also has made greater independence and self-confidence in consumer buying possible. It is in accord with the informality of suburban living and the trend to "do-it-yourself" in activities traditionally performed for profit.

The low level of personal salesmanship in this country has exerted a negative pressure upon customers' attitudes. Wartime conditions were a major factor, but the effectiveness of salespeople has continued at a low level. Much of the customer's willingness to accept a greater role in the transaction is a result of the default of personal selling.
During the wartime and postwar seller's market, customers became accustomed to less dependence upon a salesperson and they somewhat reject any "unusual" selling pressure. Even where there are successful attempts to improve the effectiveness of salespeople, customers remain influenced by past experience and are skeptical of the motives of salespeople. Higher education has the reinforcing effect that customers desire still more intelligent salespeople.

It appears also that customers can be more relaxed when salespeople are not always present. There is no problem of properly timing a transaction when customers have the option regarding the participation of a salesperson. A salesperson's mere presence, for example, may compel a customer to hurry his buying in fear of wasting the salesperson's time or merely in fear of feeling embarrassed about being a "poor" buyer. If the customer is undecided, he wants time to browse, to examine and compare merchandise, and a clerk standing by him restricts this freedom of choice and is apt to make him feel self-conscious. There is also less likelihood of customers' being embarrassed by undesired influence from salespeople.

General Character of Customer Buying Habits

These two tendencies in the buying habits of mass-market customers--greater homogeneity and greater personal independence--seem sufficient to characterize the general manner in which they desire to buy. All other aspects of
customer buying behavior seem to emanate from these. It is inaccurate to contend that the primary trend is toward automatic, mechanized, or robot shopping. While it is true that customers seem to do less in the selling situation than in the past (i.e., give less care, consideration, examination, and discussion to a given purchase), it is quite possible that the diminishing overt behavior is simply a matter of the minimization or elimination of salesperson participation and the increased use of non-personal selling means. The less personal salesmanship in a given transaction, the less must the customer manifest his mental buying process. It is only where there is a salesperson participating in the transaction that the customer must express all or part of the mental buying process. A greater homogeneity of buying, whatever the cause, also makes for less overt behavior on the retail floor, but may not mean that the buying is being done more mechanically.

The question of whether or not buying and, more specifically, shopping, is losing its appeal as a "major sport," also becomes less significant when the two primary elements of customer change are isolated. The greater the effectiveness possessed by the retail selling forces--including those pre-selling activities which take place outside the selling situation--the less actual shopping is necessary. It also may be a failure on the part of
the retailer which makes shopping less desirable. A failure to interject sufficient "drama" and convenience to excite interest and satisfaction in the buying experience stimulates customers to spend their time doing other things. Greater homogeneity in buying tends to accentuate the effect of this failure. Inefficient personal salesmanship may be one of the factors most discouraging to shopping.

It does seem reasonable that a significant general cultural change which is favorable to simplified selling is taking place in the buying habits of the American people. The directions of this change which have been suggested are more than a result of general economic and social conditions affecting consumers. In addition, there has been the decided conditioning of customer behavior by experience in simplified selling situations, particularly in super markets. Customers of the super markets and that of other mass-market retailers are likely to be the same. This conditioning effect is especially true of the younger customers who are almost strangers to so-called service grocery stores. As the practitioners of simplified selling, the general population, and pre-selling activities all increase, the number of customers who associate satisfying buying experiences with those retailers who apply selling simplification will grow.
The third major condition which exerts pressure upon mass-market retailers is the increasing effectiveness of the non-personal means of retail selling. It is not surprising that these forces have a great capacity for selling—the success of the super markets attests to this fact. What is surprising is the somewhat reluctant acceptance of this fact by non-food retailers. Many have simply "eyed with envy" the success of the "supers" and have done little to emulate them by capitalizing upon the selling forces available to them. However, the evidence of the potentiality of non-personal means is causing more and more retailers to adapt their traditional methods of personal selling. As more retailers apply selling simplification more effectively, there is additional pressure for further extension and refinement in order to maintain a competitive advantage.

A retail operation is uneconomical and inefficient to the extent that existing non-personal means are not properly integrated into the performance of the selling function. Effectiveness of non-personal means is dissipated many times through inadequate appreciation of their worth and, what is even worse, through poor personal salesmanship. In this period of business specialization, there is this pressure for a realistic
division of responsibility among the several selling forces; for an end to the use of personal salesmanship as if other means did not exist, or were not worthy of being entrusted to do part of the retail selling task. There is surely a considerable unused efficacy of non-personal means. Much can be done to simplify retail selling through merely a more planned and integrated use of available techniques and tools.

The retail customer of today is "pre-sold" before he or she comes into the selling situation. There has been a confidence engendered in the product and/or the retail store which enables customers to feel secure in their buying without receiving personal assurances from a salesperson. There would be little customer self-selection if there were no honest adherence to high standards of quality and no desire to stand firmly behind the brand name of the product or behind the reputation of the retailer. The importance of customer confidence in the retailer is clearly recognized in the practices of one furniture store which features customer self-selection. This store offers a free trial period as well as a lifetime service guarantee for all purchases. Increased advertising of merchandise brands has many times been even more important. Customers have been willing to buy known brands with confidence regardless of the reputation of the retailer, as illustrated in the success of new discount houses.
In the case of many brands of merchandise, pre-selling activities also have been able to increase considerably that part of the buying process which is done outside the department or store. There is greater brand acceptance than ever before. Whereas in 1920 there were only a few score of non-food brands that had been forcefully advertised for even 10 years, there are (some thirty years later) actually hundreds of non-food brands which have been effectively advertised for 25 years and longer. The advent of television and the beginnings of color reception promise more effective pre-selling of merchandise in the future. It has been estimated that there will be at least a 200 per cent gain in the number of national advertisers between 1952 and 1962, if the growth merely maintains the pace established since 1940.

The tendency is for the performance of the retail selling function to revolve around known brands, whether they are manufacturers' or distributors' brands. The accumulation of this pre-selling inherent in a large number of strongly advertised brands realistically makes

2 E. B. Weiss, The Retailing Revolution and Its Impact on Sales Management, (A talk prepared for delivery before the Ninth Annual Conference of Sales Management sponsored by the College of Commerce and Administration of the Ohio State University), Columbus, Nov. 10, 1952.

possible less dependence upon retail salespeople by both the retailer and his customers. Techniques with other non-personal means of selling have similarly developed. It would otherwise be impractical to accord them the interdependent functional character suggested in the previous chapter. The very efficacy of pre-selling activities is dependent upon their proper integration with non-personal means within the store. Brand recognition has little significance unless there is a display of the product so that the package shown on television is properly exposed to the customer.

Super markets have been able to capitalize upon the early existence of known brands of food through effective use of packaging, display, and the check-out system. Non-food retailers are coming to recognize the efficacy of these means which are available from merchandise, fixture and equipment, and packaging manufacturers. In some cases, non-food retailers have gone on to take the initiative in actually developing or encouraging changes in these other selling forces. Sears, Roebuck and Company has found that as high as 90 per cent of all fixtured merchandise in its multi-line stores was pre-selected by the customers during peak selling periods.4 In its suburban department store

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in Park Forest, Illinois, Goldblatt Bros., Inc. was able to plan for 85 per cent of the merchandise to be sold through self-selection.  

OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS OF RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS

Rising Costs, Diminishing Net Profit

The operating conditions which are constraining retailers to action center basically around the "squeeze" on profits. A fairly static margin is being narrowed by a continuing increase in operating costs. Since 1945, practically all branches of retailing have experienced not merely increased dollar costs but also increases in the percentage of operating costs to sales. Many of the difficult problems which have brought on this downward trend in profits have really been the product of the times rather than of a store's own making. While practically all expenses have increased, the largest increase has been in wages and salaries where retailers have attempted to keep pace with increases in rates and/or shorter hours in other fields. On the other hand, there has been a certain inertness to do much about internal conditions which could have otherwise been improved to minimize the adverse effect

of external pressures.

Large Amount of Employee Time Consumed in Retail Transactions

Retail selling productivity is considerably limited by the time which an employee must devote to a given sales transaction. Accordingly, there are advantages in stressing physical units (i.e., the number of transactions processed in a given department or store) rather than sales volume. Effective integration of specific patterns of customer buying behavior into particular selling situations can be a means of decreasing the average clerk-time per transaction through the specialization of salespeople and greater dependence upon non-personal means. Moreover, the ability to support longer time-expenditures by salespeople (i.e., an increase in the average sales check) can be realistically sought through simplified selling.

At the same time, however, there is the limiting factor of the time needed to perform the "mechanics of the sale." Regardless of the extent to which the customer participates in the selection of merchandise without a salesperson, there is a considerable amount of time (depending upon the methods of payment available and system of recording the purchase) that must be spent for every transaction, regardless of the price of the item. It is this fact which has given some of the greatest impetus to more effective use of specialized facilities
for customer payment and merchandise handling. These facilities can increase the productivity in completing the sales transaction by the very specialization of the task (i.e., the use of specialized labor and equipment) and by, what may be even more productive, the fostering of handling more than one purchase at a time.

**Intensified Competitive Conditions**

Intensified competitive conditions have impelled retailers to simplify the performance of the selling function. Once again, the pressure is a product of other conditions and is also reinforced by the past success of simplified selling in stores. Retailing has always been a "fiercely competitive" industry, but it is doubtful if there ever was a time when more revolutionary changes were going on in more phases of the trade than in the 1950's. There is considerable evidence that competitive conditions in retailing are much more acute than at any time for many years. The existence of a buyer's market will force retailers to adopt improved management tools in order to get costs under control in spite of rigid wage rates. Selling simplification is one of these techniques.

The growth of suburban retailing has brought a great number of different types of retailers into direct competition. The traditional distinction between buying done by consumers near their homes and that done in a
central shopping district is disappearing. As the different types of retailers come to locate together in suburban shopping districts or centers, they find that suburban buying is considerably influenced by the self-service type of operation.

Competition has not only increased between supposedly different types of retailers for the consumer's total purchasing power. At the same time, the growing diversification of product lines within a given type of store has brought about greater competition for expenditures on particular groups of merchandise. The supermarket is the most striking example of the tendency to "one-stop shopping" stores, but product-line diversification is also apparent in drug, variety, hardware, and other types of stores. Retailers are experiencing competition for the consumer's purchases on items traditionally associated with their particular type of store from others which have not been in direct competition with them in the past. Selling simplification can become one means to meet successful competition with the competitors' own methods. Those retailers who have applied selling simplification also have found that simplified selling makes it more practical—from their viewpoint and that of their customers—to carry a wider variety of merchandise in a given store.
Intensified Hourly and Other Seasonal Variations in Customer Traffic

The final aspect of operating problems which are pressuring retailers is that of the intensification of hourly and other seasonal variations in customer traffic. Retail stores have a unique operating problem created in the attempt to secure the utmost of efficiency while at the same time being opened at the convenience of their customers. In most stores, there are not nearly enough employees to handle the work properly during peak selling periods and at other hours the store is greatly over-manned. To the extent that selling service is not dependent upon salespeople, this problem is minimized.

The problem has generally intensified in all types of stores. Seasonal peaks (e.g., Christmas, Easter, Valentine's Day) appear to have intensified in many stores. While somewhat accounted for by the increase in children, it also appears that the diversification of product lines has accentuated the peaks, i.e., many of the items added seem only to compound existing periods of maximum sales. In terms of hourly peaks, the problem is more acute because of the trend toward the 40-hour, five-day store week and the trend to night openings. In an attempt to provide more convenient opportunities to buy, retailers have increased the likelihood of an inability to give adequate and efficient service.
This intensification of peak selling periods brings about problems of major proportions. Customer complaints of poor service are increased; customers are often heard to ask, "How does one get waited on?" The productivity of salespeople, as will be more conclusively indicated later in this chapter, is further diminished. There is an increase in "walk-out dollars," i.e., sales which are lost simply because customers cannot get a salesperson to complete the transaction for already-selected merchandise. Even if sufficient employees are available and perfectly trained, retailers would not find the problem solved. There are space limitations and the number of salespeople that would be necessary to handle the peak traffic would break the store in paying them for some 30 idle hours.

It is here also that retailers have turned to the extension of simplified selling. They desire means to be able to serve their customers more quickly during the peak hours without increasing their sales forces. They seek, too, to satisfy the increased desire of customers to buy faster during the smaller number of hours available to them at a given time. This problem of intensified peak selling periods has been recognized by Sears, Roebuck and Company as its major operating problem.  

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6 Findley Williams, Point of Sale Packaging and Labeling at Sears (A talk at the American Management Association
of cash-and-wrap desks primarily for use during these periods has been forced upon the company. It represents an effort to minimize the adverse effects of a situation where half of the business is done in less than 12 hours of the week, i.e., on Saturdays and during night openings.

Other suburban retailers are experiencing similar peaks of customer traffic. In central business districts, retailers find the additional problem of peak traffic during the lunch period when their sales forces are decreased because of their own eating periods. Customers often outnumber salespeople by as many as 10 to 1 during peak periods. Some customers have been timed to wait as long as 20 minutes to complete the transaction for merchandise that they have already selected. No longer can these retailers enjoy, even though they would like to, the opportunity of having salespeople meet customers face to face to negotiate every transaction. They believe that continuance of the traditional use of a salesperson in every customer purchase would seriously limit the potential of these companies and increase their selling expense beyond all reasons.

There is also the other side of the intensification of variations in customer traffic. One of the high costs

Footnote 6 (cont'd.) Packaging Conference), Atlantic City, New Jersey, April 5, 1954.
of retail operations has been the result of a reluctance to limit store hours to those during the most likely customer traffic peaks. Retailers believe that they must be ready to serve whether customers come or not, i.e., a "readiness to serve" similar to that of public utilities. If retailers are to continue this practice, there is a need for more economical operation during periods of small traffic.

The application of selling simplification also has been able to minimize the problem here. Mechanical devices as represented in vending machines enable retailers to cut down on store-opening hours and yet provide an opportunity to purchase at other times. The use of specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling have enabled variety stores to achieve a flexibility in operation before impossible. All but the smaller variety stores have traditionally required a sales force large enough to permit at least one clerk at each counter in order to operate. With these facilities, satisfactory operation for slow periods has been achieved with a minimum of help.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS OF RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS

High Cost of Retail Salespeople

The fifth and final pressure, readily apparent from
discussions with retailing officials and published material, lies in the area of store organization. The specific concern in a study of selling simplification lies with the selling organization of a retail store, i.e., with the selling personnel and the supervision of these employees. A large proportion of retail operating expenses goes for salaries and wages. Salaries to salespeople, more specifically, normally constitute a considerable part of total payroll, the specific proportion having an indirect relationship to the size of the retail store.

While a continuing upward trend in wage rates is a probable long-term heritage of the economic beliefs that have been dominant since the early 1930's, management can do something to cope with this condition. It will necessitate an attack on the problems or employee productivity both more intelligently and more radically than has been generally true in the past. Selling simplification has been found to be a major means to this end.

**Unavailability of Retail Salespeople**

The problem of retail sales personnel is far more complicated than that suggested merely by its high cost. The large numbers of people who are needed to do an adequate selling job without simplified selling are unavailable in times of high employment. In spite of the
rise in selling payroll costs, retailing has not been able to compete very favorably with other fields. In comparison with other occupations, retail salespeople are paid more poorly than they were in 1939. Inability to compete upon a monetary basis is not the only factor which has led many retailers to believe that only a small percentage can develop into excellent salespeople, regardless of training and supervision efforts. People also are discouraged by the fact that retail salespeople are often required to make their own investment in the learning process. While other fields have come to appreciate the importance of paying employees without regard to their productivity during training, many retailers still require that the greatest burden of the preparation period fall on the employee.

In addition, there is a lack of dignity in the retail sales position. Both management and salespeople often emphasize the short-run viewpoint of securing immediate sales volume and overlook the service or professional attitude. As they do so, the task falls into low regard by the customers and by the salespeople, themselves. The failure to integrate salespeople into selling simplification efforts has often contributed to a deterioration

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of respect for the task of personal salesmanship. A spotlight on other selling forces, such as the package or interior display, is surely disparaging to the salesperson who is still necessary in simplified selling situations. On the other hand, where there is no effective selling simplification, the salesperson's dignity can be damaged by clinging to full service methods for all types of merchandise. No salesperson who really likes to sell will stay long on a job that reduces itself to making change for impatient customers. Finally, the status of retail salespeople is adversely affected by the very failure to define clearly the importance of the position; the salesperson is many times the most confused of all in regard to his function.

The problem of the unavailability of potentially capable sales personnel is increased by the decreasing reluctance of women to accept factory employment, the trend to night hours in retailing, and the growth of retailing and other kinds of businesses in the suburbs. In the past, retailing companies have been able to compensate somewhat for lower wages by providing better working conditions than found in the factories, especially in regard to the employment of women who have been used to a considerable extent. The war, however, broke down the reluctance of women to work in plants. In addition, there is a tendency for industrial companies to provide improved
working conditions, especially evident in the newer factories. The development of night openings in retailing has further diminished the attractiveness of retail sales positions. In the case of the retailers in the central business district, the problem is even more acute. These merchants are also faced with the competition engendered merely by the more convenient location of suburban businesses. If a woman still resists the highly attractive employment of a suburban factory, she can choose a suburban retail store over one in the more distant and inconvenient central district.

Inadequacy of Retail Salespeople

What of the capacity of salespeople which retailing has been able to secure? Why cannot more adequate people be attracted through higher compensation? Any blanket condemnation of retail sales personnel has little justification. On the other hand, the efficiency of many retail salespeople is far below standards of desirable performance, especially in regard to the primary sales-producing or creative selling activities. For some evidence of this condition, see the widely-publicized studies conducted by Willmark Service; the most recent of which is reported in Robert M. Bernstein, Selling Effort Increases in 1953, New York: Willmark Service System, Inc., 1954, 5pp. See also "Retail Salesmanship and Retail Systems," Stores, Vol. 34, No. 7, July, 1952, p. 45.
are one of the most expensive and one of the least efficient parts of store organization. Practically every survey shows large portions of salespeople's time spent merely in idleness while waiting for customers, or merely in performing tasks of a mechanical routine nature. Thus, retailers feel constrained to pay low wages, wondering sometimes if the present level is justified.

**Adverse Effects of Peak Selling Periods**

The intensification of peak selling periods in retail stores further aggravates the inefficiency of sales personnel. Sears, Roebuck and Company has found that salespeople are actually selling only 15 per cent or less of their time during these peak periods. In the other time (85 per cent), the salespeople are occupied in wrapping, making change, telling another employee where something is, and generally going through the motions of negotiating a sale. When a retailer attempts to provide more salespeople to handle this large customer traffic, he finds that a point of diminishing returns is experienced. Generally, the retailer in his concern for satisfactory service is apt to add more personnel than ban

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be effectively used. In addition, the new salespeople are in most cases less productive, selling time of regulars is consumed in answering their questions, and their poor salesmanship may turn away customers and increase customer complaints and returns. The problem is particularly acute in the case of part-time salespeople.

Factors Limiting Improvement of Retail Salespeople

Training and supervision of retail salespeople as a means of securing greater productivity has had only limited results to date. Certainly the caliber of the salespeople which retailing has been able to employ is a limiting factor. Many do not have a desire or inclination to be trained, some actively or passively resist such efforts, the turnover is high, and many of them represent a very low intelligence level. The very fact that so many salespeople have been required introduces an obstacle to improving personal salesmanship in retail stores. Additional diversification of product lines also makes it more difficult for salespeople to equip themselves to do a better selling job as well as limits the retailer's capacity to spend time in training and supervision.

A fundamental limitation to the success of any efforts to improve the ability of retail salespeople is that retailers have never been able to standardize much
of the selling task. They are considerably dependent upon the emotional attitude of the sales personnel. However, it seems reasonable that the retail sales task can be divided among different groups of salespeople, in accordance with the patterns of customer buying behavior which is to be particularly encouraged in given selling situations. When there is employment and maintenance of various groups of salespeople, each having a particular level of capacity and ability, much more can be accomplished. Not only can training be more properly directed but retail companies also then can make greater use of the tool of effective sales supervision.
CHAPTER SEVEN

BENEFITS FROM SELLING SIMPLIFICATION

Any planned effort to simplify performance of the selling function within a particular store or department can achieve all or several of the following major benefits: improved selling service to customers, enhanced status of retail salespeople, and more profits to retailers through greater sales volume and/or lower operating costs. The specific character and extent of benefits which will accrue to a retailer are dependent upon objectives, degree of effectiveness attained, and extent of change involved as well as upon factors external to selling simplification. Some of the retailing problems which selling simplification can minimize or eliminate and the nature of customer buying habits which the process can attempt to satisfy have been indicated in the previous chapter. It is the purpose of this chapter to present more distinctly the major benefits which can result.

BETTER SELLING SERVICE TO RETAIL CUSTOMERS

Simplified selling, if it is to be effective at all, must be planned to facilitate the pattern or patterns of
buying behavior which customers desire to follow in a particular selling situation. Accordingly, great customer satisfaction in the buying process is the primary benefit. It is only to the extent that retail establishments can provide better and more desirable service to their customers that selling simplification can be employed to achieve other benefits. While customers may accept temporarily an extension of their buying activity which is not particularly desirable to them, they will ultimately exercise their freedom of choice to patronize other retailers. Price savings and relatively better service than that provided by other merchants may relieve resentment since customers will feel compensated for otherwise undesirable effort.

Some of the willingness of customers to prefer extended simplified selling has been a result of the novelty of particular selling situations. This aspect of uniqueness had much to do with early acceptance of self-service food stores (prior to the depression period of the 1930's). Early vending machines, early self-service operations in non-food stores, the "firsts" in numerous non-food self-service stores throughout the country which reached a peak during the early 1950's, and the development of self-service stores in Europe since the end of World War II all had a novelty appeal which gave impetus to their growth. In addition, there
seems to be a continuing satisfaction derived from buying in simplified selling situations, a satisfaction which appears to grow deeper through the conditioning of similar buying experiences.

Compatibility With Customer Buying Habits

Even though selling simplification results in some shifting of business activities to retail customers, the process can provide better selling service. It is generally compatible with the direction of change in general buying habits of mass-market customers, i.e., toward greater homogeneity and personal independence in buying. When simplified selling is planned to make personal salesmanship unnecessary, or to permit a customer option in deciding if and when to make use of a salesperson, selling service can be very effective. If customers want to shop leisurely, it is possible for them to do so. On the other hand, if they want to complete the buying experience speedily, this is also possible. Planned in terms of the manner in which the customer desires to buy, simplified selling permits maximum customer convenience.

The customer's time can be conserved through effective selling simplification. There is less waiting for salespeople to help (or influence) the customer in his or her selections. Customers can use any waiting time to advantage since merchandise is accessible to them. Where customers extend their participation through the "mechanics"
of the sale, specialized facilities generally accelerate the performance of this phase of the purchase. If the customer must spend some time waiting in a line for this service, it seems justified since there was less time spent in the selections and the "mechanics" will be handled more speedily. In one study of the effect of self-service operation in meat departments, it was found that customers went through such departments in 41 per cent less time than did those who purchased in full-service meat departments and, at the same time, bought 9 per cent more items than did customers in service departments.\(^1\) In peak selling periods when the problem of speeding up the total buying experience is made more difficult, selling simplification has been able to minimize and even eliminate the obstacles.

**Improved Personnel Contacts**

Better selling service to customers can also result through improved personnel contacts made possible by selling simplification. First, there tend to be fewer contacts between the store's employees and customers. More favorable relationships can result insofar as the personnel tend to become more important in a diminished number of contacts, i.e., the salespeople do more creative

\(^1\) DuPont Film Department, *Time Lost or Time Saved*, Wilmington, Delaware, E. I. DuPont De Nemours & Co., (Inc.), 1951, pp. 4-5.
and service selling (contrasted with rendering mere service), and cashier-wrappers are more specialized in their tasks. Moreover, store personnel can become better able to do their tasks—a benefit which will be discussed more fully later in this chapter.

Evidence of Better Selling Service

This first possible benefit of selling simplification is difficult to substantiate since it exists in an attitude of customers. Relative improvement in a retailer's sales volume (over his competitors) possibly indicates greater customer satisfaction as a result of simplified selling. There also is some evidence in the spontaneous favorable comments which retailers receive from customers after specific changes. At times, formal or informal interviewing has been used to confirm the belief that better selling service is being provided.

A reduction in customer complaints of poor service is another indicator that sales are being made with less dissatisfaction. A decrease in customer returns of merchandise, especially to the extent that returns may have been caused by poor personal salesmanship, also suggests better service. The increased tendency to buy without traditional shopping lists in supermarkets (and elsewhere) and to rely upon displayed merchandise as "want lists" further implies that customers are confident
and satisfied with simplified selling operation.  

In addition, a somewhat surprising increase in male customers in stores suggests that extensive simplified selling dovetails with customer buying habits. In 1951, it was estimated that men did 25 per cent of the buying (in dollar volume) in super markets and that they would ultimately be buying from 30 to 50 per cent of the total retail volume. Male buying is not traditional; men had been well accustomed to accept the observation that as much as 80 per cent of purchases in stores were made by women. As wives have less time because of employment, less dependence upon servants, etc., men may have to do more buying. Nevertheless, the incidence of buying by man and wife together gives substance to the contention that there is also positive motivation for increased male buying. The ability to self-select has been found to be a primary factor in this trend. Men tend to desire

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2 In a 1954 study, only 19.4 per cent of customers in super markets used a completely written shopping list while 25.3 per cent indicated in 1949 that they did so. (See DuPont Film Department, Latest Facts About "Today's Shopper" in Super Markets, Wilmington, Del.; E. I. DuPont De Nemours and Co. (Inc.), 1954, p. 5.


4 It has been reported that 77 per cent of husbands sometimes shop for groceries (68 per cent of these men did so once a week or more often) and that self-service is
personal independence in buying in order to minimize the embarrassment in doing a traditionally woman's task. In simplified selling situations, men can be less fearful of being delayed or subjected to poor personal salesman­ship. The extension of self-selection operation to men's wear stores and departments indicates that the trend is valid also for the items men buy for themselves.

ENHANCED STATUS OF RETAIL SALESPEOPLE

Effective selling simplification can also result in an enhanced status for retail salespeople in those situations where personal salesmanship continues to be desirable. Fundamentally, by permitting a greater degree of functional specialization for floor personnel, simplified selling makes possible a rise in the standard of activity performed by salespeople and makes very realistic an opportunity for greater economic and social recognition to retail salespeople. If selling situations

Footnote 4 (cont'd.) the foremost reason given for a man's preference to shop in a particular store. Moreover, 82 per cent of the male customers buy things that wives do not normally buy; a third spend more money than when their wives shop alone. See The Male Influence in Grocery Shopping, New York: Batten, Barton, Durstine, and Osborn, Inc., Undated, 26 pp. More recent studies have indicated that men customers buy 15 per cent more than do women customers in super markets; reported in Will Self-Service Work in My Store? Chicago: Clinic on Simplified Selling, p. 25.
are properly planned to integrate all possible retail selling forces, the need for salespeople should diminish even though a considerable number of floor personnel may still be required. There can be a definite distinction between the selling employees who are directly necessary to accomplish the selling strategy of a store and those who are required only to facilitate extended customer participation, e.g., stock attendants, cashier-wrappers.

**Rise in Level of Activity**

If it is desirable to exert personal salesmanship in a particular selling situation, the responsibility can be clearly defined and allocated. Personnel who are required to perform other floor duties can then be specially trained, with no pretense that they are to do an active selling job. Salespeople can be relieved of many of their non-selling functions. No longer will a large number of people be needed to do a varied and complex selling task. Retail salespeople can then assume an important role, in that they will be more responsible for sales producing functions, i.e., creative and service selling. While fulfilling a somewhat narrower role, they will be performing on a higher plane.

For the smaller number of personnel who will be required to provide effective personal salesmanship, the possibilities of raising the level of their performance are considerable. First, there will be fewer "real"
Salespeople and this, in itself, will make possible the selection of more people who are better qualified to fulfill the specific requirements of the job. Second, the need for part-time salespeople can be appreciably decreased. Efforts of supervisors and training personnel as well as of salespeople will not be diluted in attempts to improve the contribution of part-time help. Third, it is quite possible that employee turnover can be reduced. All of these factors can help to endow the retail selling position with more permanent importance.

Selling simplification also can result in more effective training of salespeople. While the need for better training of retail salespeople has long been recognized, there does not seem to have been much success in hitherto "shot-gun" attempts for better "sales craft," conducted for the most part on a store-wide basis. Simplified selling, on the other hand, will make possible concentrated training, planned and implemented on the basis of specialized selling tasks and capitalizing upon non-personal means to facilitate the salesperson's job. Whether or not the retailer conceives the salesperson's function in a particular situation to include creative salesmanship, training can be planned accordingly. If highly skilled "customer advisers" are the objective, they can be so trained; their task made easier through effective use of non-personal means of selling.
Greater Economic and Social Recognition

Greater economic and social recognition for salespeople is possible through selling simplification. It is thus realistic for the factors suggested above to produce a higher level of personal selling performance. Through enabling salespeople to concentrate more on sales producing phases of their task, higher monetary rewards can be paid. As salespeople become more effective and important through a specialization and "mechanization" of their task, higher salaries are more justified. The experience of self-service operation in food stores suggests that selling simplification makes possible higher wage rates for non-selling personnel. Where salespeople are effectively retained under simplified selling operation in non-food stores, there also is evidence that higher salaries can be paid to them.

In a study of self-service variety stores, it is reported that one-half of 40 stores responding with pertinent information adjusted upward wage scales after

5 Department of Labor data give some indication of the validity of this statement. Average hourly earnings of non-supervisory employees in food and liquor stores was $1.56 in January, 1954, which was a 194 per cent increase over the average for 1939 ($0.53). The average hourly earnings for all retail stores was $1.43 in January, 1954, only 159 per cent greater than the average for 1939 ($0.54). Data from Monthly Labor Review, Vol. 77, No. 4, April, 1954, pp. 479-480; and Monthly Labor Review, Vol. 68, No. 4, April, 1949, p. 484.
installing a check-out system. In the "Quick Service" operations of Sears, Roebuck and Company, it was found without exception that earnings of individual salespeople are up. In this company's stores, salespeople have been continued on varied commission compensation plans. Specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling are used only for those merchandise selections in which a salesperson has not participated. Higher earnings thus result from the ability of salespeople to concentrate upon creative and service selling as well as from the stimulus provided them by the existence of cash-and-wrap desks which could make their participation in a sale unnecessary. This potentiality for greater rewards to salespeople through the addition of cash-and-wrap desks in situations already arranged for much customer self-selection is evidenced in the experience of one store. Earnings for a group of 16 salespeople (in six departments) who sold during the Christmas peak four-week period in 1952 (without "Quick Service") and again during the same period in 1953 (with "Quick Service") were up 41 per cent.7

There can also be a greater psychological reward.

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7 Absolute data confidentially revealed in a field interview with company personnel.
The position of a retail salesperson can be realistically dignified in terms of the importance of his contribution. There will be fewer "real" salespeople. Qualified, trained, and enabled to do a better selling job, salespeople can take greater pride in their work. A greater feeling of self-respect also is reinforced by the more favorable attitude of one's customers. When salespeople prove that their experience, judgment, and time is worthwhile, customers will place greater confidence in their help and/or influence. For example, it was observed in an interview with an official of a large drug chain that pharmacists in the company's self-service drug stores felt renewed prestige. Their customers were more confident of their service and advice because they are more able to specialize in rendering it. Other retailing officials noted the same thing about effective salespeople in their simplified selling situations.

GREATER CAPACITY FOR AND REALIZATION OF SALES VOLUME

Selling simplification also enables a retail establishment to achieve a greater sales volume from its customer traffic. The capacity for greater sales is primarily a result of more effective use of non-personal means of selling, a general improvement in the productivity of floor personnel, and an ability to minimize the problem.
of peak selling periods. While it is difficult to demonstrate unquestionably the favorable effects of a scientific application of this process in quantitative terms, it is possible to indicate some of the specific causes of increases in sales volume capacity made possible by selling simplification. Increased volume, of course, depends on many other factors beside the presence or absence of effective simplified selling.

More Effective Use of Non-Personal Means of Selling

Non-personal means of retail selling, when properly used, have the capacity to do more than minimize or eliminate the need for personal salesmanship. Effective use of non-personal means also can result in purchases which otherwise would not be made at a particular time. There seems to be a favorable effect upon customer purchases, whether planned or unplanned before the customer comes into a particular selling situation. In one study of "unplanned" food purchases, it was found that while 86.4 per cent of women customers who shopped in self-service food stores purchased one or more unplanned items, only 79.2 per cent of the women who shopped in semi-self-service food stores and 59.0 per cent of those who shopped in counter-service stores made unplanned purchases.8

8 "How We Shop For Groceries," BBDO Food Staff Presentation No. 14, New York: Batten, Barton, Durstine and Osborn,
What, then, are some of the reasons why non-personal means of retail selling bring about increased expenditures in simplified selling situations? It has already been observed that extended use of non-personal means is compatible with present customer buying habits and makes possible greater satisfaction in the buying process. To the extent that the buying experience becomes more convenient and easy for customers, they are encouraged to buy more. In addition, there are other reasons why the American customer has been termed "the best salesperson in the world," when enabled to do his or her buying job without the direct participation of retail personnel. These include: effective customer accessibility to merchandise; better capitalization upon pre-selling of merchandise; fewer delays and thus greater opportunity to buy; multi-unit and multiple-item packaging; combining of the performance of the "mechanics" and therefore encouragement for more selections at a given time; and less customer resistance to selling efforts, especially because customers are less on the defensive from personal salesmanship.

Footnote 8 (cont'd.) Inc., Undated, p. 13. Here, "unplanned purchase" was interpreted broadly to include those items not on prepared shopping lists and, where no shopping list was used, those items which the customers said were unplanned.

9 See, for example, the comment in Malcolm P. McNair, "Some Major Trends in Distribution," Twenty-third Annual Boston Conference on Distribution, Boston: 1951, p. 45.
Some of the above effects of simplified selling and the resulting increased capacity for sales volume have been discussed previously. Nevertheless, it will be helpful to indicate here the possible benefits of customer accessibility to merchandise which is a primary feature in many simplified selling situations. When customers have access to merchandise impressively displayed, their senses of sight and touch can immediately function. Customers need not be dependent upon salespeople to show and make available merchandise. At the same time, there is product information and promotion through the printed word on packages and signs. Thus, retailers can take greater advantage of the sense of sight which is recognized as the major means for stimulus in the buying experience.¹⁰

Customer access to merchandise also directly exposes the customers to new and novelty items and, accordingly, results in increased purchases of an unplanned nature.

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¹⁰ It has been observed that the sense of sight receives 87 per cent of one's buying impressions; see C. N. Clark, "There's a New Look in Lighting," Super Market Merchandising, Vol. 13, No. 4, April, 1954, p. 111. Moreover, the contrast between the possible effectiveness of selling through the spoken and written word is suggested in the observation that a person gives 25 times the attention to eye suggestion that he does to ear suggestion because the nerves leading from the eyes to the brain are many times larger than those leading from the ears; see Howard Ketcham, "Removing Guesswork from Package Design," Planning the Package (Consumer Marketing Series No. 38), New York: American Management Association, 1940, p. 14.
The somewhat phenomenal success of ready-to-eat foods, prepared mixes, etc. perhaps would not have been possible without such merchandise exposure in self-service food stores. There also is the impetus to "natural" trading up and suggestion buying engendered by merchandise accessibility. Higher priced items are often selected after careful comparison of values of different sizes or qualities of items openly displayed near each other. Suggestion selling is apt to be very subtly accomplished when related items are displayed in close proximity or being used together. Certain display tactics (e.g., effective shelf positioning, mass displays) can further increase purchases.

It is difficult to support quantitatively the extent to which these non-personal means of retail selling can be effective. Most of the observations and attempts at controlled experiments have been concerned with changes in only one of the selling forces. Also, sales results are affected by other factors (e.g., location, size of store, merchandise variety) and it is difficult to isolate out the specific favorable effect of non-personal means.

The favorable effect upon sales volume which is partially a result of installation of a check-out system in non-food stores has been substantiated in studies of The National Cash Register Company. In fifty variety stores converted to the use of the check-out, sales volume
was found to have increased an average of 28 per cent, and in eleven of the stores the volume increase was 40 per cent or more.\textsuperscript{11} The average sale per customer in six converted hardware stores increased an average of 49 per cent.\textsuperscript{12} Reports of conversions to self-service operation, dramatized by installation of check-out counters at the exit door, in other types of non-food stores indicate similar, if not greater, increases in store volume and average sales per customer.

The effectiveness of display tactics is suggested by results of the many controlled experiments which have been conducted in self-service food markets. It is here that display methods have been nurtured for the longest period of time and most successfully. In one intensive study of eighteen mass displays of 34 different items, it was concluded that special dominant displays of merchandise (especially when devoted to related items) can be depended upon to double sales of products so displayed; the increases for specific products ranging as high as 1,217 per cent in the case of a brand of spiced wafers.\textsuperscript{13} Reports of:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{11} Market Research Department, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 11.
  \item \textsuperscript{12} Market Research Department, \textit{A Survey of Hardware Store Operations}, Dayton: The National Cash Register Company, 1953, p. 8.
  \item \textsuperscript{13} \textit{Food Store Merchandising}, New York: Progressive Grocer, Undated, pp. 4-5.
\end{itemize}
similarly successful tests with changes in shelf positions of merchandise, in signing, in scrambled displays, etc., are plentiful. The effectiveness of proper fixtures which permit customer access to merchandise has also been vividly demonstrated. For example, after the installation of a self-selection Hickock Belt fixture, stores experienced overall increases in belt sales of from 25 to 569 per cent.\(^14\) The benefits of improving store lighting are evidenced in one series of reports of retailers throughout the country in various types of stores; gains in average sales per store after relighting ranged from 19 to 40 per cent.\(^15\)

**General Improvement in Employee Productivity**

Another effect of selling simplification is better conservation and direction of retail employees for maximum results. Some of the ways in which the level of performance of retail salespeople is improved in simplified selling situations have already been noted. Increases in worker productivity result from the mechanization (i.e., development and use of non-personal means) and specialization of the selling function. Not all of the increased productivity is a net savings since part of the improvement


\(^15\) Application Engineering Department of Lamp Division, *Planned Lighting Builds Sales and Profits*, Cleveland; General Electric, 1950, p. 2.
is a result of customers doing more of the task. However, it should be remembered that many customers seem to like and even prefer greater participation in many selling situations. At the same time, part of what the customer takes over is a utilization of what would otherwise be idle time (e.g., waiting to be served).

In addition, selling simplification can beneficially reduce the number of employees who have direct contact with customers. When a great proportion of a store's personnel can function without depending upon the irregularities of customer traffic, greater efficiency can result. Not only is the work of these employees of a more constant and steady nature, but there also is greater opportunity to mechanize their work. Furthermore, selling simplification permits a greater flexibility in the use of all floor personnel, e.g., stock handlers, cashiers, salespeople. Regardless of the functions to be performed by a particular type of employee, retailers find that simplified selling enables personnel to acclimate themselves more quickly to the particularities of a specific situation than would otherwise be possible. The merchandise is distinctly arranged in terms of customer sequential buying decisions, there is product information on packages and various kinds of signs, and the task for which they are to be responsible is more apt to be similar to their task in other situations.
Accordingly, with simplified selling retailers are able to attain profitable area selling in departmentized stores, more effective use of part-time help, and more productive shifting of regular personnel.

The accomplishment of self-service operation in food stores also provides some substantiation for the benefit of increased worker productivity through selling simplification. While some of the increase can be attributed to other factors, it is believed that the method of selling operation is a major cause. Annual sales per full-time employee in self-service food stores in 1953 appear more than two and one-half times those per employee in department stores. There has been an appreciable increase in the physical volume or real sales productivity per employee in food stores since 1939 and there is evidence of a higher rate of increase in self-service stores in contrast to those which are operated on a semi-self-service basis.

In one survey of food store operations during 1953, $45,259 sales per full-time employee in self-service stores are reported; see Progressive Grocer's Facts in Grocery Distribution (1954 Edition), New York, Progressive Grocer, 1954, p. 13. In contrast, average sales per employee of $15,500 in the case of smaller department stores ($5-$10 million annual sales) and of $17,500 for the largest stores ($50 million and more annual sales) are reported for 1952, the latest data available; see Malcolm P. McNair, Operating Results of Department and Specialty Stores in 1952 (Bureau of Business Research, Bulletin No. 139), Boston: Harvard University, 1953, pp. 25 and 31.
or counter-service basis. (See Table 1) Sales per full-time employee in self-service food stores during 1953 were one-half greater than those per employee in counter-service stores.

In non-food stores, there is also ample indication that extension and improvement of simplified selling can bring about higher productivity. In thirteen hardware stores which converted to the use of the check-out system, for example, an average annual sales volume per employee of $30,000 was reported, compared to $20,000 average sales per employee in all hardware stores.17

In a study of the effect of installation of cash-and-wrap desks for peak selling periods in one Sears, Roebuck and Company store, it was reported that sales in a four-week period for 16 salespeople increased 59 per cent over the same period of the previous year, with one salesperson selling 109 per cent more.18

Greater Capacity in Peak Selling Periods

As selling simplification enables a store to provide better service during periods of peak customer traffic, its capacity for sales is increased at the very times


18 Absolute data confidentially revealed in a field interview with company personnel.
**Table 1**

**Sales per Full-Time Employee in Combination Food Stores, 1946 and 1953**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Store and Year</th>
<th>Sales Per Full-Time Employee in Current Dollars</th>
<th>Physical Volume (Real) Sales Per Full-Time Employee ((1947-1949 = 100)^b)</th>
<th>Real Sales for each type of Store ((1946 = 100))</th>
<th>1953 Real Sales for all types of stores (Counter-Service Stores Real Sales = 100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counter-Service Stores: 1946</td>
<td>$19,133</td>
<td>$21,580</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>$29,936</td>
<td>$26,539</td>
<td>108.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-Self-Serv. Stores: 1946</td>
<td>$20,915</td>
<td>$26,513</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>$33,804</td>
<td>$29,968</td>
<td>113.0</td>
<td>112.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Service Stores: 1946</td>
<td>$24,033</td>
<td>$30,123</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>151.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>$45,259</td>
<td>$40,123</td>
<td>131.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*b. The Consumers' Price Index (for Food) of the Bureau of Labor Statistics was used to deflate the data for price changes.*

**Source:** Compiled from data secured from surveys of leading "independent" (one through ten stores) combination food stores, as published in Progressive Grocer's Facts in Grocery Distribution (1951 Edition), New York: Progressive Grocer, 1954, p. 13.
sales potentialities are the greatest. It is, in fact, as a solution to the problem of peak selling periods that the development of specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling in non-food stores is best justified. Physical limitations of stores, selling floor space, and fixtures makes it imperative that retailers seek ways to make all selling forces effective during the times when customers outnumber salespeople by as much as ten to one. The benefits of simplified selling in this regard are two-fold: improved effectiveness (of both non-personal means and salespeople) in utilizing existing space and the minimization of the burden upon the selling forces of such large numbers of customers.

It is at the point where customer traffic becomes so great that customers are selecting items faster than they can pay for them that a system of having a salesperson or sales clerk handle the "mechanics" of all sales breaks down and the need for specialized facilities arises. Use of these facilities can eliminate the limit imposed on a store's capacity by the slowness of completing transactions through salespeople contacts. Sales volume is then no longer geared to a slow rate of "money turnover;" retailers can capitalize upon a more rapid rate of merchandise selection. Moreover, the effectiveness of non-personal means is not frustrated because customers must wait for salespeople. Such waiting for service decreases their own
opportunity to buy more and blocks merchandise from the view and examination of other customers. At the same time, simplified selling situations can reduce the non-productive burden upon salespeople and thus free them for more effective performance during these peak periods. To the extent, then, that the adverse pressures of customer traffic peaks can be minimized by simplified selling, the effectiveness of all retail selling forces is increased not only in periods where customer traffic presents no problem but also in peak selling periods as well. As peak periods intensify, this benefit of simplified selling looms more important.

The extent to which retailers have relieved the burden of peak selling periods and increased a store's sales capacity with simplified selling can be substantiated. There is considerable evidence that effective simplified selling prevents many "walkout dollars," i.e., sales which are lost simply because customers could not find someone to wait on them or could not get to the merchandise quickly enough to make the time they waited for a salesperson seem worthwhile. In the "Quick Service" experience of Sears, Roebuck and Company, the sales of small items have increased. Overall volume is greater even though the average sale in a department is smaller. Thus, there is a definite indication that the sales of lower-priced items which were previously lost because of poor service are being "captured."
The results of the experience of one store of this company provide considerable support that a simplified selling situation which offers customers the option of personal salesmanship or customer self-selection is successful in handling peak customer traffic.\textsuperscript{19} In a three-week period of observation, 27.9 per cent of the transactions were handled through the cash-and-wrap desks without any salesperson participation, but these "Quick Service" sales accounted for only 8.6 per cent of the total sales volume. At the same time, the average sale handled by salespeople was more than four times the average sale completed at these desks.

\textbf{LOWER OPERATING COSTS}

A final major benefit which can result from selling simplification is lower operating costs for the retail establishment. It has already been observed that benefits of this process tend to augment one another. Certainly, those costs which do not vary or which vary disproportionately will be reduced by realization of greater sales volume. A study of retailing costs in the past has indicated a very definite relationship between sales productivity and store expense: the expense ratio of a store seems to vary

\textsuperscript{19} Absolute data confidentially revealed in a field interview with company personnel.
inversely with the volume produced by each selling employee. In the case of selling simplification, the major cost percentage for payroll is particularly decreased, even though higher wages and salaries to selling and other personnel are paid.

Reduction in Personnel and Savings in Selling Space

Greater productivity of personnel and space may also enable a store to decrease its work force and selling space and thus reduce operating costs absolutely. Better compensation to retained personnel will, however, decrease actual savings here. While there is some hesitancy to discharge regular employees, stores have reduced substantially the amount of part-time help which had been necessary for peak selling periods. At times, employees who quit are not replaced and new stores are opened with fewer personnel than in stores where selling simplification is not so extensively applied.

Possible reductions in actual display space have ranged from 25 to 75 per cent where selling simplification is applied throughout the store, depending upon the type of store, its original layout and fixtures. This savings in space can result from several modifications which are part of simplified selling arrangements: better

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planned merchandise assortments and presentations, greater use of vertical fixturing, elimination of clerk aisles, and lengthening of counters. Most retailers have used the space for additional merchandise offerings and, thus, have attained still greater sales capacity and a relative decrease in occupancy costs. There also have been some cases of actual reduction in space.

Favorable Effects Upon Other Phases of Retailing

Although the major benefits of selling simplification lie in achieving better selling service to customers and improvement in sales productivity, the process affects more than the selling function of stores. The interdependence of factors previously suggested is not limited to the aspects of selling; simplified selling eventually affects many of the other areas of retail planning, organization, and operation. Improvement in other areas (and the lower operating costs which then result) is at times a necessary preliminary to maximum effectiveness in selling simplification and, at other times, a result of the process. In some cases, inefficiencies exist because traditional dependence upon a salesperson in every transaction has been able to compensate, at least partially, for them. In simplified selling situations, retailers are more able to concentrate on other phases to the extent that their time is freed by the simplification of
the selling function. Moreover, retailers find that less possible dependence upon sales personnel does much to reduce their complacency about matters which precede or follow the actual sale.

Other specific phases of retailing which can be favorably affected by proper selling simplification include:

1. More effective buying through limitations upon assortments, buying in relation to the "balance of sale," more cognizance of the selling situation, and visual stock control measures.

2. Better stock maintenance and control, e.g., more effective in-stock position, improved stock care.

3. Decrease in services rendered by stores, e.g., less delivery, less credit.

4. Reduction in customer returns and complaints and, therefore, less costs.

5. More rapid merchandise turnover through more refined merchandise assortments and less reserve stock.

6. Lower fixturing costs through greater use of functional, open fixtures.

7. Less cash shortages, reduced training problems, and, where the "mechanics" are fully specialized, less need for cash on hand.

8. More effective utilization of non-selling space through better arrangement of fitting rooms, stock rooms, stock within the stock rooms, etc.

**Evidence of Lower Operating Costs**

The experience in self-service food stores gives support to the considerable favorable effect upon operating costs. Again, not all of the effect can be attributed to the method of selling. The 1948 Census of Business
indicates a payroll cost of 6.7 per cent of sales for multi-unit companies (four or more stores) operating self-service grocery departments while the payroll for such companies which did not operate on a self-service basis was 8.5 per cent of sales. Total operating costs in self-service supermarkets have been estimated as perhaps 25 per cent below those of the older types of food stores.

In non-food stores, part of the reduction in operating costs results from the specialized operation of facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling. More economical performance of the "mechanics" of the sale is gained through the use of these facilities even though retailers manytimes select "cashier-wrappers" from the more experienced floor personnel and pay them more than salespeople. This benefit has been achieved regardless of the type of facilities used. It is strikingly

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indicated in the "Quick Service" experience of Sears, Roebuck and Company where cash-and-wrap desks are used for only those sales for which a salesperson has not participated in the selection. The relative payroll cost of sales made at these desks is often less than one-half that for transactions by salespeople in the same merchandise department.

In a group of over one hundred variety stores which converted to the check-out system, there was an average decrease of 3 percentage points.\(^23\) In one large department store which converted to self-selection with cash-and-wrap desks in most of its departments, selling costs decreased 2\(\frac{1}{2}\) percentage points.\(^24\) In another "self-service" department store, payroll costs decreased from 13 per cent to 7 per cent of sales.\(^25\) Another large departmentized store with a long history of emphasizing customer self-selection reported an initial markup of 12 percentage points less than comparable stores.\(^26\) The operating cost


\(^24\) Revealed in field interview with company official.


\(^26\) Revealed in field interview with retailing official.
ratio of self-service drug stores averages 20-21 per cent, in contrast to 25-27 per cent for full-service drug stores.

The various major benefits of selling simplification as well as their inter-related nature can be clearly indicated by the following experience of a variety store retailer which was reported to the author:

It cost $7,000 to convert to self-service operation, but it paid for itself the first year. In 1949, 22 people were employed an average of 47 1/2 hours per week and paid 48 1/2 cents per hour (selling cost was 12.9 per cent of sales). In 1951, there were 15 people paid 66 cents an hour for the same work week and they were also given 7 1/2 per cent of annual salary for bonus (selling cost was 9.4 per cent—down 3.5 percentage points from 1949).

The self-serve layout provided 40 per cent more counter space and volume increased 20 per cent. The average sale in 1949 was $1.5; in 1951, it was $2.0. In 1949, the net profit plus proprietor's salary was 11.3 per cent of sales; in 1951, it was 16.2 per cent.

In 1952, with the customers conditioned to the self-service operation and the personnel's knowledge and efficiency in its use improved, the store was showing an appreciable increase in sales over the previous year and doing it with an average of 11 girls.

CHAPTER EIGHT
LIMITING FACTORS IN SELLING SIMPLIFICATION

The process of selling simplification can be beneficially applied in all types of store selling situations. There are, however, certain factors which limit the extent to which personal salesmanship can be de-emphasized and still have desirable customer participation in a particular selling situation at any given time. The restrictive effect of these factors is not permanent. A given retailer can do much to modify some of the factors and thus minimize or eliminate their impact. General social and business conditions also affect the factors and, in addition, there is the continuing effect of efforts of manufacturers, wholesalers, other retailers, consumer groups, and government. While it may be difficult to determine which of the factors are causing varying results in a specific situation, it is felt that those discussed in this chapter are ones which deserve the attention of any retailer who seeks to apply selling simplification or to increase its effectiveness.

Underlying all of the possible limiting factors is the need for a highly-coordinated and controlled operation, both within the store and in the relationships of the store.
with its customers and suppliers. Certainly, where all seven possible factors (see Chapter Five) of a selling situation are not carefully planned in an integrated manner, there can only be limited success. While all of the selling forces may not be used in a particular situation, the functional character of those that are used must be fully coordinated to achieve a truly simplified selling situation, i.e., one which is in line with the dominant customer buying pattern. Any deficiencies in a harmonious balance among the several factors used will serve to limit the achievement of selling simplification. The process is not applied quickly but requires research, development and experience for proficiency.

CUSTOMER BUYING BEHAVIOR

Difficulty of Controlling Customer Buying Behavior

The buying behavior of customers of a retail establishment is the first major factor which limits the simplification of the retail selling function. No retailing process that is too far ahead of public habit or that does not conform with public preference can be successfully applied. The very status of customer buying behavior in retailing introduces a limit to extension of selling simplification throughout the field. In retailing,
customers are the "raw material" to which personnel and machines (i.e., non-personal means of selling, inclusive of mechanical and electronic equipment) are applied to produce sales. Such raw material is much less susceptible to control than is the raw material of manufacturers. Customers, under a free enterprise system, will always have the opportunity to patronize another retailer when they feel their wishes are neglected. This freedom of customer choice emphasizes that no application of selling simplification can long be successful if it is not in accord with the manner in which most of a store's customers desire to buy.

Lack of Knowledge About Customer Behavior

At the same time, it seems that retailers lack knowledge about customer buying behavior. This dearth of information about the ways in which customers buy and parallel questions of the significant effects of the several means of retail selling present an important obstacle to greater progress in this area. Unless a retailer is able to ascertain clearly how his customers want to buy in a particular selling situation, effectiveness in providing better selling service through this process is limited. Information about buying behavior is generally difficult to secure. In addition, most of past attempts to do so have consisted simply of casual and very limited observations of customers and the results
of changes in the selling situation. There is a considerable need for greater and improved research efforts into the customer's role in simplified selling.

Heterogeneity of Behavior in Particular Selling Situation

In many departments or stores there also is a lack of an homogeneity in behavior. The participation of different customers may vary in any given situation. Because non-personal means of selling act more uniformly than salespeople, extended simplified selling is clearly dependent upon limiting the patterns of behavior which a customer can execute. While individuals will continue to differ in personality and their mental response to given situations, it is only to the extent that their behavior is narrowed to one or two dominant patterns that the process can be most successfully applied. The process is further complicated by customary merchandise classifications which group items with others not compatible in terms of buying behavior patterns. Where customers desire personal salesmanship for some items and not for others in a specific store or department, the extent of simplification is automatically limited.

Rigidity of Buying Behavior

In addition, there is a certain rigidity in customer buying behavior which acts as a limiting factor to selling simplification. Where this process results in changes in
the manner in which customers have become accustomed to buy, there is the difficulty of overcoming the inertia in much of the buying experience which has become habitual. People resent change because it involves effort in learning new relationships or patterns of activity. As customers, they dislike changing their buying behavior and may be reluctant to accept even methods of selling which are more convenient but nevertheless new to them. The habitual nature of buying caused Sears, Roebuck and Company (in its "Quick Service" development) to locate the cash-and-wrap desks in places formerly occupied by salesperson registers. Customers who selected merchandise without the participation of a salesperson in the past had been in the habit of taking their selections to these locations where they could advantageously await a salesperson. Education regarding early desks located elsewhere did not sufficiently break down this habitual performance.

The extent of change which customers are asked to make will materially affect this limiting factor. If customers of a particular store have become accustomed to pre-selection buying, its use of customer self-selection will be easier than if a store were to change its selling methods directly from full-service to self-service. The degree to which customers have come to depend upon non-personal means also will influence their acceptance of the introduction of self-selection operation.
There seems to be a conditioning effect from experience in other stores and departments, especially similar ones. This factor then has less impact as more and different types of retailers practice extended simplified selling.

In fact, it seems that differences in acceptance of self-selection buying in various types of stores by customers in the West Coast and those in other areas of the country was narrowing in 1954. While retailers on the West Coast may continue to extend selling simplification more progressively than others elsewhere, the acceptance of greater customer participation may no longer vary because of geographical differences. Sears, Roebuck and Company has already found that the local peculiarities of customers do not enter into the situation; that "Quick Service" will work in any size store in any section of the country where peak selling periods exist.¹

The normal reluctance upon the part of people to change seems to increase with their age. Younger customers, who have little or no remembrance of the predominance of full-service food stores, are most adaptable. Previous customer dissatisfaction may complicate the possible task of educating customers for extended participation. When a customer is dissatisfied because of

deficiencies in one simplified selling situation, his acceptance of greater participation elsewhere may thereafter be adversely affected. For these reasons, the modification of customer buying behavior may take time and embody risk.

It is not to be expected that even desirable changes will always occur immediately. Early experience in food stores indicated that possibly only 25 per cent of the regular customers made their selections without salesperson participation during the first month after a change to self-selection emphasis. In reference to the discontinued use of vending machines at transportation terminals by Wm. Filene's Sons, it has been said that "an experiment in an entirely new field which lasts for less than two years at the most, and has been carried on in only two locations, is at best inconclusive."3

Some Limiting Factors in the Buying of Mass-Market Customers

It has already been observed that mass-market customers are becoming less of a variable in their buying behavior. To the extent that people in this growing market buy more homogeneously, stores which seek their patronage


can extend the use of non-personal means of selling. However, there are specific desires which continue to inhibit efforts for more extensive simplified selling, even for some mass-market customers. Although a salesperson's participation in merchandise selection may be made unnecessary through the use of non-personal means, some customers may still desire personal salesmanship. First, this desire may arise from a lack of complete self-determination in the buying experience. Second, customers may lack confidence in either the product or the retailer and personal salesmanship is desired for greater assurance of the reliability of the purchase. At times, this continuing desire for personal salesmanship can be minimized by the information on packages and signs where the "sanctity of print" gives assurance to customers, by store reputation, and by brand identification.

Customers also may continue to want to touch or feel the merchandise, a practice which extension of packaging makes less possible. While there is evidence that this desire is considerably less than in the past, there is some persistency, especially in the buying of soft goods. As merchandise becomes both more varied and complex in its construction, the sense of touch will tell the customer less and less and, therefore, the desire may further diminish. At the same time, proper packaging, a narrowing of brands to known pre-sold ones, merchandise
standardization, assortment display of the merchandise unpackaged, and a liberal return policy by the retailer can also compensate for the loss of this "privilege."

Customers may continue to want broad assortments of merchandise, an inhibiting factor to simplified selling. Assortment, selling-stock, or mass display of merchandise automatically gives an appearance of breadth of assortment which may be sufficient to satisfy this desire without sacrificing desirable restrictions on assortments.

**MERCHANDISE COMPLEXITY**

The complexity of merchandise, which is both the terminus of selling effort and a means of selling, is the second major factor limiting the extension of selling simplification. Some attributes which complicate merchandise for customers were indicated in Chapter Five. It is to be emphasized here that an analysis of merchandise complexity cannot be statically conceived; progress in this area requires that the product be considered a factor capable of modification, at least in the long run. Not only can some merchandise features be modified to achieve greater simplicity, but also extensive simplified selling can be facilitated by offsetting some of the complexity with non-personal means, e.g., packaging and labeling. Technology (broadly conceived) which can nullify existing product features and improve these means of selling thus
becomes the paramount limitation. In early 1954, for example, experimentation with the atom as a means of "purifying" meat was announced. If ultimately practical, meat could be kept fresh for weeks without discoloration or loss of flavor, two attributes which limit the sale of meat by customer self-selection.

Only some of the complicating features are inherent in the very nature and use of the products. Even in the case of these, some complexity may be a matter of limited experience and thus diminish with greater use of the items. Some of the complexity is a result of the desire of customers and sellers for product differentiation. To what degree these elements can be avoided depends upon broad questions of competition and consumer motivation. There is, however, an important area in which great improvement seems realistically possible. Some of the existing complexity is a result of lack of standardization which would be readily acceptable to customers and sellers alike. Inertia and ineffective business cooperation must first be remedied. There could then be rigid and nationally reliable standardization of merchandise (and package) sizes and quality determinants (e.g., names of colors) which could do much to make possible more extensive simplified selling. Until such time, non-personal means may be effectively used to minimize partially the problem, e.g., use of signing to suggest pajama sizes to men's weight.
Restraint of Major Company or Store Policy

The third major limiting factor in the application of selling simplification consists of a number of possible operational factors. First, the extent of simplified selling in a particular situation, i.e., a store or department within a store, will be unmistakably limited by company or store policy. It is very desirable that there be a formulation of an explicit major policy regarding selling simplification before the process is actually applied. The process then will be applied in accord with such a policy. Since selling simplification is basically a merchandising concept, it must also be applied as part of the broader merchandising policy of a store. Just as customers are conservative and reluctant to change, policy decisions by retailers may reflect a hesitancy to make radical changes from traditional patterns. There has been little empirical testing of the propriety of present methods of selling. In some cases, even though retailers fully subscribe to the value of extensive simplified selling, they refuse to break away from present methods because of a fear of immediate adverse effects upon patronage.
Initial Costs of Selling Simplification Efforts

Second, initial costs of simplifying the selling function may limit the action of retailers. For all retailers, there can be the cost of research and development. At times, wholesalers and manufacturers may bear all or part of the research investment and it is also possible for smaller retailers to minimize this cost by making use of the accomplishments of larger ones. In addition, while the process may result in lower operating costs (both relatively and absolutely) some retailers may hesitate in making extensive conversions in established stores. They do so because of the loss in their investment in present fixtures and equipment and the original costs of setting up an extensive simplified selling operation. Some examples of possible initial costs follow.

There is often a need for re-fixturing, especially when equipment presently used in a store is grossly unsuitable for effective exposure of merchandise. However, much of the new fixturing is simpler in construction because of its functionalization and may therefore be purchased at a lower per-square-foot fixture cost. Conversion of fixtures may be gradually accomplished by merely taking the glass out of showcases and initial costs are thus minimized or spread out. Here, too, it may be possible to secure from consumer goods manufacturers fixtures for which they will share the costs.
Where a retailer desires to compensate for the lack of packaging by the manufacturer or wishes to supplement it in the case of unbranded merchandise or multi-product "ensembles," the need for packaging equipment and/or supplies will arise. Furthermore, there will be a need for marking equipment and supplies since price identification on the merchandise becomes important in an extensive simplified selling situation, especially where specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling exist. The labor cost in initially price-marking and packaging of existing inventory may be considerable, but it will level off since it is thereafter necessary only to handle the receipts. Where the "mechanics" of the sale are specialized, bigger and more complex cash registers are normally needed, but the additional costs may be offset by the need for fewer registers.

Ineffectiveness of Non-Personal Means

Third, there is the limiting factor of ineffectiveness of non-personal means in fulfilling the various functions of retail selling. Certainly, these means have not been fully developed to a point where they can always perform with maximum efficiency and economy without personal salesmanship. While there is considerable promise that increased velocity of this trend will stimulate improvement, there seems to exist, at any given time, a
technological lag or limit to progress. Many times, this lag is a result of human inadequacies in imagination and failure of businessmen to commit themselves to cooperation and financial support. There is the parallel need to secure customer acceptance and use of mechanical means; technology can never be too far ahead of existing buying habits if it is to be practically applied.5

Lack of effective pre-selling of merchandise will limit the extension of simplified selling, perhaps more than inherent complexity of the merchandise. A local chain of self-service drug stores in Detroit, Michigan, shifted away from complete customer self-selection and introduced personal salesmanship because customers were not sufficiently acquainted with the products in the drug field and did not recognize packages.6 Simplification may also be limited by technical deficiencies in fixturing, packaging, display, and specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling. In super markets, problems of inability to maintain sufficient selling stock,

5 When he closed his mechanical "Keedoozle" store in 1949 after a ten-year experiment, Clarence Saunders observed, "It's too far ahead of the buying habits of the public... too much for the average mind to grasp; too far in advance of public thinking." Quoted in "Too Much for the Mind to Grasp," Business Week, No. 1044, September 3, 1949, p. 39.

ineffective display promotions, and the considerable labor-consuming phases of the check-out operation loom large. In non-food stores, there are problems of an inability to use an effective check-out system in multi-level stores and inadequate techniques for fixturing and packaging of some items. However, it is to be stressed again that existing effectiveness and technical knowledge about these means are not always fully exploited in non-food stores. Many times, it is merely a matter of an unrealistic opinion or fear that non-personal means automatically create a "hard" store atmosphere and consequently do not enhance the quality and attractiveness of merchandise.

**Ineffectiveness of Buying and Vendor Relations**

Fourth, ineffectiveness of buying and vendor relations will limit a retailer's simplification of the selling function. Success of buying is reflected in sales performance; store policies and actions regarding buying are always affected by selling policies and methods. In extensive simplified selling situations, there is a greater need for close coordination of the two functions. Buying must be fully oriented to the particular arrangement and operating needs of the selling situation. If effective customer participation is to be realized, buying decisions must result in the purchase of merchandise compatible with the pattern of buying behavior which is being encouraged
in a particular situation. Ineffective consideration of the needs of the selling situation in the performance of the buying function will adversely affect achieving and maintaining a balance of the interdependent factors. With less dependence upon salespeople, there is less possibility of floor personnel compensating for errors and misjudgments in buying. Unless vendor relations are effective, it will be difficult to achieve such desirable features as proper packaging and labeling, better coordination of manufacturer pre-selling activities with selling forces employed by the retailer, and more effective relating of packages to general store fixtures.

Problems Which Arise in Conversion

Fifth, certain problems can arise in converting an existing selling situation to some or a higher degree of simplified selling. These will complicate temporarily the application of this process. One possible problem is that through greater emphasis upon service by "things" rather than by people, the responsibility for supervision and control of the sales situation may necessitate some re-orientation in larger stores where there is a functional division between merchandising and operation. What has been a responsibility of the merchandising division in the past assumes greater similarity with the functions of the operating division. This is particularly true where specialized facilities for customer payment and
merchandise handling are used by more than one selling
department. Another problem may be the possible un-
adaptability of the physical environment, e.g., size,
shape, location, of existing selling situations.

In large department stores, there may arise the
problem that a change in one department has an effect
upon others, as in the case of the use of specialized
facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling
or improvement in merchandise layout. Where non-selling
departments (e.g., purchasing, display, personnel, ware-
house, workrooms, merchandise control) exist, these also
may be affected. For example, merchandise receiving
operations may have to be modified in order to make
possible selling-stock display of balanced assortments.
A conversion in one selling department thus may be compli-
cated by necessitating changes elsewhere in a store. In
addition, the tendency to broaden merchandise lines in the
application of selling simplification and the emphasis
which is placed upon early attainment of greater volume in
a somewhat unfamiliar situation both may complicate store
operation during the development period.

A fear of greater customer pilferage may also arise
to limit selling simplification. Many retailers have
become overly concerned with this possibility because of
the greater exposure of merchandise. They then have
limited their application of the process or refused to
use it entirely. While pilferage has increased in some cases, realistic consideration of this problem does not seem to justify restraint because of it. The extent of customer pilferage has been somewhat confused by the lack of knowledge regarding the amount and causes of such losses with traditional methods of operation. Therefore, a conscious interest in the problem during the development of simplified selling may produce evidence which is unrealistically damaging to extension of the process. Because of the nature of the problem, there always has been a hesitancy to give it accurate quantitative dimensions. Certainly, part of the estimates of shrinkage which have been published are a result of bookkeeping errors, salesperson theft, and inaccuracies in recording sales.

Retailers have found it more reasonable to adopt the philosophy that most customers are basically honest. Extensive simplified selling requires a certain confidence of retailers in customers in addition to customer confidence in the retailer and/or merchandise. Otherwise, considerable benefits will be lost through exaggerated fear caused by the action of a few. Customer access to merchandise is the key to greater sales, lower costs, and other benefits discussed in the previous chapter. In addition, there is considerable evidence that there is less, not more, shrinkage after conversion. Various causes of shrinkage
have been controlled in simplified selling situations by such means as the specialization of the performance of the "mechanics" of the sale, proper store layout, effective lighting, better vigilance of floor personnel, packaging of merchandise, price-marking of all merchandise, limitations upon fixture height, and the psychological barrier of a check-out system. Specialized means such as one-way mirrored lookouts, a protective force, and retailer cooperation in publicly prosecuting offenders have also been used. At the same time, a favorable relative effect on shrinkage is possible because of the achievement of greater sales volume. A possible increase, furthermore, may be justified by lower selling costs which can materialize through effective simplified selling.

PERSONNEL FACTORS

Certain personnel factors may limit the extent to which selling simplification can be successfully applied in a particular selling situation. Whether any restraining effect of these factors is of a temporary or more permanent nature depends considerably upon the effectiveness of the planning and the success in informing executives and employees of the various ramifications of the change. Their part in developing the simplified selling situation and any proposed changes in their responsibilities must be carefully explained in a manner which will achieve
their realistic support. If there is employee education and training prior to and during the actual development, much of this limiting effect will not materialize. If this re-orientation in ability and attitude is neglected, extensive use of selling simplification will surely be complicated.

Conservatism in Planning for Simplified Selling

It has already been implied that a conservative attitude may arise in the planning for selling simplification and immediately restrict the extent to which the process will be used. Some of the resistance to simplified selling is probably only resistance to change. Many retailers who have become accustomed to certain ways of selling goods and handling customers find it difficult to change. Fixed by habit, the old way is very often thought to be the best way, in spite of obvious benefits of possible changes and problems in continuing the present method. Since selling simplification affects traditional relationships between salesperson and customer, many retailers may view the process as a threat to both personal contacts with their customers and the preservation of personal salesmanship. For either reason, changes in selling methods which are otherwise realistically possible and desirable may not be attempted.
Inadequacies of Executives and Personnel During Operation

Inadequacies of executives and employees may limit extensive development and operation in a particular situation once it has been planned. Retailing executives may lack skill in supervising and controlling a simplified selling situation. Depending upon the nature of traditional methods, previous experience of executives may not fit them for the changes in the selling operation. They may lack the technique which is necessary in a developing coordination of non-personal factors in a sales situation. They may have little knowledge regarding merchandise display arrangement and control, use of packaging and signing, economical use of specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling, etc. Since extensive simplified selling requires exacting and constant supervision, especially during the formative stages, this factor may present a considerable limit to its success. The problem appears to be further complicated in department stores where the responsibilities for selling and buying are centralized in "buyers." They are kept busy with the many details of buying, including buying trips which necessitate prolonged absences from the selling floor. Moreover, many are uninterested and untrained in people and their management.

At the same time, the existing skill of floor personnel may be grossly inconsistent with the planned situation. For
example, salespeople may lack a sense of timing which will encourage customers to make use of non-personal means of selling prior to their approach. They may be unable to make effective use of these means in their sales presentation. They and other floor personnel may have little knowledge of inventory control which must become a continuous function in order to assure merchandise exposure.

There also are instances where the attitude of personnel limits the extension of simplified selling. S. J. Fosdick, a department store executive who has had considerable experience with selling simplification, emphasized this problem to the author during a field interview. In an earlier article, he observed that "the biggest barrier to wider adoption of the self-service idea in department stores will come from within the store organization, from buyers and service people." He referred to the reservations of these executives which limit their contribution in achieving greater benefits from planned simplified selling. They may work to block or restrict decisions for more extensive application of the process or, what is perhaps more detrimental, accept changes without giving them wholehearted support. A lack of enthusiasm in supervisory personnel may well result in indifferent

success for well-planned simplified selling situations. A store or department manager may merely accept the introduction of various aspects of simplified selling arrangement and then simply wait "to see what it will do." In some cases, these executives may even overtly bring about failure for, as one retailing official phrased it for the author, "anyone can make selling simplification fail if he puts his mind to it."

On the other hand, success with extensive simplified selling may be limited because of over-enthusiasm of executives. They quickly may become excited about the potentialities of the change and expose themselves to serious disappointment. When they do not take the time or responsibility to analyze the limitations of planned changes and to assure themselves of full effectiveness without salespeople, benefits are not realistically anticipated. When the deficiencies of the situation do arise, these executives are apt to become just as quickly disillusioned. Not only may they return to traditional methods, but they may reject selling simplification efforts in the future.

Improper attitude of floor operating personnel also may restrict the extension of selling simplification. Where non-selling personnel are used to perform duties of stock maintenance and/or the "mechanics" of the sale, the
importance of their task in achieving better customer service and more economical operation may not be readily apparent to them. They may become negligent in doing these things which are a necessity for maximum effectiveness. Where salespeople are retained, their attitude regarding simplified selling is especially important. For example, where they continue to be responsible for stock maintenance in addition to their selling duties, they may neglect the refolding and replacing of merchandise examined without their assistance. They may adopt a "self-service complex" where, even though it is planned that they are to do creative and service selling, they put forth little effort to sell. This latter attitude especially arises where there is no commission form of compensation and supervision is not effective. It is, on the other hand, possible that salespeople may be antagonized by selling simplification efforts. They may confuse all such efforts with "self-service" and view the process as a threat to their job security. They then may resist and inhibit such efforts. If not properly handled, there is the further possibility of arousing the hostility of labor unions.

Difficulty of Providing Monetary Incentive for Salespeople in Simplified Selling Situations

Another important personnel factor which may limit success in the use of this process is the problem of providing incentive compensation for salespeople who are
to function in simplified selling departments or stores. This problem may be great enough so as to prevent or restrict the use of specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling in situations where individual commissions are to be retained. Where there is individual commission compensation, sales must be identified with individual salespeople. If the "mechanics" of all sales are performed through the specialized facilities, the necessity of this identification complicates the operation. It may result in the situation (described to the author) where salespeople attempt to associate themselves with all sales, even those for which they do not actually participate in the selection. Specialization of their efforts is accordingly frustrated. In such cases, individual commission arrangements are difficult to employ. However, commissions may be given on a group basis where all departmental floor personnel share equally in them. Merit increases based upon recommendations of departmental managers also may be effective, without sacrifice of individual rewards. In some cases, periodic bonuses (on either an individual or group basis) may be used.

Where the specialized facilities operate only to supplement sales completed by salespeople, individual commission payments are more practically retained, but other problems may result. When salespeople are enabled to concentrate more on creative and service selling, their
earnings are found to increase substantially. There then is a question of whether or not continued use of a rate set for a substantially different situation is justified. The higher earnings of some salespeople may create difficulty in maintaining balance in employee payments. The justifiable differential between the income to a salesperson and that received by his supervisor will narrow and present considerable problems. In large departmentalized stores where these specialized facilities are not used in every department, there may be further problems. Income of salespeople in departments where these facilities are not used will remain static and the balance among salespeople will be lost. It then may be more difficult to transfer salespeople.

POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION OF RETAIL SALESPEOPLE

A fifth major factor which may limit the extent to which retailers simplify their selling performance is the positive contribution of retail salespeople. Where personal salesmanship can be used economically and efficiently with results which compare favorably with those of non-personal means of selling, there will be less desire for extensive simplified selling (and its elimination of participation by salespeople). The general level of retail salesmanship in 1954 does not pose such a
limiting factor for most mass-market stores. If the function of personal salesmanship can be carefully re-examined and revitalized to make possible a general and considerable up-grading of its contribution, however, it is conceivable that there will be a limit to supplanting salespeople with non-personal means, even in mass-market stores. There thus may be a positive incentive to restrict or confine the area of customer self-selection even though improved non-personal means continue to be developed and integrated into retail selling situations.
Use of scientific management can help to minimize the risk that a firm must assume in attempting to convert to some, or to a higher, degree of simplified selling. It therefore is desirable to devise and use a reliable method or procedure. Nevertheless, the need for a scientific approach to planning and developing simplified selling situations was found to be largely unsatisfied. In field interviews conducted with officials and technicians of fifteen large retailing companies active in this area, it was evident that none had a complete formalized approach for the application of selling simplification. Furthermore, there was no evidence in published material of an adequate practical approach developed by other companies.

The problem of proper techniques and procedures is apparent in the unintegrated trial-and-error efforts which have been dominant in the past. Very seldom has consideration been given to more than one or two of the six selling forces. It also is obvious in the complications experienced by retailers as a result of a deluge of advice and offers of assistance from others such as consumer
goods manufacturers and fixture and equipment suppliers. Much confusion, disappointment and even expensive re-adjustment have resulted from indiscriminate use of ideas and proposals which give little consideration to the particular needs of the individual retailer. The absence of a reliable method by which ideas (whatever their source) can be judged in terms of a retailer's own coordinated merchandising operation has been generally recognized as a major obstacle to simplified selling efforts.

Notwithstanding the scarcity of formalized methodology in this area, it is believed possible to recommend a definite, but general, approach to the application of this process in all types of stores. This procedure is a result of careful and critical study of a large number of varied simplified selling situations through either direct observation or critical analysis of published accounts. Of particular significance was the author's detailed investigation of the unparalleled broad and intensive planning for the "Quick Service" program of Sears, Roebuck and Company.

The steps or actions in the recommended general procedure for effectively using selling simplification can be grouped as an approach for analysis, interpretation, and application. The method to be used by an individual retailer will be fundamentally an adaptation
of this general approach to the problem, with some features more manifest than others. An understanding of this approach will not provide answers necessary for the application of selling simplification. It will not indicate how to install or operate a simplified selling situation or suggest a particular functional arrangement or system which might be used. Effective selling simplification is much too dependent upon the peculiarities of a given situation.

This general approach can represent a means for securing answers valid for the conditions of a specific retail operation. The following major steps are believed to be necessary parts of a planned and integrated approach to selling simplification:

1. Determination of a major policy on selling simplification.

2. Organization of operational responsibility for selling simplification efforts.

3. Planning and developing of particular simplified selling situations.

   a. Determining the reasonable confines of a particular selling situation, i.e., whether it is to a separate merchandise department or entire store.

   b. Situation analysis of the existing selling operation of the department or store.

   c. Analysis planning of the realistic simplified operation.

   d. Development and maintenance of the simplified selling situation.
4. Introductory program with floor personnel and customers.

5. Continuing evaluation of results of selling simplification.

At all times, careful consideration should be given to factors which may limit the application of this process, as discussed in the previous chapter. Special attention should be paid to the problems which can arise in converting to more extensive simplified selling in established stores. In field interviews, it was learned that many of these were unanticipated in early efforts and caused considerable difficulty. To the extent that the possibilities of their occurrence are recognized and efforts are taken to minimize them throughout the application of the steps suggested above, a retailer's selling simplification can become more efficient. However, there still may not be full latitude in simplifying retail selling performance because of conditions uncontrollable by an individual retailer.

DETERMINATION OF MAJOR POLICY ON SELLING SIMPLIFICATION

Determination of a definite and clearly stated company (or store) policy regarding selling simplification should be the first step in any such undertaking. Selling simplification merits the attention of top management because of its broad significance. Conscious and
effective application of this process will result in radical changes in the operation of many stores and will involve or ultimately affect almost every phase of retail operation. It is neither desirable nor necessary to continue the general practice of piecemeal management decisions regarding individual proposals.

Few of the companies where personal interviews were made during this study had such a policy and those policies that did exist were generally incomplete and/or impractical. They referred to a limited number of specific selling forces or were overly-generalized statements of company intent regarding simplified selling. In some large companies where there was specialization of management, those who were responsible for planning simplified selling had to secure top management approval of each specific change in selling arrangements or operation. Approval many times depended to a great degree upon personal vagaries, especially in regard to very extensive changes. In addition, there was little provision for substantive stimulus or direction to a continuing awareness and action by operating executives. For these reasons, it was not possible to use a particular company's policy as the basis for the following recommendations which are believed to be important to efficient selling simplification (as the process is conceived in this treatise).
Significance of Policy Decision

Company policy is based upon management's consideration of social and economic circumstances together with their interpretation of the desires of a store's customers. As a product of the individual attitudes and capacities of men, it may prevent an extension of simplified selling which is fundamentally desirable in a particular situation. It is, at the very least, a greater variable than are other factors which influence the application of selling simplification. In contrast to the facts observable in a particular selling situation and which are generally similar for given types of stores and merchandise, a store's policy is "man-made." It provides the milieu or environment in which ascertained facts are to be interpreted and used. Unless a policy regarding selling simplification is consciously determined at the outset, it is felt that top management's control of the results of such efforts will be complicated.

Determination of an adequate policy in this area can contribute considerably to effective development and maintenance of simplified selling situations.¹ Its

contribution will be greater for larger, more complex retailing organizations. On the other hand, the significance of such a preliminary step for smaller stores should not be discounted. It is believed that a sound policy on selling simplification can have such specific benefits as the following:

1. Prevention of deviation and greater assurance of consistency in action, regardless of the personnel involved or the time of its application.

2. Promotion of intelligent cooperation between executives, technicians, and operating personnel which is vital to the development of selling simplification.

3. Improved coordination of action in the various selling situations and in the non-selling operations which must support simplified selling.

4. Effective purchasing arrangements for merchandise, equipment, and services without sacrifice of freedom to select particular offerings. Individual purchase decisions will not commit a retailer to depend thereafter upon the use of specialized items and advice provided by the manufacturer or supplier.

5. An effective foundation for an introductory program with store personnel and customers.

6. A realistic basis for evaluating executive action in applying selling simplification.

7. A guide for thinking in future planning as conditions change.

Factors to be Considered in Policy Decision

In the formulation of policy regarding selling simplification, a number of factors must be considered.
These consist, for the most part, of influences which have been examined generally in previous chapters of this treatise. The individual retailer must carefully study each of these factors as they affect his business. He must come to understand the nature of their effect upon the primary and secondary business objectives of the company. It is very important that the retailer know as much as possible about the character of the process of selling simplification, itself. He should be aware of the tendency in its effects upon the performance of the selling function and the participation of customers in his store. Without an appreciation of the fundamental meaning of the development, no store policy regarding its use can possibly be complete or sufficiently realistic. Those conditions which are exerting pressure upon the particular retailer's operation and organization must then be considered in order to determine the desirability of action. At the same time, possible benefits and limiting factors in selling simplification must be directly related to the specific operation.

Consideration of the character or personality which a store is attempting to develop is an important part of the determination of store policy regarding selling simplification. The application of this process must be clearly perceived and developed in terms of the store's "merchandising bid" for a particular segment of the
consuming public. It is necessary to do so because selling simplification is primarily a merchandising concept. Its results, as an expression of the store's particular attempt to provide desirable selling service, must not be permitted to destroy indiscriminately that character which has been developed over a long period of time. With abrupt changes in store personality, customers are apt to be confused and their patronage may be adversely affected.

Many of the pressures which have led to more extensive simplified selling also have fundamental and far-reaching effects upon the validity of a particular store character. Changes in the buying habits of a store's customers, especially, can make inappropriate a personality which had considerable effectiveness in the past. Therefore, it may be desirable to reconsider a store's character and many of the policies which serve to develop it before final formulation of a policy on selling simplification. Such policies as those relating to merchandise lines, quality of merchandise, level of services, and price and other appeals should be carefully re-examined. They must be evaluated against current buying habits and the store's achievements, especially in regard to the performance of salespeople. Once there is assurance that the store's character-objective is realistically appropriate for its market, simplified selling can be adapted without damage to its personality.
Nature of Policy on Selling Simplification

The fundamental objective should be to achieve a policy which can have significance for the entire company. The complexities of a large departmentized store may make a store-wide policy formulation difficult. Major policy decisions for each "shopping center" or major merchandise division within the store may be more practical. Similarly, in the case of multi-unit companies, individual store policies may be desirable, depending upon the extent to which the stores do not represent homogeneous situations and the extent to which the company operations are to be affected. In indicating the general manner of applying selling simplification, the policy will tend to be restrictive. It must be sufficiently broad, general, and basic to be realistically relevant for all specific situations controlled by it. Moreover, it seems that its restrictive elements should be preceded by an expression of purposes which are germane to formulation, application, and control of the policy.

In addition to a statement of purposes, policy on selling simplification should embody the following elements:

1. Pattern or patterns of customer buying behavior which may be encouraged and facilitated, implying full latitude to operating executives and technicians to use all possible selling means, except where specific restrictions are stated below.

2. The focus of emphasis which is desired, i.e., the dominant store pattern, if more than one
pattern is permitted. (Where customers are to be provided an option between patterns in a particular situation, the emphasis will be upon such a combination.)

3. Continuity or intermittency of operation, i.e., whether or not the emphasis will vary with hourly, daily and/or seasonal changes in customer traffic.

4. Restrictions believed desirable upon the following, whether throughout the province of the policy or only parts thereof:
   
a. Role of pre-selling activities, i.e., nature of brand policy and use of educational techniques for customer participation.
   
b. Extent of packaging and labeling of merchandise.
   
c. Nature and extent of interior display features (i.e., layout, merchandise classification and presentation, signing, and fixturing.)
   
d. Existence and type of personal salesmanship, i.e., creative and/or service selling, and whether or not salespeople are to be identified by smocks, badges, etc.
   
e. Use and type of specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling, whether they are to be used for all merchandise selections or solely for those made without the participation of a salesperson, and whether their use will be primarily during peak periods or continuously.

2 Opinion regarding the advisability of clear identification of salespeople who function in customer aisles is divided. However, there seems to be greater justification for the belief that such identification will prevent customer delay and confusion in locating salespeople even though a possible additional means of controlling customer pilferage is sacrificed.

3 In larger stores, where cash-and-wrap desks are opened and closed to meet the demands of customer traffic, it has been found desirable that at least one desk should
OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELLING SIMPLIFICATION

Planning, development, and maintenance of simplified selling must take place in terms of particular (i.e., rather homogeneous) selling situations. It is complex in that knowledge of varied techniques is required and its maximum effectiveness is considerably dependent upon a balanced, integrated situation. It differs considerably from the counter or full-service type of operation where floor duties of supervisory personnel (i.e., department managers or buyers) involve primarily the control of salespeople. In simplified selling situations, it is necessary to control non-personal means and, possibly, salespeople to a degree previously non-existent. Its development requires more than the installation of various elements of simplified selling arrangement. The operation must be continually developed in actual performance, with adjustments being made as the need arises.

Use of Committees in Selling Simplification

This different and more complex task in simplified selling operation has affected the operational responsibility for effective selling. In the smaller stores, while the task is changed, it continues to be performed

Footnote 3 (cont'd.) be in operation on each floor at all times in order to preserve customer acceptance of the system.
by the owner-operator, i.e., the merchant. In larger stores where there is specialization among various line and staff personnel, organizational changes have been made in order to achieve more integrated and controlled performance. One problem in these stores has been that the knowledge required for selling simplification is usually not the exclusive province of any one man or department. It becomes necessary to use committees or "task forces" in order to secure a sharing of skills and opinions between various technicians and operating management. These committees may be composed of some or all of the following types of personnel (depending upon the peculiarities of the company operation and organization): merchandising, sales, operation, research and planning, sales promotion, display, packaging, personnel, control, and architect-designer.

Allocation of Responsibility and Authority

There is a further problem. Even where committees are used, it is necessary to delegate responsibility and authority specifically. Retailers sometimes have felt that the application of selling simplification cannot be effectively performed as a part of the functions of the line organization which has responsibility for selling. They believe that the process is abnormal or too greatly dissimilar to existing functions. Thus, the selling simplification task has been centralized into either a
new specialized position or some existing staff position. In some large departmentized stores, the position of Manager of Simplified Selling Projects, Director of Merchandise Presentation, or some similar title has been established. In others, the Sales Promotion or Display Director has been delegated the responsibility.

However, a decision to assign the responsibility for the development of simplified selling outside of the division which is charged with supervision of salespeople is not felt to be particularly desirable. Such a distinction is artificial. Selling simplification should be considered as a normal and continuing part of the sales responsibility. It is a merchandising concept and has important effects upon sales results. Its direction thus logically should come from the primary line personnel who are charged with the broad responsibility for sales performance.

The process of selling simplification should not be isolated from overall merchandising strategy because there is apt to be extended use of non-personal means about which operating sales executives lack knowledge. Where there has been education and training regarding simplified selling, the process has not been found difficult for effective infusion into the continuous management of a store's selling operation. On the other hand, where the responsibility has been specialized, there has been no
single accountability and complications between selling simplification efforts and "normal" selling efforts have arisen. Furthermore, supervision of the selling operation was complicated.

The centralization of responsibility for selling simplification also has been defended upon the basis of the need for an integrated store or company system. For example, the National Retail Dry Goods Association Subcommittee on Simplified Selling has recommended:

However it is done, the responsibility should be fixed and centralized so that every move in the direction of selling simplification is part of an integrated store program. The well-meaned attempts of individual enthusiasts can simplify in one spot and complicate in another. Also, the many people outside the store who are offering help, including manufacturers of merchandise, should have a single point of contact with the store on this subject.4

The possibility for a given effort to simplify selling performance to complicate other operations was recognized in the previous chapter. Nevertheless, it does not seem reasonable that there must be a centralized responsibility in order to achieve uniformity and consistency of action internally and with those outside the company. These needs can be better achieved by an adequate policy on selling simplification. Sound policy, as previously indicated, can do much to secure coordination

and integration of action. A policy decision, rather than centralized action, does so while preserving the leadership and control of line executives charged with the responsibility for sales performance. It can be a better stimulus to their necessary action, not only during initial development but continuously. Each selling situation should be individually planned and developed by those primarily responsible for its direction. Store-wide uniformity in selling simplification should be achieved by effective acceptance and application of sound policy. Under such circumstances, retailers will find that sufficient restraints are imposed and conflicts are minimized or solved through regular channels of communication.

Desirability of Participation by Floor Personnel

It has proven very worthwhile to encourage the participation of operating floor personnel in the planning and development for simplified selling. Where personal salesmanship continues to be a selling force in the simplified operation, the advice of the salespeople can materially aid the planning. Their experience can be a major source of criticism and ideas which may help to make the planning more complete and realistic. Their participation also can help to insure in advance their necessary acceptance of changes in personal selling
performance. Similar benefits have resulted from participation by non-selling floor personnel.

Possible Need for Specialized Staff

There may be a need to supplement the line responsibility for selling simplification with more than the use of committees headed by sales or merchandising executives. It may be desirable to organize a specialized staff for long-range planning and research regarding techniques, equipment, and customer buying behavior. Large retailing companies have found such staffs practical and helpful in formulating procedures, guides, and systems for use in the planning and development of individual simplified selling situations throughout their operation. Where committees are used, this staff should be represented on them. However, it should not exercise authority over the responsible line personnel. The national and territorial Store Planning and Merchandise Departments of Sears, Roebuck and Company function in this manner. Where the organization of a specialized staff to fulfill this need was not justified, retailers have made use of outside consultants.

In one large chain of drug stores, self-service operations in only some of its stores has resulted in the organization of a separate operating division. A Director of Self-Service Operations (with a specialized staff) has authority over those stores which are operated
on a self-service basis. The radically different type of operation in the self-service stores has made necessary a specialized staff and specialized training for these managers. Nevertheless, there is no breakdown in the unity of command since planning and control of these stores have been isolated from the major operating division. If all stores were operated on a self-service basis, apparently no specialized staff with authority would exist.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPING THE SIMPLIFIED SELLING SITUATION

Once policy is determined and organizational responsibility established, it becomes realistic to proceed with the actual planning and development of simplified selling operations. The process of selling simplification, as indicated in Chapter Three, is most appropriately directed to a particular sales situation.5

5 Specific changes in individual means, e.g., packaging, fixturing, may be made without consideration of the entire department or store. Self-selection fixtures, for example, may be installed for only one section of a department or for a single manufacturer's line within the department. Such isolated selling simplification efforts are incomplete and only bring about fragmentary results. Any change within an individual sales environment clearly affects other factors and full effectiveness of any one element cannot be achieved unless it is compatible with the total sales operation.
The focus of attention is a physical environment which is naturally distinguishable from others, one in which the products offered possess considerable homogeneity. Care must be taken to insure that the situation is neither delineated too minutely (i.e., is actually only a part of a natural merchandise grouping) or defined too broadly (i.e., encompasses several independent selling operations).

It must be a particularized situation in which the functional character for each of the several selling forces can be integrated to facilitate a dominant pattern (or optional patterns) of customer buying behavior. In the case of single-line specialty operations, there is only one particular selling situation, i.e., the entire store. Elsewhere, particular selling situations may initially consist of merchandise departments which have been previously segregated. Where a merchandise department is composed of products which lack homogeneity with one another, it will be necessary to regard it as more than one selling situation. In toy departments, for example, expensive wheel goods and dolls may be advantageously separated in terms of selling methods from other products in the department. Later, departmental classifications may be studied and revised to provide greater homogeneity in selling operation within each department.
Situation Analysis of the Existing Selling Operation

For the individual retailer, the need for simplified selling is related to the peculiarities of his sales environment. Moreover, the simplified arrangement and operation of selling factors must be tailored to it. It is this individual and particular environment which must be carefully analyzed. The primary method in planned and integrated simplification of the retail selling function therefore can be appropriately termed "situation analysis." In making a situation analysis of a specific selling operation, a standardized pattern of diagnosis can be of considerable aid. Such a pattern can provide a logical basis for analyzing these complex situations. At the same time, it can be a means of insuring careful consideration of all factors which have a vital bearing upon effective selling performance.

It is here that the theoretical conception of the retail sales situation (as discussed in Chapter Five) is given practical and specific denominations. The various features of the seven major factors which exist in a selling environment properly form a schematic outline against which the existing situation is to be examined. Customer attitudes and knowledge which dominate in the specific situation should be studied first in order to provide understanding of/major buying set particular to the situation. In addition, it should be determined which
of the selling forces do exist and each of them should then be separately studied as it functions. A meaningful descriptive model of the existing selling operation thus can be the product of sound situation analysis.

As previously stated, the specific guide for diagnosis will depend upon the personnel and type of operation involved. However, it seems reasonable to recommend that the following points be included in such an outline:

1. CUSTOMERS' PARTICULAR BUYING SET
   a. Attitudes regarding price differentials, desire for convenience or ease of buying, immediate desire for speed, salesperson's participation in the purchase of specific merchandise.
   b. Characteristics of the purchase—whether transactions are normally considered as primary by the customers or secondary to some other buying or non-buying experience (i.e., a purchase of a convenience good in a department store or one made in a railroad terminal), frequency of purchase, need for immediacy of want satisfaction.

2. THE PRODUCTS
   a. Products themselves—standardization, perishability; weight, bulk, style factor, manner of use, need for adjustment, guaranties, service requirements, legal restriction upon use.
   b. Price of products—level, stability.
   c. Product lines—breadth and depth of assortments.

3. PRE-SELLING ACTIVITIES
   a. Pre-selling of merchandise—presence of strongly pre-sold brands as indicated by degree of customer acceptance (i.e.,
recognition, preference, or insistence).

b. **Pre-selling of customer participation**—existence of conditioning (through experience and education in similar stores and in one's own establishment) for specific patterns of customer buying behavior.

4. **INTERIOR DISPLAY**

a. **Layout and space allocation**—relatedness of merchandise groupings, relatedness of pattern of buying behavior, relation of space allocation to sales potentialities.

b. **Physical environment**—size and shape of physical area; nature of atmosphere created; use of lighting, color, and air-conditioning.

c. **Fixtures and mechanical equipment**—presence of functional character, appropriateness to merchandise (and packaging.)

d. **Merchandise presentation**—dominance of no visible stock, feature display, assortment display, selling-stock display, or mass display arrangements.

e. **Merchandise classification and arrangement**—dominance of customer's point of view (emphasis upon customer interests) or retailer's point of view (emphasis upon brands or prices). If from customer's point of view, relevance of classification and arrangement to sequential decisions in the buying process.

f. **Signing**—for merchandise location, merchandise information, promotional emphasis, identification of and directions for specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling.

5. **PACKAGING AND LABELING**—use of containing, identifying, informing, protecting, and promoting functions; use of multiple-unit packaging; appropriateness to fixtures and merchandise arrangements.
6. PERSONAL SALESMANSHIP—forms of selling (i.e., creative salesmanship, service salesmanship, or service) which are present, type and rate of salesperson approach, salesperson or customer option in use of personal salesmanship, presence of salespeople in customer aisles, possibility of area selling in departmentized stores.

7. SPECIALIZED FACILITIES FOR CUSTOMER PAYMENT AND MERCHANDISE HANDLING—nature of specialized facilities (i.e., cash-and-wrap desks, check-out system, or checkwriters), use of facilities (i.e., for all transactions or only for those where no salesperson participates in the merchandise selection), location of facilities, presence of carrying equipment for customers.

The primary method in situation analyses is the use of observational research. This method implies more than casual viewing of the nature of the non-personal selling means and the behavior of customers and floor personnel. The scientific nature of observational research must be stressed because many retailers act and re-act hastily upon a limited number of isolated observations and term such activity, "observational research." On the contrary, there must be careful planning and control to assure accurate viewing and recording of all the significant facts within the selling situation. Care should be taken to make a sufficient number of observations in order

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6 For a more complete discussion of the scientific character of observational research and rules for applying such a technique, readers may refer to texts on marketing research. For example, see Lyndon O. Brown, Marketing and Distribution Research, New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1949, pp. 510-512.
to achieve reliability. It has proved helpful to use a number of observers who have different orientations (e.g., sales supervision, fixtures, packaging, operations), preferably the committee or task force planning the simplified operation. After individually making their observations, they collaborate on a statement of findings.

Through such a method, the functional character of all selling forces can be identified. It is important that the various means of selling be observed in actual operation, i.e., as they come into contact with customers and floor personnel. The selling situation is an interdependent operation and no assumptions should be made that a means of selling will actually function as it is intended. For example, it is not sufficient to know that an item is packaged in a particular manner; it is necessary to ascertain just how customers and salespeople make use of the package and its attributes. Moreover, it is important that observations be made at different times in order to assure consideration of the effects of changes in customer traffic. A schematic outline of the factors, as previously suggested, with convenient spaces for the notations of the observers can prove helpful in directing and controlling such observations.

At the same time, specific quantitative data regarding customer behavior should be collected. Standard forms which facilitate the recording of individual observations
and their summary should be used. **Customer behavior during merchandise selection** should be studied. Observations should be made regarding such facts as the proportion of customers who select a particular item without salesperson participation, the sequence in which customers consider merchandise attributes, the point on a display fixture which receives the greatest attention, and proportion who read informative signing or packaging information. It also is desirable to secure data (at periodic intervals) regarding other aspects of the selling operation. The following facts have proved particularly worthwhile: customer counts (by sex) at various places in the selling situation itself, group of related departments, and entire store; physical patterns of customer traffic flow; salespeople/customers ratios; average times for completion of a total purchase transaction; average times for completion of the "mechanics" of a sale; and successful transactions/total transactions ratios. In all cases, comparisons should be made between data collected during peak customer traffic periods and those collected at other times.

**Sales record analysis** can provide information pertinent to the study of the existing selling operation. Sales for the various merchandise lines should be analyzed to reveal the "balance of sale," i.e., the relationship of sales to the merchandise attributes in the assortments. In
order to isolate out the normal sequence in which the merchandise attributes are considered in the buying process, emphasis should be placed on why customers bought the merchandise. Cross-analyses of sales according to major merchandise characteristics by one store have revealed, for example, that customers normally consider silhouette first in the purchase of popular-price dresses, with other features being considered in the following order: size, color, and price. Such data is necessary to test the relevance of merchandise assortments and arrangement to customer buying behavior. In addition, hourly, daily, weekly, and seasonal variations in sales and transaction volume should be determined. In one company's research, it was found that cash register readings at only three times during a day were sufficient.

A critical analysis of the existing selling operation serves several purposes. First, it provides an understanding of the manner in which the various factors are presently combined. There thus is a basis for judging the conformity of the present situation to company or store policy. Later, there is a basis for evaluating the extensiveness and effectiveness of any change in the selling operation. Second, it discloses inconsistencies and defects in the way in which individual selling forces are arranged and operated or in the totality of the selling situation itself. Third, it familiarizes personnel
directly engaged in selling simplification with the technique of analytical study of the total selling operation. They receive a preparatory conditioning for planning changes in selling performance. Moreover, the considerable importance of planning for proper balance in all factors is forceably stressed by the readily apparent lack of integration in most existing operations.

**Analysis Planning of the Realistic Simplified Operation**

The next step in the recommended procedure for selling simplification is "analysis planning" or the actual planning of the integrated, simplified selling situation. The same outline which was used in the situation analysis of the existing operation should be used here as a means for depicting the planned arrangement and operation. Rather than the common practice of concentrating on the introduction of specific improvements, the starting point should be the development of an operating model of all the selling forces as they might possibly exist to facilitate the pattern (or optional patterns) of customer behavior believed desirable.

Consideration should be given to the action and interaction of the selling forces upon the customers' particular buying set in order to ascertain the most desirable pattern of buying. The objective should be to identify the one fundamental type of selling arrangement and operation which is most compatible with the manner in
which customers want to buy a particular kind of merchandise. The existence and nature of retail selling forces should then be based upon their interdependent contribution to the effective realization of that particular manner of buying, assuming reasonable effectiveness of each.

This model or plan for a simplified selling situation must be realistic. Revision in the functional character of the components of a selling situation, ideally conceived, must take place in accord with the restraints of company or store policy. In most cases, sound policy will make necessary only slight modification or particularization of the type of selling situation found most appropriate for a kind of merchandise. It will be primarily a matter of "finesse," rather than a fundamental difference in buying behavior. At the same time, the planning must be realistic in terms of existing technology and knowledge and capacity of the retailer.

The individual capacity to control the factors in a selling situation will vary considerably among retailers. Much of the variation will be a result of the size or scale of the retailing operation. While certainly not a static situation, most retailers are severely limited in the changes which they themselves can achieve. For the most part, they are able to select only from available
merchandise and equipment offerings. They are considerably dependent upon the cooperative efforts of manufacturers, other retailers, and, possibly, wholesalers in order to secure necessary information (e.g., of the "balance of sale" in merchandise lines) and to secure changes in merchandise and equipment. At the same time, some retailers have undertaken changes on a temporary and somewhat uneconomical basis, i.e., store packaging of merchandise. Very large-scale retailing companies, on the other hand, will not be so limited to existing devices and customer habits. With their greater resources for controlling selling forces and customers, they generally will be able to make adjustments more directly and more quickly.

Adequate situation analysis of the present sales environment, as previously indicated, can provide worthwhile information regarding tools of selling and customer behavior. Furthermore, existing techniques in one department are very apt to have validity for others. Much insight into realistic planning can be derived from a considered sharing of judgment of various executives, technicians, and floor personnel. The method generally can be facilitated by the organization of permanent or temporary committees. In smaller stores, it may simply constitute an informal attempt to secure the benefit of knowledge and opinion of company personnel.
There also can be experimentation with changes in the selling situation. Complete control of all selling factors in order to isolate the effect of a change in one is very difficult. Nevertheless, a possible change can be introduced in several similar situations for a test period and its approximate effect can be deduced from sales and expense records and customer reactions. Test results can then provide a basis for changes in further planning and development. This method is normally most practical for multi-unit companies and for cooperative groups of retailers which can make comparisons between stores and which assume less risk in such experiments. Extensive testing of "Quick Service" operation by the National Store Planning and Merchandise Department of Sears, Roebuck and Company for four months (including the Christmas rush) in two stores of the company contributed much information otherwise unavailable. Numerous "on-the-spot" changes and improvements were made and a definite operational pattern for use throughout the company resulted.

For information external to the company, retailers may employ the survey method in order to secure attitudes of their customers. However, the effectiveness of this method generally is limited and observation of actual customer behavior may be much more rewarding. There is a considerable need for improved methods for gathering
facts on customers and it may be that in-the-store efforts
will be supplemented by organized contacts with customers
outside the store. Another method is the study of
developments in other stores. These may ultimately assume
the character of "comparison shopping," where simplified
selling techniques of competitors in addition to their
merchandise prices are checked. Retailers also should
endeavor to make judicious use of the advisory services
of manufacturers, wholesalers, and their trade associations
as well as of published material, especially in regard to
techniques and equipment.

Development and Maintenance of the Simplified Situation

Once a simplified selling situation is planned and
set up, it becomes necessary to develop and maintain it.
Adjustments have to be made in order to eliminate
deficiencies which are only disclosed in actual operation.
As new techniques and devices become available, they must
be incorporated into the situation. Finally, in the
normal course of buying, new merchandise selections should
be based upon the requirements of the existing selling
situation. In order to maintain integrated arrangement
and operation, products have to be selected upon their
compatibility for the dominant buying pattern. The
product, its pre-selling, and its packaging all will have
to possess a similarity to present factors. Otherwise,
its selection will complicate, nor further, the simplified selling operation.

INTRODUCTORY PROGRAM WITH FLOOR PERSONNEL AND CUSTOMERS

Another important step in the actual simplification of a retail selling situation is an educational program with floor personnel and customers, the personal factors in the situation. Difficulties of control, especially with respect to customers, make necessary a definite and concentrated program in order to secure willing acceptance of changes in their participation within the simplified selling situation. While many retailers have slighted the need for a definite introductory program, those that have carried out such activities as described below secured readily apparent benefits. Such a program is especially necessary where the new pattern of customer behavior is substantially different from a previous and more general pattern for a type of department or store. At the same time, where salespeople are to continue to function, it is essential to dispel possible confusion and fears caused by the usual generalizing of all simplified selling with self-service. The benefits which can accrue to personnel and customers, respectively, should be paramount in all educational efforts.
Education and Training of Floor Personnel

It is essential that floor personnel be thoroughly "sold" on the simplified selling arrangement and operation prior to its installation and during the initial development. Sears, Roebuck and Company has found that some explanation of the simplification efforts should be made immediately when it is decided to engage in such an endeavor within a store. Otherwise, personnel will be put on guard by the appearance of observers or by changes in other selling departments. The personnel should understand all of the ramifications of the new operation and the benefits that the store, the customers, and they themselves will derive from it. Retailers can beneficially use such means as the statement of company or store policy, participation in the planning by selected personnel, employee meetings, and, later, close supervision in achieving employee acceptance. Without employee understanding and acceptance, proposed changes will not succeed, no matter how worthwhile they are.

In the case of salespeople, the need for education is compounded since they are otherwise apt to become antagonistic toward an operation which seemingly reduces their role and earnings. They must be convinced that non-personal means of selling are aids to them and that they can accordingly earn more and receive more satisfaction from their work. There also is a need for additional
training, re-oriented to the requirements of the simplified selling operation. For salespeople, this training may involve such matters as proper technique of approaching customers, use of non-personal means, and stock care duties.

**Education of Customers**

Effective simplified selling is dependent upon effective customer participation in the sales transactions. Activities for pre-selling of customer participation in the situation are as necessary to the success of simplification efforts as those for the pre-selling of merchandise. Retailers have found that customers must be educated as to the **advantages and their use** of a particular system of simplified selling. It is of utmost importance to inform customers of the manner in which they are expected to buy. It must be clearly indicated if only one pattern of behavior is possible or if they have an option, e.g., pre-selection and self-selection. The following means have been successfully used in the past: informative and directional signs and posters on the selling floor and elsewhere in the store, hand-out notices, institutional advertising in newspapers, window displays, publicity releases, and announcements over public address systems.

There is still much to be learned about effective means of accomplishing this important phase of selling
simplification. It may be quite difficult to change ingrained shopping habits. In some cases, customers have been found to ignore or pay little heed to signs and printed advertising and spoken announcements had to be a major means for eliciting customer action. Where there has been considerable conditioning in regard to a particular type of arrangement and operation, less must be done by the individual retailer. If a check-out system at the exit is used for all purchases, for example, its similarity to supermarket operation makes education as to its use less necessary. At the same time, it may be more difficult to convey the idea that personal salesmanship is not eliminated in such a situation.

CONTINUING EVALUATION OF RESULTS OF SELLING SIMPLIFICATION

A continuing evaluation of the results of selling simplification is necessary. Actual performance must be periodically compared with planned results. Retailers should look for improvement in existing operating data, many of which might have stimulated the simplification efforts. There should also be a conscious check for the realization of particular anticipated benefits (as indicated in Chapter Seven). Results of simplified selling performance may be substantially different from those of the previous operation, especially where the
conversion is an extensive one. Comparisons with existing standards will then be meaningless.

Retailers thus may find it desirable to upgrade and revise bases or standards for effectively judging operating performance. In some cases, retailers have felt it sufficient simply to establish higher amounts for existing standards. In others, there has been an actual change in the factors used as standards. Necessary revision in types of standards has been particularly in two directions. First, there has been a greater concern with physical transactions than had existed in the past. Second, because of the tendency in simplified selling to broaden the use of selling forces, productivity has been more accurately determined by space utilization, rather than as a matter of the particular contribution of salespeople, fixtures, etc. Salespeople and non-personal means all tend to be considered as utilizers of space which together give the fundamental factor (i.e., space) its productivity.
Future economic changes of considerable significance are indicated by the magnitude and extent of early consequences of the trend toward simplified selling in stores. The changes directly wrought by retail selling simplification appear to affect the very economic character and structure of retailing, merchandising activities of non-retailers, costs of retailing, and the nature of retail competition. While experience with planned selling simplification in other than food stores has been short and limited by 1954, it is possible to discern the nature and direction of general changes which may result, at least in part, from development and extension of this process in the future. For the most part, though, the broader effects still exist as tendencies and not established facts in most segments of retailing. Of course, factors such as those discussed in Chapter Eight can limit or delay these economic effects.

The development of retail selling simplification is part of a larger dynamic growth in the American economy and
society which is confronted with enhancing marketing efficiency in order to resolve the significant problem of unparalleled increasing productive capacity in this country. It thus is likely that the development of this process will not be without conflict between manufacturers and their distributors and between large-scale economic institutions and small businesses. Moreover, increased selling simplification may only accelerate developments which are taking place quite independently of planned and coordinated use of simplified selling. Self-selection selling, for example, will quicken economic effects already stimulated by manufacturers' brand identification of consumer goods. Some of the effects, however, are peculiarly a result of simplified selling operation in stores and the consequent greater customer participation.

CHANGING ECONOMIC CHARACTER AND STRUCTURE OF RETAILING

Possible effects upon the economic character and structure of retailing are of major importance in a discussion of the broader aspects of retail selling simplification. Various elements of simplified selling arrangement and operation seemingly jeopardize the very selling responsibility of small retailers. Even though the position of retailing will always be a strategic one because it represents the point at which the marketing system comes
in contact with ultimate consumers, a concern for the preservation of traditional responsibilities of retailers has arisen. In writing of the impact made by pre-selling activities of manufacturers upon retailing, an official of a retail trade association has cautioned:

"Pre-selling" reduced to plain terms is the means of selling the consumer through us at smaller mark-ons for us. I'm not one to insist on slogans, but are we the purchasing agent for the consumer or are we merely the vending machine for the national advertiser.1

Changing Scope of Economic Responsibility

Application of selling simplification and the resulting extensive use of non-personal means of retail selling possibly can affect the economic responsibility of retailers in two ways. First, use of non-personal means may make de-emphasis or elimination of personal salesmanship desirable. Retailers tend to feel that with such a simplified selling situation they lose their means of differentiating their operations from those of other retailers. Second, some of the non-personal means may be more economically developed by manufacturers, especially in the case of the many small retailers. Pre-selling activities and packaging by manufacturers are both examples where the responsibility of retailers for selling can be beneficially reduced. Because

of this two-fold effect, retailers may find themselves in keener and more limited competition with other retailers.

Growth of selling simplification thus gives rise to a fear that retailers will become mere transferers of goods with no differentiation between them (except that of location) and that there will be an accompanying readjustment in operating margins. In such a situation, it is possible that there will be a continuous and quite indeterminate shifting of patronage by both ultimate consumers and manufacturers who control the product differentiation. Reaction to such a possibility has varied in the past. In spite of the advantages of extensive merchandising activity and assistance by manufacturers, some retailers have resisted such efforts in fear that they would otherwise become passive distributive agents for manufacturers. They have defended private brand promotion wholly on the basis that they own the brands and "nobody can take them away." A few large-scale retailing companies have sought a commanding position by taking full responsibility for selling, including product development and brand promotion. Smaller retailers have sought some remedy through cooperative action, sometimes under the aegis of wholesalers or trade associations.

Efforts to preserve and strengthen the economic stature of retailers need not be at the sacrifice of extended merchandising activities by manufacturers. The solution as
well as the problem can be found in the very nature of sound selling simplification. It is true that pre-selling of merchandise and packaging become more important in simplified selling situations and that most retailers cannot economically perform such activities. At the same time, however, careful planning and control of individual sales situations provides a basis for establishing an effective partnership with others who can assist in developing and maintaining specific features of simplified selling operation. A retailer's primary significance in the marketing of goods thus can lie in his control of a particular selling situation, not in whether he is a purchasing agent for his customers or a distributor for manufacturers. Moreover, his strategic position is reinforced in a soundly planned simplified selling operation for he then will carefully select and coordinate all factors in a manner adapted to the buying habits of his customers, whether or not he actually develops the individual selling forces.

Because of the variability and freedom of customers, even in the mass-market segment, there can be no constantly applicable sales situation. This means that manufacturers cannot depend solely upon generalized promotions. Only through the retailer's specialized knowledge and control of the physical arrangement and operation of his particular department or store can manufacturers attain maximum success in their selling activities. To the extent that retailers
have effectively adapted the selling situation for their own customers, manufacturers who control product differentiation through their highly advertised brands are dependent upon them. There are few product items which have any appreciable degree of continuing brand insistence. In his arrangement of the physical selling environment, the retailer then has the opportunity to select from manufacturers' brands those which have significant brand recognition and preference among his customers. He also has control over the shelf location and height for merchandise. In addition, he has the option of strongly promoting his own brands or joining with other distributors to do so in order to benefit directly from selective demand.

The differentiation between simplified selling situations will be a matter of the particular composition of all retail selling forces, in terms of both physical arrangement and operation, rather than solely a matter of personal salesmanship. Customer patronage can be elicited and maintained upon the basis of facilitating a pattern of customer behavior which is most desirable for a type of merchandise and for a particular type of customer buying set. While personal salesmanship generally will become less important, there will remain a differentiation between stores, i.e., a differentiation based upon an individual integration of various selling forces. Where personal salesmanship is
de-emphasized or eliminated, personal contacts of non-selling floor personnel and the "drama" of non-personal means will become more important. It may be more difficult to achieve differentiation under such circumstances, but where retailers refuse to accept blindly the offerings of manufacturers and develop their own individual type of simplified selling operation, it can be done. In addition, retailers will be able to use broader credit extension and personal contacts of non-selling personnel as compensating factors in gaining and holding customer patronage.

Retailers thus may come to recognize the value of specialization among those who actually develop the various means for performing the retail selling function as well as of specialization in the functioning of the different selling forces. It will generally be a retailer's responsibility to develop a department or store upon the basis of the buying habits of a particular group of customers. His task will be to select continually from the many offerings of products and selling forces those that are most compatible to his own operation. He also will be a primary source of data with which manufacturers will seek to improve the product, its pre-selling, its packaging, and its fixturing. It will be a task of making specific the generalized promotions of the manufacturers at the very point where the merchandise comes together with customers. Thus, the scope of economic responsibility of retailers may
change with retailers becoming important partners of manufacturers and others within the channel of distribution. Retail selling, while oriented to the individual selling operations developed and controlled by retailers, will become the joint responsibility of all.

**Widening Apparent Distinction Between Selling Situations**

A primary change in the economic structure of retailing may be a widening apparent distinction in the types of selling service provided within departmentized stores and between stores. Extensive simplified selling will be used wherever possible for the majority of consumers (especially in the mass-market segment of the population) who want to pay a smaller proportion of the sales dollar for retailing services and, who, many times, prefer self-selection. At the same time, there will continue to be departments and stores where maximum personal salesmanship and minimum customer participation are emphasized. Various types of selling performance will exist side by side, each serving a group of customers who find in it the best adapted to their respective buying patterns. In addition to the effect of policy decisions regarding store character and product lines, regrouping of merchandise in order to facilitate more homogeneous selling situations may further make distinctions in selling service apparent.
Most stores will emphasize "typical" customer wants, concentrating on the fastest moving items and providing minimum personal salesmanship. Contemporaneously, some stores and departments which feature considerable service in all its forms will prosper.2 The stores which do not choose to apply selling simplification will tend to provide broad assortments, maximum services, and salespeople who are highly trained (i.e., "customer advisers"). Many of them will adapt some of the features of the physical arrangement for simplified selling but nevertheless continue to stress full-service operation. Because there are apt to be fewer departments and stores of this kind, they individually will be able to capitalize to a greater extent on those customers who continue to desire extensive personal service. Higher selling costs necessary to secure and maintain effective salespeople will become justified, even at the sacrifice of other operating expenses. It also is possible that customers will understand better the reasons for price differentiations because of the more apparent distinctions and thus may be willing to pay additionally for the higher costs of personal service.

2 The food field has been so affected. For a discussion of one specialty grocery which has not only survived the growth and dominance of the super markets but is doing better than ever, see "S. S. Pierce: Growing With the Quality Trade," "Business Week, No. 1242, June 20, 1953, pp. 132-143."
Further Impetus to Product-Line Diversification in Stores

Retail selling simplification may also lead to more stores which are large and diversified. While there will be a growing recognition of the importance of narrowed assortments within product lines, retailers will be stimulated to sell a greater variety of products within their stores. It will not be uncontrolled addition of product lines, but a diversification planned and implemented on the basis of the compatibility of merchandise with existing selling arrangements and operations. There seem to be two reasons for such a tendency. First, simplified selling increases a store's physical and organizational capacity to handle customer traffic, even in peak selling periods. Thus, retailers will be encouraged and facilitated in seeking greater sales through product-line diversification. Second, maximum effectiveness in extended simplified selling operation depends to a considerable extent upon securing large amounts of customer traffic. A broad base of sales is necessary for adequate planning and use of non-personal means of selling, in addition to its facilitating an emphasis upon lower prices through volume operation.

Changing Amount and Composition of Retail Labor Force

The amount and composition of the retail labor force may be changed by the continued expansion of simplified selling. In conversions to greater customer participation,
retailers have taken one of two courses of action in regard to their selling personnel. Some have been cautious and therefore content with gradually instituting changes, at most eliminating part-time help and failing to replace regular personnel as they leave the company's employment. In other cases, management has discharged salespeople in the conversion to self-selection operation, as much as 85 per cent of the sales staff in one instance.3

The possible nature of long-run effects upon the retail sales force is difficult to state with much degree of certainty. However, past experience provides some insight into possible changes. Increased productivity per salesperson and diminished use of personal salesmanship must mean either fewer workers for a given amount of sales or the same number of employees or more for a growing amount of sales. Extensive use of non-personal means and greater customer participation in retail transactions pose these possibilities. Selling simplification thus may be a threat to retail workers generally and to salespeople in particular since unemployment may result to the extent that any

3 "Management's Washington Letter," Nation's Business, Vol. 41, No. 10, October, 1953, p. 9. One retailer has written, "There usually is some dislocation when a progressive idea in the public interest is adopted but it is temporary. . . . Business has a responsibility to its employees, to be sure, but it owes a deeper obligation to society." (See Albert M. Greenfield, "I Run A Department Store Without Clerks," Nation's Business, Vol. 41, No. 10, October, 1953, p. 75.)
decreased need for retail personnel is not offset by changes in the work week and other factors. On the other hand, if the experience in the case of mechanization of manufacturing and the self-service operations of super markets is at all analogous to the extension of simplified selling in non-food stores, there seems to be little realism in fearing widespread declines in retail employment.

If there is an expanding economy, it is likely that the total amount of retail employees may be only slightly affected. The major effect of selling simplification will be upon the composition of this work force. It does seem certain that the number of salespeople will decline considerably over the long run. There will be fewer but far superior salespeople with increased opportunity to capitalize upon the benefits of personal salesmanship. There will be less part-time help in retailing to the extent that non-personal means are depended upon to provide additional capacity in peak selling periods. There also will be a greater number of non-selling personnel, on and off the selling floor. Not only will the number of

4 In considerable contrast to the belief held by this author is the 1953 statement that, "Market experts see more cuts coming as public warms to self-service in a greater variety of outlets. Retail employment's expected to drop in next few years from 10 per cent to 3 per cent of non-agricultural jobs, or from more than 5,000,000 to less than 2,000,000." See "Management's Washington Letter," op. cit., pp. 9G10.
non-selling personnel increase but the status and nature of many of their tasks will be enhanced, e.g., the delegation of inventory control responsibilities to stock people.

**Increased Use of Engineering, Psychological, and Sociological Methods and Data in Retailing**

It also is probable that retailing will use engineering, psychological, and sociological methods and data to an extent previously unimaginable. Specialization of personal salesmanship and its diminution in many departments and stores will only become possible through greater prior research and planning of selling forces. These other disciplines will have to be utilized if stores are to be developed as highly intricate and specialized mechanisms capable of making it easy and pleasant for customers with considerable certainty of results. Knowledge of human motivation and the personal and non-personal means of eliciting desired responses will become more important under such circumstances.

In simplified selling operations, retailers will find that almost exclusive reliance upon personal selling experience as a means of developing capable management will be insufficient. Retail sales managers will not always be supervising salespeople and a major part of their time will be devoted to coordinating non-personal selling forces. Thus, because of the needs of both developing and managing
simplified selling, there will be greater education and training in the use of the social sciences and techniques regarding non-personal means.5

EXPANSION OF MERCHANDISING ACTIVITIES BY NON-RETAILERS

Parallel with the changes in the economic character and structure of retailing, a considerable expansion of merchandising activities by non-retailers seems likely to be a major result of extensive selling simplification. The vast majority of retailers are unable to do the entire job necessary for effective simplified selling and will come to depend upon others to assist and advise them in developing effective selling operation. Through either demand from retailers or enlightened leadership of their own, manufacturers of consumer goods, wholesaling companies, manufacturers and agencies for non-personal selling means, and retail trade associations all will intensify their activities and services for the improvement of retail selling. The merchandising aspects of their relationships with retailers will develop from a thorough understanding of the problems involved in the operation of a retail store or department. Many times, they will be devised specifically for simplified

There are various reasons for this expanding role of non-retailers in selling to the ultimate consumer. Fundamentally, it is a result of the planned nature of scientific selling simplification which has uncovered many gaps and problems in previously unintegrated retail selling operations. In addition, all parties are stimulated by intensified competitive conditions to help in the solution of those problems for which their respective economic positions equip them. It comes also from a recognition that greater benefits can be derived from a mutuality of respect and dependence among the various segments in the channel of distribution. It arises out of an understanding that the needs of retail selling profoundly affect all who are a part of the marketing process.

There are more specific reasons for this tendency. As the concern for planning and controlling integrated simplified selling situations intensifies, these will become more apparent. First, many of the activities can be performed most efficiently and most economically by non-retailers. Most retailers neither have the time nor money nor the breadth of experience with which to do necessary research and development of the various selling forces. Second, they do not have the sales volume to justify the strong brand promotion which is important in a situation of
extensive customer participation. Third, many retailers have numerous product lines and thus are unable to justify concentrated effort on any one. Fourth, there is the possibility of greater retailer conservatism or simply ignorance regarding dynamic improvements because of their more direct, day-by-day concern with operating a store.

At the same time, non-retailers may be able to justify costs because of greater volume and specialization of task. As a result of economic pressures, many will extend their merchandising activities as a means of preserving or increasing a company's control and monetary reward. Furthermore, there is the negative pressure of the default of retailers (as in the case of poor personal salesmanship) where others, notably consumer goods manufacturers, seek to minimize the adverse effects upon them.

A basic effect of the expansion in the merchandising activities of non-retailers may be a greater emphasis upon the buying function (rather than selling) within the channel of distribution. The tendency is for salesmen of manufacturers and wholesalers to become "merchandisers" or "store advisers." The emphasis is upon helping retailers to do a better selling job, rather than to sell more goods to them. The concern of manufacturers and wholesalers turns to selling the ultimate consumer, helping retailers in their stock control, layout, display, promotions, merchandise classification and arrangement, personnel training, etc. The use of salesmen in this
way is based on the premise that a retailer's buying will reflect the value of such services to him.

**Expanding Activities by Consumer Goods Manufacturers**

The expanding responsibility for retail selling by manufacturers of consumer goods is already well accepted. Functions of product development, brand promotion, and packaging have long been assumed by them. In the future, their efforts will be more specifically tailored to the needs of simplified selling in stores. Their salesmen will secure knowledge of the particular selling operation of each of their accounts, i.e., their policies, practices, and problems. They then will help retailers to particularize general promotions and efforts on the basis of this detailed in-store knowledge. Competition for a retailer's patronage and especially for preferred shelf space will require them to show the compatibility of their products for the type of selling operation that the retailer is developing.

The salesmen will have to substantiate the effectiveness of the pre-selling and packaging to do part of the selling job where extended customer participation is encouraged. Furthermore, they will provide information to aid retailers in the planning, developing, and maintaining of their specific simplified selling operations. For the most part, manufacturers will recognize the wisdom of providing promotional material, fixtures, and other merchandising aids.
which are sufficiently flexible that the balance in the selling operation will not be adversely affected. Fixtures, for example, will be capable of being used with items other than those made by the sponsoring manufacturer.

While consumer goods manufacturers are many times better able to undertake research and development than retailers, there is a limit to their capacity to engage in merchandising activities. By early 1954, it is becoming clear that extensive merchandising service by manufacturers' salesmen in the food field is not without its complications. Salesmen are concentrating their time on a few outlets in order to serve them properly. The larger self-service outlets not only need more help but they merit more help because of the relatively big volume done in them. The service thus has tended to be provided only in larger stores, with little or no consideration being given to the greater number of smaller ones. These smaller stores expect to receive such services, and, moreover, may be legally entitled to them.

The dilemma posed has not been satisfactorily solved in the case of most manufacturers. Refusal to render such service because it cannot be provided for all stores has

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6 For one account of the problems which have developed, see "What's the Effect of Self-Service on Salesmen?" Printers' Ink, Vol. 243, No. 7, May 15, 1953, pp. 59-74.
resulted in loss of regular shelf display and fewer special displays in the larger stores. On the other hand, use of specialized store service men in addition to salesmen has not proved wholly satisfactory. The problem may lead manufacturers to reduce the number of their retail outlets. In doing so, they sacrifice widespread distribution which may be desirable for convenience and some shopping goods.

Need for Merchandising Activities by Wholesaling Companies

For the vast majority of stores which are small and perhaps for all retailers in some cases, the expanded merchandising activities of consumer goods manufacturers will have to be supplemented. Simultaneously, wholesaling companies may greatly expand their merchandising services. It will be incumbent upon wholesalers to become experts and advisers in simplified selling. While they continue to be important in assembling from the vast number of manufactured goods those which are most appropriate for the selling operations of their retailers, the merchandising advice and assistance in planning and operating simplified selling provided by wholesalers will become of primary importance. Their salesmen call on retailers more frequently than could those of manufacturers. They can justify expenditures of time and money over a greater breadth of product lines. There also is less possibility of their advice and assistance being biased to the disadvantage of the retailers.
There is already evidence that regular wholesalers are playing an important part in retail selling simplification. Some have organized specialized fixture and store modernization staffs. Of even greater significance is the further impetus given to the expansion of wholesaler-sponsored voluntary chains. In all likelihood, the movement of voluntary chains will be extended further in lines of business where they now exist and into additional lines, especially as non-food wholesalers merge and grow. It is found that many merchandising activities so necessary for simplified selling can be performed by wholesalers more effectively when they are backed by a strong, closely-knit group of retailers.

An official of one wholesaling company which has sponsored a voluntary chain of limited-price variety stores for some time commented to the author about the important part played by voluntary chain operation in the simplified selling operations of its member-stores. With a large number of stores closely related to it, this company felt justified in spending considerable sums for developing and experimenting with simplified selling in order to secure arrangements and a type of operation best adapted to the type of stores served. It was then possible to encourage and supervise effective conversion of more than one-half of the member-stores in a relatively short period of time.
The greater homogeneity of the stores which resulted from the central development of the simplified selling operation made it possible to add new services which were fully coordinated with the needs of the retailers. These new services included: basic stocks set up and arranged by specialized "store-opening men," merchandise arrangement and promotional guides, a systematic buying procedure, and periodic consultations by trained "store advisers."

Both the addition of new product lines into self-selection operations and radical conversions of existing lines to self-selection selling may stimulate buying offices to broaden their operations and also result in further development of specialty wholesalers known as "rack jobbers." Buying offices can capitalize on such situations to provide extensive merchandising service through which they not only control the buying but also supervise the selling operation. In addition, the growth of rack jobbers or "service distributors" of non-foods for self-service food stores is indicative of a tendency which may very well broaden to other types of stores in the future. Rack jobbers attempt to relieve a retailer of all problems arising in a field with which he is unfamiliar. They assume all responsibility for warehousing, delivery, and re-ordering; provide and maintain display racks, guarantee the sale of all merchandise; rotate items among stores to
eliminate any which do not sell readily in a particular sales situation; develop and supply promotional display material; and even dust and clean racks and merchandise regularly.

**Extension of Merchandising Services by Manufacturers and Agencies for Non-Personal Selling Forces**

Manufacturers and agencies for non-personal selling means may provide considerably more merchandising advice and service to retailers and consumer goods manufacturers. These companies have specialized experience and the ability to justify necessary research and planning costs in terms of larger volume. Specialized merchandising sections or divisions will be established in almost all such businesses as fixture and equipment manufacturers, package manufacturers and suppliers, seal and label manufacturers, vending machine manufacturers, advertising, packaging, and display agencies, and architect-designers. They not only will help to plan and install specific merchandising elements but also assist in analyzing results and in the continuing development necessary with many of the selling means. The requirements of integrated simplified selling also may shift the emphasis in the purchase of these items and services from one of price to one of the effectiveness of the merchandising assistance provided.
Growth of Merchandising Assistance by Retail Trade Associations

Retailers may seek an expansion in the merchandising activities of their trade associations, especially in those fields where large corporate and voluntary chains are not dominant. They will want guides for the use of promotions, merchandise arrangements, operation of specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling, etc. These associations will increase their research efforts into the development and design of non-personal means of selling. Through them, retailers also will collaborate on customer education regarding changes in their selling operation. The associations may become an important medium of communication with manufacturers in securing and testing of changes in product, packaging, advertising, and fixtures. They may establish store laboratories and have in-store field men for the development and testing of selling means in order to secure data helpful to retailers and manufacturers. The National Retail Hardware Association has set up such a laboratory where manufacturers are able to test the compatibility and effectiveness of their products and packaging. This association also plans to organize a force of in-store field men for research purposes which will function in addition to its staff of field representatives who already advise retailers on selling operation.
In addition to changes in the economic character and structure of retailing and increased merchandising activities by non-retailers, and partially as a result of these effects, extensive selling simplification is likely to bring about lower retailing costs. The method of selling in stores is a type of customer service which readily affects operating costs. In fact, simplified selling has been for many retailers solely a means of cost reduction. As simplified selling operation reduces expenses for individual retailers, total costs identified with the field of retailing are favorably affected. For the most part, however, simplified selling of non-foods, except in the case of discount house operators, has not directly resulted in lower prices. The favorable effect on costs has therefore not been as apparent as might be expected. Most retailers have had to be content with minimizing the major problem of rising costs in other areas. In the future, lower costs through selling simplification are certain to be reflected in lower prices. Competitive conditions, the changing role of retail operation, and changes in customer buying behavior will require that savings from simplified selling be passed on to customers, whether or not manufacturers adjust retail margins or retailers simply give away part of their margin through price cuts. There then
may arise increased agitation to eliminate or modify the inflexibilities introduced into the pricing of manufacturer-branded products by resale price maintenance (fair-trade) legislation.

Many of the underlying reasons why selling simplification can bring about lower retailing costs already have been discussed in detail in Chapter Six. Three major causes for lower retailing costs in the future can be identified here. First, success in simplified selling operation is evidence of greater efficiency in the performance of the selling function. As selling simplification is extended throughout retailing, there will be more selective use of salespeople. More economical non-personal means of selling will be depended upon solely in the case of some products and some stores and partially in other cases. Where personal selling remains, there will be greater specialization of effort because salespeople will use non-personal means more effectively and perform in accordance with dominant buying behavior patterns. The number of personnel involved with the selling function who are dependent upon the irregular flow of customer traffic will decrease. There also will be greater capacity for selling, without increases in direct selling personnel or the physical size of selling areas, through the use of specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling and other non-personal means.
Second, costs identified with retailing will decrease as more manufacturers and wholesalers undertake merchandising activities either directly or under their sponsorship. Many of these activities, as noted earlier in this chapter, can thus be performed more economically. Moreover, whether or not greater economy results when merchandising activities are assumed by suppliers of merchandise, the costs will become a part of the costs of goods and therefore will not be reflected in retailers' operating costs. Even though packaging is certain to be extended in the future, such additional costs as may result will not be indicated in retailing operations since it is likely that retailers will do less packaging than before.

Third, increased overt participation in the buying process by customers results in lower costs, if only in explicit terms. To the extent that customers actively or passively patronize stores which operate on a self-selection basis, the extension of their buying activity will be a major cause of lower retailing costs. Even where customer self-selection is not featured, customers generally will be doing more in their buying.

CHANGING ASPECTS OF RETAIL COMPETITION

Intensification of Competitive Advertising

One of the two major effects of extensive selling simplification upon retail competition will be a further
increase in brand advertising, with its emphasis upon building selective rather than primary demand. As it has been discussed previously, substantial pre-selling of merchandise is an important complement of simplified selling in stores. Product brand acceptance--especially where brand preference or insistence exists--is a primary requisite for simplified selling to the extent that the need for personal selling is diminished and exposed display of merchandise becomes the major selling force of the retailer. At the same time, the incentive for brand promotion by manufacturers is increased because exposure of brands will be less dependent upon retail salespeople. There thus will be an increase in the number of lines where brand acceptance is significant as well as greater competition in establishing brand preference within product lines.

It is likely that manufacturers who seek distribution through stores which feature self-selection selling will find it imperative to increase advertising expenditures. In doing so, they will give major consideration to establishing brand name recognition. As part of the tendency to narrow assortments in simplified selling operations, retailers will reduce the number of brands carried. Thus, manufacturers will have to engage in substantial pre-selling for their products in order to obtain access, i.e., as a "price of admission," to the retailer's shelves as well as to
maintain sales in a situation where there are no salespeople.

At the same time, there will be an increase in distributor-controlled brands which will be exploited through intensive advertising, particularly by large-scale retailers and wholesaler-sponsors of voluntary chains. The ability of these brands to compete with manufacturers' brands in a simplified selling situation increasingly will depend on brand preference, established through advertising of brand names. Strong competitive advertising by distributors in order to establish consumer preference for their private brands will be a result of various pressures. Distributors will commit themselves to intensive brand promotion as a means of protecting their control of the retail operation, of securing greater profits, and as a means of securing merchandise advantages not always possible with dependence upon manufacturer branded merchandise (e.g., coordination of packaging with display equipment, minimum conflict between individual items within a selling situation).

**Increased Price Competition**

A second major effect will become more apparent as a greater number of retailers turn to extensive selling simplification. Retailers increasingly will use price competition as a means of soliciting and holding customers. As it has been previously indicated, there still can be considerable differentiation between simplified sales
operations which sell similar merchandise. Such aspects as different brands, different physical environment, and different location can help to distinguish individual retail operations and thus enable retailers to stabilize customer patronage and the supply of highly pre-sold brand merchandise. Nevertheless, the loss of differentiation engendered by salespeople will tend to bring more retailers into greater and more direct competition with one another.

Many retailers will find it difficult or fail to try to differentiate their stores when they turn to self-selection. The historical dependence on salespeople to give individual character to stores featuring manufacturer-branded products and physical limitations in existing non-personal means will prove major deterrents to many. It thus is likely that they will turn to greater price competition, in direct or indirect forms. Moreover, the decrease in costs brought about by sound selling simplification will enable these retailers to lower prices realistically. Under such pressures, it is possible that attempts of manufacturers to administer retail prices similarly for all types of retail operations through resale price maintenance will not be effective. The competitive ability of retailers who choose not to employ selling simplification will then have to be truly justified by the quality of service provided customers who are willing to pay additionally for it.
CHAPTER ELEVEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The selling function is of major importance in retail establishments. It is the basic reason for the existence of stores; its performance accounts for a substantial portion of store operating costs. The radical changes in the performance of this fundamental function which have been a result of selling simplification justify interest and attention of practitioners and students of business. The effects are evident in every segment of retailing as well as in the marketing activity of many manufacturers and wholesaling companies. At the same time, current selling simplification efforts are but part of a more widespread re-examination of retail operation which has been stimulated by a growing scientific interest in the field and by competitive conditions. Simultaneously, it also is a result of the recognition that American customers are undergoing fundamental changes in their buying habits.

Considerable changes in selling service are evident in every type of store. Many have evolved simply out of retailers' passive acceptance of gradual improvements wrought by others. On the other hand, some are being
consciously and dynamically planned and implemented by retailers. There has been a decided quest for knowledge with which retailing personnel might benefit from the experience of others. More intensive experimentation and other research in this area seems certain. It thus was recognized that development of retail selling simplification had advanced in thought and experimentation sufficiently to permit a scientific study of its nature, causes, and implications.

NATURE OF THE STUDY

It has been the primary purpose of this study to develop a coordinated body of reliable and useful knowledge regarding the process of selling simplification and its effects on the personal selling function in all types of retail establishments. Throughout the theoretical and empirical investigation of this retailing development, a major objective has been to make apparent a body of principles which explain actions and methods affecting selling performance in stores.

Inadequacies in existing terms and lack of terminology relating to simplified selling operation has resulted in confusion and absence of mutual understanding. Thus, particular consideration has been given to the development of definitions of major elements. These are a necessary
basis for more scientific study and growth in the future. Fundamental pressures for the substantial changes being made in many stores have been carefully identified. In addition, possible benefits and limiting factors involved in specific undertakings have been discussed.

A factual basis has been provided for the use of a scientific approach by retailing companies, whether small or large, engaged in selling simplification. The approach has been evolved to aid personnel of these companies in achieving effective policy decisions and implementation. In this way, there can be greater certainty of decision and action in an area of major consequence. The competitive position of practicing retailers is certain to be enhanced through development of simplified selling which is sounder from the point of view of both retailers and their customers. Brief consideration has been given to broader economic effects which may arise from continuous widespread extension and development of simplified selling.

The research has had to be primarily qualitative in nature. Careful study was made of the literature regarding this retailing development in general marketing journals, trade magazines, and material of trade associations and government agencies. In addition, marketing and retailing texts and journals were perused to provide material of a more general nature, especially in regard to the development of theory and practice in retail personal selling.
Correspondence was used at various stages of the research. Major reliance was placed on field investigatory work. Line and staff executives and technicians who are directly concerned with the simplification of the personal selling function in a limited but representative number of retailing companies were interviewed. In-store observations of simplified selling in establishments of these and other companies were valuable in securing knowledge of actual behavior of customers and store personnel and in studying empirically physical results of planned efforts for selling simplification. In some cases, it was possible to analyze existing company records and management guides in order to secure facts about benefits and limiting factors as well as methodology used in achieving simplified selling operation. Interviews also were conducted with officials of retail trade associations and non-retailing companies engaged in the development of some aspect of simplified selling.

CONTRIBUTIONS

As a result of a broad, general analysis of the retailing development identified as "selling simplification," this study makes five major contributions to the knowledge and methodology of those who engage in the application or study of this process. While the first contribution is concerned
with bringing together and making explicit in a systematic presentation what may already be known, the others are of a more original nature. All loom as a substantial prelude to more scientific development of retail store selling in the future. These contributions consist of the following:

1. A conceptual, integrated account of the trend in a study which has relevance for all types of retailing situations and all types of products.

2. A realistic terminology of all major aspects and a fundamental theoretical perspective for sound development of selling simplification, broadly conceived.

3. The crystallization of a new theory of retail selling, termed the Mental Buying Process-Behavior Pattern Theory, consistent with and related to selling simplification.

4. A theoretical re-examination of the seven major factors which may exist in a sales situation in the light of the possible effects of selling simplification, with stress upon the application of concepts from the viewpoint of practical store management.

5. The formulation, in a precise and understandable manner, of a general and scientific approach to selling simplification which can be adapted to the specific organizational and operational conditions of a retailing company.

CONCLUSIONS

As part of these contributions, a number of major conclusions can be summarized here. Two fundamental types of conclusions can be distinguished. First, there are findings which give factual perspective to the nature and significance of this retailing trend. Second, marketing
principles are derived in order to guide application and development in this area.

The Nature and Significance of Retail Selling Simplification

In the first group of conclusions, the following are included:

1. "Selling simplification" is most accurately defined as the specialized process of planning and controlling integrated selling situations in order to facilitate greater participation by the customer and to make more effective any participation by selling personnel. This process is best viewed as a store-wide concept subject to major policy decisions and fundamentally as a merchandising concept to be undertaken as a part of an integrated merchandising program. The primary concern is with the nature of the operational relationship between the factors of a composite selling situation (i.e., the customer and the selling forces) involved in a sales transaction. Such a definition prevents illogical confusion between the process and its objective or consequence (i.e., "simplified selling"), emphasizes operational aspects rather than the physical arrangement, delimits the subject properly, and stresses the positive aspects of the development.

Simplified selling is to be identified with the resulting effects upon the totality of the selling performance throughout a store. It will not always involve the
minimization or elimination of personal salesmanship; in fact, it may result in strengthening the role of salespeople. The performance of the selling function will be simplified, but the planning and controlling of the sales operation may be complicated, at least in the initial stages. The setting in which the process is applied is appropriately confined to the "selling situation," i.e., the physical and psychological environment in which buying action is determined and carried out.

While selling simplification will generally result in fewer barriers and complications to customer buying in store, it is the facilitation of effective customer (and salesperson) participation which is the primary concern. It thus is for practical reasons as well as because of the fundamental importance of a customer's point-of-view that selling simplification must be continuously and carefully oriented to customer behavior. There can be no simplified selling where buying patterns desired by customers are not properly encouraged and facilitated. The major emphasis, then, is upon how customers want to buy.

2. In view of the major influence of open merchandise display and specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling, it is sufficient to consider five distinct stages in the development of these two aspects as the primary thread of the modern development of retail selling simplification. These stages consist of the following:
a. Period of Inception
b. Super Market Birth and Growth
c. Temporary Expansion During World War II
d. Permanent Expansion in Non-Food Stores
e. Scientific Development

3. Certain economic effects of considerable significance are likely to result, at least in part, from future development of simplified selling in retail establishments. The nature and direction of many of these broader changes are discernible even though experience with planned selling simplification in other than food stores has been short and limited by 1954. Extension of sound simplified selling in more stores and for more products will likely bring about the following effects:

a. The economic character and structure of retailing will change. (1) The scope of economic responsibility of retailers will generally narrow. With the exception of a small number of large-scale retailing companies, selling for ultimate consumption will become the joint responsibility of manufacturers and all within the channel of distribution. (2) The distinction in the nature of selling service will become more apparent, not only between stores but also within departmentized stores. (3) There will be a greater number of larger, more diversified stores. (4) While the number of retail employees should not appreciably decrease, the composition of the workforce will change considerably. (5) The use of engineering, psychological and sociological methods and data will become more prevalent in the retailing field and education and training for retail management may thus be affected.
b. Merchandising activities of non-retailers will be further expanded. Manufacturers of consumer goods, wholesaling companies, manufacturers and agencies for non-personal selling forces, and retail trade associations all will intensify and broaden their activities concerned with the improvement of retail selling.

c. Retailing costs will be decreased and lower consumer prices will accordingly become more practical.

d. Retail competition will be affected by further increase in brand advertising. In addition, greater price competition will likely result because many retailers who eliminate or de-emphasize personal salesmanship will fail to achieve store differentiation on other than price factors.

4. **Application of selling simplification in a greater number of stores than ever before as well as interest in improving the effectiveness with which the process is used gives rise to a need for further research in several directions.** Cooperative efforts on the part of all those connected with the production and distribution of major classes of products toward unifying and implementing practical research will be important to fulfilling this need. A primary need will exist for psychological and sociological study of consumer buying behavior. In addition, personal salesmanship should be studied similarly in order to define clearly the distinct character and contribution of human or personal influence upon people engaged in the buying process. Unless efforts are directed to such an end, increased effectiveness of non-personal
means may very well make personal salesmanship unnecessary for maximum selling efficiency.

At the same time, methods of selection, training and supervision of retail selling-floor personnel should be studied. The extension of simplified selling re-emphasizes the need for more meaningful job analyses and a retail personnel management which carefully distinguishes between the various tasks that are to be coordinated in planned selling operations. There also is need for more thorough and concentrated research for the improvement of the capacity of non-personal means to perform the selling function, especially in an integrated manner with one another and with salespeople. Careful consideration should also be given to a working arrangement which better facilitates coordination of merchandising efforts of manufacturers and distributors and which permits realistic allocation of costs between them.

Such research efforts should embody the use of every practical research method. Special consideration should be given to expanded and improved use of scientific observation and experimentation of retail selling forces performing under actual conditions. It also is conceivable that "operations research" can be applied to an integrated study of selling performance in stores. A preliminary to such research is the satisfaction of the important need for a conceptual design of the factors involved. It is to be
hoped that this study contributes to that end.

**General Principles Regarding Simplified Selling**

The following major considerations with respect to retail selling simplification have been formulated as general principles; in terms of explanatory statements of general truth, involving cause and effect relationships, that always apply under given or assumed conditions. Even though every store does not operate under similar or typical conditions, the activities and problems are essentially the same. While exceptions will exist, they do not destroy the general validity of the conclusions expressed here. As general conclusions, they provide a rational framework within which retailers can solve their specific problems and achieve simplified selling particularized to their own conditions. When used with specific facts regarding individual operations, these conclusions will help retailers to make more effective decisions concerning the use of selling simplification.

1. **Because of a number of strong and continuing influences, in terms of both pressures for change in retailing and benefits which can be realized from sound selling simplification, current efforts made to simplify the retail selling function and growing customer acceptance of the consequences represent part of a permanent trend in retailing. In all likelihood, planned efforts for simplified**
selling will be extended to more types of stores and more products in the future, many times in a manner which emphasizes customer self-selection. Adverse conditions can be minimized and favorable conditions satisfied by benefits arising from sound selling simplification. This increase in sales contact with customers by things (e.g., packaging, display, advertising) rather than by people in varying types of shopping environments will be possible because of a growing capacity for selling by non-personal means and systematic coordination of these with personal salesmanship. Customers will be more readily conditioned to further innovations as methods of achieving simplified selling become more widespread and more effective. Furthermore, increased use and effectiveness of selling simplification intensifies competition and will bring about even more rapid changes by retailers.

2. So long as there are limitations in the employment of non-personal selling means and inherent advantages in the use of personal salesmanship which can be exploited through sound selling simplification, traditional salespeople will not disappear from the retailing scene. In fact, effective simplified selling can result in the development of better salespeople by permitting greater concentration on the problems connected with personal salesmanship. Selling simplification will establish a firm basis for specialization of personal selling tasks and thus
put an end to a generalizing of all personal salesmanship. It will enable retailers to use salespeople where they are most productive and to train them more adequately in the techniques of personal salesmanship and supplementary use of non-personal means.

3. **Because retail store selling is potentially easier than other types of selling and because there has been a tendency for its performance to become overly complicated, it is reasonable—from a retailer's viewpoint—that efforts in this area be primarily concerned with simplification of the function.** In order to evaluate the necessity for and contribution of a selling force, whether personal or non-personal, it is necessary to distinguish first between the unity of purpose of the selling forces and the different means by which the retail selling function can be performed. When customers seek out the seller as in the case of the selling which takes place in stores, two distinct advantages become possible. First, most customers will have a specific want and an approximate, if not definite, idea about the means of satisfying it, at least for primary purchases. Second, it is more possible to make use of non-personal means in order to increase the effectiveness of selling performance.

4. **Since the sale takes place in the buyer's mind and is expressed through customer action which may or may not be accompanied by the participation of a salesperson, a complete**
and realistic theory of retail selling is one which emphasizes the customer and coordinates his overt buying behavior with the mental buying process. Consumers involved in the buying of merchandise experience successively four conscious states of mind which do not always occur distinctly from one another; do not always occur within the selling situation, itself; and are not necessarily equal in length of experience. These conscious states can be identified as follows:

a. Want Determination  
b. Decision to Buy  
c. Selection  
d. Satisfaction

By relating buying behavior to these states in the mental buying process, the various kinds of selling can be realistically differentiated upon the basis of the nature of customer participation which takes place. The different types or patterns of response exist because customers are conditioned, facilitated, and encouraged (by both the way in which selling-floor personnel act and the physical arrangement) to buy in various ways. The four major patterns are distinguishable from one another by the point at which a salesperson enters the buying process, if at all, to aid and/or influence the customer. Together with the possible modifications introduced by the manner in which the mechanics of the sale are handled, these behavior patterns consist of the following:
a. Unconscious/Undefined Want Buying

(1) without specialized facilities for customer payment and merchandise handling
(2) with specialized facilities

b. Pre-Decision

(1) without specialized facilities
(2) with specialized facilities

c. Pre-Selection

(1) without specialized facilities
(2) with specialized facilities

d. Self-Selection

(1) with a salesperson
(2) with area checking
(3) Self-Service
(4) Mechanical Buying

5. The degree to which participation by salespeople can be effectively decreased and therefore the extent to which customer participation can be beneficially encouraged and facilitated depends upon the manner in which all of the interdependent factors within a selling situation act and inter-act. Always acting and re-acting upon the customer's particular buying set, the six possible selling forces continuously complement one another. There must be a harmonious balance between them for maximum effectiveness. They are clearly interdependent, for a change in any factor will affect the performance of others. In an integrated situation, benefits arising out of the use of one factor will be reinforced by the others. Nevertheless, isolated changes will bring about some benefits, unless fully
dissipated by inconsistencies in other factors. In regard to the seven factors possible within an individual sales situation, the following conclusions can be made:

a. A greater willingness and readiness on the part of customers for increased participation in the sales transaction can be associated with certain factors which may exist as part of their "buying set" in a particular selling environment.

b. While the product is a major factor in a simplified selling situation inasmuch as it is both the terminus of selling effort and a means of selling, its importance as a determinant of the extent to which a selling operation can be simplified has been overly emphasized in the past. The inherent characteristics of the product, its price, and the merchandise line of which it is a part can and do change. The modification of product attributes should be considered as a means of achieving greater simplicity in the operation. Also, some of the features making for complexity can be offset by non-personal means.

c. Effective pre-selling activities reduce the amount of selling which has to take place within the selling situation itself, especially where the selling means are carefully integrated. These activities can extend the stage of the customer's buying prior to his entering the store or department, facilitate buying decisions made within the physical sales situation, and condition the customer for the way in which he is to participate in the transaction.

d. Interior display, as a retail selling force, must be considered as more than the artistic presentation of segregated merchandise; it involves coordinated use of layout and space allocation, the physical environment, fixture and mechanical equipment, merchandise presentation, merchandise classification and arrangement, and signing. As the focus of the customer's interest, the open presentation of merchandise is the center of interior display.

Space should be allocated in proportion to sales potentialities of the merchandise and departmental
layout should tend to group merchandise in "shopping centers," primarily in accord with the relatedness of consumer use of the products. Within these groupings, it is desirable to arrange merchandise according to the manner of selling for which they lend themselves (e.g., pre-selection, self-selection) rather than according to store buying convenience. Merchandise should be classified and arranged according to customer interests, with emphasis upon the SEQUENCE in which customers generally consider product attributes (e.g., size, color, silhouette, purpose or use, fabric, fragrance, brand, price) in their buying process.

e. As a major selling force, packaging and labeling should be considered as consisting of any material or device which is affixed directly to the merchandise, whether or not it is provided by the retailer. There are five functions which can be performed by this non-personal means of selling: containing the product, identifying the product, informing the customer, protecting the product and its display, and promoting the purchase.

f. Personal salesmanship can become the critical selling force in those operations where it is believed desirable to use salespeople. Until such time as more is known about the unique functional contribution of salespeople, it seems likely that they will be retained because of either real or assumed limitations of non-personal means of selling to perform the entire selling responsibility. It is important to distinguish between three types of contact with customers by selling-floor personnel, i.e., "creative salesmanship," "service salesmanship," and "service."

g. One of the last steps taken in selling simplification, but one which can be a major means of minimizing pressures as well as permitting greater exploitation of other aspects of simplified selling arrangement and operation, is the splitting off of the merchandise handling and payment activities from the responsibilities of salespeople, at least during periods of peak customer traffic. The use of these facilities
need not prevent the use of salespeople; in fact, they may facilitate more effective personal salesmanship.

6. **Individual retailers will find it desirable (or necessary) to apply selling simplification to the degree to which they are affected by certain external and internal conditions, properly grouped as follows: the need for more economical distribution, changes in customer buying habits, increased effectiveness of non-personal means of selling, operational problems of retail establishments, and organizational problems of stores.** Some are apparently intensifying (1954) and others are being consciously experienced by large numbers of retailers for the first time. At the same time, the application of selling simplification is only one of the possible effects of these conditions. It is not particularly important to distinguish between those pressures that are causes of original attempts for simplified selling and those that are results of earlier selling simplification; they are all pressures for extension of this retailing development.

7. **The specific character and extent of benefits in four major areas which will accrue to a retailer engaged in selling simplification are dependent upon his objectives, degree of effectiveness attained, and extent of change involved as well as upon factors external to the process.** The major areas in which benefits can be anticipated consist of the following: improved selling service to customers,
enhanced social and economic status of retail salespeople, greater sales volume, and lower operating costs.

8. Because of difficulties presented by the very application of the process, customer behavior, merchandise, operating factors, and personnel, retailers will be limited, at least temporarily, as to the extent of simplified selling which is practical and/or the effectiveness with which the process of selling simplification is employed in specific selling operations. Any deficiencies in a harmonious balance among the factors which operate in a sales situation will automatically limit the extent to which personal salesmanship can be profitably de-emphasized. Proficiency in the application of the process requires research, development, and experience and will not be achieved easily. In addition to a lack of skill in applying this process, there are other limiting factors which should receive the attention of all who are involved in planning and controlling simplified selling operations. These include the following: (1) lack of knowledge about and difficulty of controlling customer buying behavior, its heterogeneity, and its rigidity; (2) merchandise complexity; (3) operating factors of company or store policy, initial costs, inadequate non-personal means, ineffective buying and vendor relations, and conversion problems; (4) conservatism in planning and inadequacies of executives and operating personnel; and (5) any positive contribution of retail salespeople. Retailers and others can take definite steps to modify some of these factors and
thus minimize or eliminate the impact of negative influences.

9. Since retail selling simplification can result in fundamental and widespread effects upon many, if not all, phases of store operation; since it is a process which must be applied on a continuing basis to distinct sales situations; and since it requires careful coordination of the personal factors within a situation; a planned and integrated approach to the use of this process must involve the participation of top management, definite organizational responsibility in those who are directly concerned with selling activity, and an educational program for personnel and customers. An approach to selling simplification which is complete and adaptable for use by all types of stores thus includes the following major steps: (1) determination of a major policy on selling simplification, (2) organization of operational responsibility for selling simplification efforts, (3) the planning and developing of individual simplified selling situations through use of the techniques of "situation analysis" and "analysis planning," (4) an introductory program with selling-floor personnel and customers, and (5) a continuing evaluation of simplified selling results. When adapted to the conditions surrounding a retailer's organization and operation, this approach can serve as a basis for analysis, interpretation and actual development in that it represents a means for securing answers valid for the specific operation.
A company's policy in regard to the use of selling simplification, when determined at the outset, serves as the controlling milieu or environment in which ascertained facts regarding the selling operation are to be interpreted and used. It may be wise to re-consider the validity of the merchandising character and the policies which help to achieve it before final formulation of a policy on selling simplification. A major effect of a definite policy will be that simplified selling operations can be individually planned and developed as a normal and continuing part of the responsibility of those primarily responsible for selling. Individual department and store managers will be able to apply selling simplification without loss of coordinated, consistent, and intelligent action which strengthens the "merchandising bid" of a company.
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In-Store Observations

(In addition to stores of those companies where personal interviews were conducted and a considerable number of food super markets, observations of customer/salesperson actions and physical arrangements were made in stores of the following companies in the designated cities).

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The Boston Store, Town & Country Shopping Center, Columbus, Ohio.

Carson, Pirie, Scott and Company, Chicago, Illinois

Cunningham Drug Stores, Inc., Detroit, Michigan.

Gorman Furniture Company, Detroit, Michigan.

Gray Drug Stores, Inc., Graceland and Town & Country Shopping Centers, Columbus, Ohio.


Ohrbach's, Inc., New York City, New York.

J. C. Penney Company, Inc., Graceland and Town & Country Shopping Centers, Columbus, Ohio.

John Shillito Company, Cincinnati, Ohio.
Stix, Baer and Fuller Company, St. Louis, Missouri

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I, Stanley Lewis Sokolik, was born in St. Louis, Missouri, August 8, 1928. I received my secondary school education in the public schools of St. Louis, Missouri. My undergraduate training was obtained at Washington University (St. Louis), from which I received the degree Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in 1950. From this university I also received the degree Master of Business Administration in 1951. While in residence at Washington University, I served as Grading Assistant and later Graduate Assistant to Dr. Ross M. Trump during the second semester of 1949-50 and the year 1950-51. In 1951, I received an appointment as James E. Hagerty Scholar in Marketing at The Ohio State University. I was appointed to the position of Graduate Assistant in the Winter Quarter, 1952, and Assistant in the Autumn Quarter, 1952, I held this latter position for the following two years while fulfilling requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy. During the first semester of 1954-55, I served as Assistant Professor of Marketing at Washington University (St. Louis).