This book is concerned with the total task of managing the personal selling effort. It consists of 33 cases involving 21 organizations and accompanying textual notes, which comprise about 30% of the total contents. Both are written in an interesting and informative style. While primarily a case book, the text material provides a useful, although brief, examination of the sales management decision areas. It is intended for the graduate student and upper-level undergraduate student who has been exposed to basic marketing and control or accounting courses.

The book has a logical organization and offers a variety of interesting and challenging cases. It should be of interest to instructors seeking a sales management text with a heavy case emphasis. The cases provide descriptive material and information for use in analysis and control. Cases are grouped within each topical area (account management, organizing the sales effort, training, etc.).

The first half of the book is devoted to defining the role of personal selling as an element of the marketing mix, including "Formulating the Sales Program," "Deployment and Account Coverage," "Account Management," and "Sales Costs and Budgets." In the remainder of the book, the textual notes and cases examine "Implementing the Sales Program," "Field Sales Management," "Compensation, Evaluation, and Motivation," "Organizing the Sales Effort," "Recruiting and Selection," "Training" and "Legal and Ethical Considerations." The textual material tends to be descriptive rather than conceptual although brief conceptual guidelines are discussed at various points.

Most of the relevant sales program decisions are identified in the textual notes and brief suggestions for analysis are indicated, thus providing a springboard for more comprehensive treatment via class discussion. The companies discussed in the cases and textual notes range in size from small to very large, including both consumer and industrial products and services. Primary emphasis is on sales forces selling to other organizations rather than to the ultimate consumer (e.g., door-to-door and retail floor selling).

The cases vary in length, difficulty, and scope, thus offering flexibility in providing students with applications and analysis experience. They allow an opportunity for considerable variation in type of use. About one-fourth are short and essentially situation discussions, while the remaining are more comprehensive cases providing detailed examination of company experiences, results, and activities. Several cases offer financial and operating data for use in analysis. Some present decision situations which require consideration of decision areas other than sales force, thus illustrating the interrelated nature of marketing decisions.

In summary, Sales Program Management offers an interesting and challenging cross-section of case situations for use in class discussions and written preparation. Unlike many case books, the cases are new; all occupy a time frame in the 1970's.

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While the text is described by the authors as a combination text and case book, the combination actually includes more. The authors have recognized and described a considerable conceptual or theoretical area pertaining to a wide range of marketing topics. Product, pricing, promotion, and distribution topics are also treated but in a way that comes off second best to decision-making, forecasting, segmentation and behavioral concepts.

Each chapter contains examples of practice-oriented problems that are usually quantifiable. It would appear to be a book for the mathematically inclined except for the chapters on buyer behavior, product development, product policy and pricing, which follow a more traditional format with some refreshing variations.

Accompanying chapter cases have a strong orientation toward actual business situations. However, while the situations represented in the cases are easily related to actual business problems, the type of problems presented do seem to be oriented more toward the application of specific research and quantitative techniques than toward business decisions requiring a wider range of integration.

The book is well researched although at times it appears that some effort was made to fit in a particular idea discussed in the literature. The terminology is up-to-date although one would wonder if some of the more nebulous terms such as "positioning" should have been defined so dogmatically.

As with any work of this magnitude, questions will arise concerning the treatment of specific topics. As one example, in the discussion of product differentiation, cement and diamonds are mentioned in the same paragraph to illustrate the beneficial effect of restricting supply on the price of undifferentiated products. It seems that more compatible products could have been selected for this illustration.

The book captures a wide area of analytical techniques applicable to marketing. The techniques are illustrated by examples and cases. There appears to be more emphasis on what can be done to solve a particular problem than on why the problem exists or how the solution can be used. Some discussions appear to be unnecessarily complex, but the overall effect is a contribution to the literature.

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