Good Service Image Or Bankruptcy Tomorrow

As a part of a marketing greey for a Delaware ewspaper, I was queried y a marketing research firm to give my opinion on tores in northern New Castle County, Del. The in-terviewer called to my atn the fact that I se to be very favorably dis-posed to Sears Roebuck products. This person's comments stirred my cu-riosity to understand this enchantment with Sears

In retrospect, I have purchased many Sears products, mostly hard goods (appliances, tools, telephones, and so on). In purchasing hard goods, I like to feel confident that their quality is good and their quality is good and that I will not have to undergo the "Third Deon adjustments for

efective merchandise. My high regard for ears' good service and igh quality merchandise e vividly clear when I visited another local re-tail chain store that ofminimal service. greeted by an electronic screening system and a guard. A quick scan along the aisles revealed that sales people were



The real-life romantic evelopments and disnevelopments and disasters of the staff members at "Life," a popular soap opera, match the tangled lives of their TV characters, in "Staff of 'Life," an 'ABC Comedy Special" airing Friday, May 17, at 9:30 p.m. on WSOC-TV, Channel 9.

staff members of a oap opera show get to leave town for a lay weekend when y Cooper, the head

writer, suddenly has an emergency script rewrite to deliver. He adroitly lets the other go, and persuades Joanna, his co-writer and ex-wife of five months, to work late with him on revisions, thereby delaying her skiing trip with her new romantic in-

pretty scarce. I am still

seething from trying to get

past this store's checkout

I spent about 15 minutes

trying to pay for two boxes

of envelopes because an untrained cashier could not

give a senior citizen cou-

ple their special discount. I finally gave up on this ca-

shier and moved to an-

other line only to have this

cashier's supervisor at-

tempt to pull her to bail out

the old one. I was furning

because I could not be-

lieve that they would put an

unassisted, untrained per-

son on a checkout line. I

finally exclaimed, "No!".I

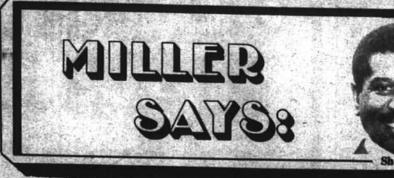
further demanded that the

supervisor get someone

else because of the very long line everyone had al-

ready spent trying to get

Starring are Granville Van Dusen as Berry Cooper, Anne Twomey as



through the checkout. He

My dander was just starting to ease when the main door electronic alarm went off on the group in front of me. The guard rushed toward them like a wild beast that had stalked his prey. This trying ex-perience thoroughly convinced me that purchasing hard good products from this store would be wrought with many hassles if these goods performed unsatis-factorily. I found that I had to toil to keep my ill-natured perception of the store's performance from affecting my view of the quality of their name brand merchandise.

I was troubled by my harsh assessment of this store until I examined its performance from a mar-keting researcher's perspective. My two favorite pastimes are studying marketing research and business strategy. In this backdrop, I feel very strongly that my initial perception was correct. My feelings are supported by the works of David Mazursky and Jacob Jacoby. They report in their article, "Forming Impressions of Merchandise and Service Quality," that people do have some definite items they use to evaluate the quality of service. Mazur-

sky and Jacoby write, "...the four most heavily accessed properties when forming service-quality impression were 'number of salespersons per department,' 'number of cashiers per department,' 'mer-chandise-return policy,' and 'number of fitting rooms."

Most people desire good quality merchandise along with good service. Mazursky and Jacoby further reported that there are some items that help to form a perception of quality merchandise in peominds. They continued. ".. the properties that were most heavily accessed when evaluating quality of merchandise were 'brand names, 'pictures of stores,' 'interior design,' 'merchandise ma-terial,' and 'price ranges.'''

I feel these two research-

ers offer an important lesson for retail businesses that wish to maximize their earnings. A business must decide whether it is going to be perceived as offering high quality service or high quality merchandise or both. I believe that companies electing to solely exploit low price as a substitute for good service and-or merchandise are merely painting a longterm mediocre earnings scenario. If America is moving towards a service dominated society, does this portend bankruptcy for those businesses that are not perceived to be underpinned with a philosophy of good service?





CURTIS C. REEVES, JR., M.D.

Ophthalmologist Diseases and Surgery of the Eye "Family Eye Care" -Complete eye exams -Glasses & contact lenses

15 Percent Discount on glasses with eye examination 25 Percent OFF Extended Wear Contacts

In Adjacent Optical Shop

1012 Kings Drive (Suite 521)

"Sparkle Like New" Car Restoration Special

Wash and Wax Exterior Interior Cleaned & Motor Clea Shampoo Carpets and Seats

Apply Pin Striping Check All Fluid Levels



ALL FOR \$89.95 STEELE'S BODY & PAINT SHOP

d Your King James Bible, Pray ad Thank God Every Day,"

On Dry Cleaning Only, Silk Not Included Ion., Tues., Wed., Thurs. 10 Percent Off On Fri. & Sat.

Offer Expires May 16, 1985 Minimum \$5.00 After Discount

Coupon Must Accompany Order

Full Price After 30 Days

American

Are You Tired of Your Hair Being Short In The Back?

HAZEL SIMONS D'ESSENCE

Presents an EXCLUSIVE LINE of ADVANCED PRODUCTS to put you in the CURLS and PERMANENTS of TOMORROW.

> By Willie Morrow SIGNATURE LINE

Willie Morrow Products Restores split ends, repairs damaged hair and adds glow and bounce to dead, dry, unruly hair.

CALL: MAZEL 377-0866

For Appointment and Amazing Results.... 2628 Statesville Avenue (Next to Waynes Supermarket)