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Summary

Marketing : Yesterday—Today—Tomorrow (pages 249—251)

As in many other areas of architecture, the post-war years have brought with them a stormy development in the building of shops. What seemed to us a few years ago to be ideal and basically suitable now seems in part completely unsuitable and is being replaced daily with other and better solutions. Not only the retailer with much capital at his disposal, but also the smallest retailer is forced to come to terms with these problems daily and to continue to introduce innovations if he doesn't want to be left hopelessly behind. The fundamentally new sales methods, which have developed in almost every branch of selling, continue to influence and are influenced by the technical progress in packaging and by the most modern shop construction. Clearly, another reason for these innovations is the shortage of suitably trained workers.

If we look at the earliest beginnings of commerce and bargaining, we see that up to now the problems have really not changed. What from ancient times to the present has seemed proper and desirable to the travelling merchant, to a great extent seems so to us today. The desire to offer any goods for sale to any prospective buyer in the most advantageous way still remains our chief consideration. The desire for more space and room to move freely is surely obvious. It is also understandable that new proposals from the New World and their realizations have been favorably received by us in a very short time. The new method of selling began in Switzerland just about ten years ago. As with everything new, it attracted supporters and opponents. The opponents were chiefly those adherents of the old, traditional methods of marketing to whom these revolutionary new ideas naturally seemed incompatible with the established customs. However the "let it sell itself" theory, the American style self-service, gained adherents and became a topic of everyday conversation.

The shop owner is now faced with the hard fact that he must completely change his traditional sales methods, from the ground up, if he intends to offer the best services. The varied experiments with the new marketing system, call it what one will—self-service, express marketing, etc.—, have in the course of time brought us to the realization that the human being is still the focal point although the most modern achievements have made it possible to shop with the aid of all kinds of cleverly-conceived devices. The personal relationship of dealer—goods—customer has not changed one iota and will not change.

1. (Ground plan example 1) (Normal selling or forced purchase)

If we take a look at the traditional shops we see that, especially in the food branch, the ratio of sales area to stock area was in the past (and unfortunately still is, in part) 1:3. In consequence, we still have sufficient examples of the various types of shops where the customer stands in front of the counter and the dealer stands behind with his entire stock of goods stacked on stands or on high shelves or perhaps kept in an adjoining room, closed off from and invisible to the customer. Marketing the goods and/or the new theory of "let it sell itself" begins here in the traditional shop. By renovating the sales room it is enlarged by one-third; the various products are displayed directly before the customer and the standing stock is reduced by two-thirds. Thus the first step towards impulse buying has been made; the self-service shop has been born.

2. The Produce Market (Free choice at open stalls)

What the travelling merchant was to our grandparents, the stall-keeper from the country is to us. In spite of the most modern marketing conveniences, we should not like to do without him. The display of the products for sale in the open and in the market stalls presents the opportunity for the freest choice possible to us. The complete variety of goods is displayed without any coercion. What in the Near and Far East is considered a part of everyday life we can now partake of only at certain definite times and even then only with regard for the strict regulations and conditions imposed.

3. Free choice in self-service shops (Modern marketing or free selection)

We now have a systematically planned sales room in which the ratio of customer area to stock area has been raised to 2:1. (Ground plan example 2.) It must already be clear that the more freedom, space and visible area we grant the customer, the greater the number of sales. Therefore it is not surprising that the free-selection method and the freely divided and spaciouly laid-out rooms have become more and more popular. Today the ratio of customer area to stock area is 3:1. Just because more and more goods are to remain in the foreground, many new technical problems have cropped up. The larger the rooms and the solid objects, the more necessary does it become to create for the customer a natural atmosphere and therefore a feeling of freedom. The specialists and those experienced in designing and fitting out shops have been able to make good use of the most ingenious artificial ventilating, air-conditioning and cooling systems.

Super Market and Department Store in the U.S.A. (pages 252—254)

The constant progress in the conservation of food by means of glass, tin, wax paper and synthetic materials; by chilling, deep freezing and dehydration; by improved transport and simplified storage has upset and radically changed old methods. The housewife today is able to obtain, in any season, foods of the best quality and selection, buy them quickly and conveniently and often partly prepared. The dealer, on the other hand, is able to lower his prices by the introduction of self-service. The additional expenditure of "selling" and "waiting on the customer" will henceforth be transferred to the packaging of the goods. The product in its attractive wrapper, psychologically calculated down to the last detail, sells itself.

The Department store is an old institution which has gained the confidence of many generations. This year, Macy's in New York, "the world's largest department store," is celebrating its 100th birthday. The department store differs from related undertakings such as the Super Market or the discount store (their stormy development began only a few years ago) above all because of its traditional, long-standing service to its customers. Individual service, the granting of credit, the possibility of installment buying, exchanging or returning goods, special treatment and advice, individual wrapping, free delivery and parking, as well as cultural offerings: lectures, concerts and exhibits—these are a few of the characteristic advantages which the dignified department store grants its customers. Many department stores have branches in various large cities in the country, but up to now they have been just as poorly represented in the suburbs as in the rural areas.

Shopping Centers and Department Stores in Rotterdam (pages 255—256)

The shopping centers have risen chiefly west and east of the Coolsingel, Rotterdam's most important boulevard, and are connected with the other parts of the city by business streets. It is chiefly west of the Coolsingel that architectural innovations have been introduced. Ideally situated in the city center not far from the railway station, a new shopping center has been erected—/the Lijnbaan—reserved exclusively for pedestrians. (See *Bauen und Wohnen*, issue 1/55) Deliveries to the shops are made from service streets in the rear. Nearby parking areas are provided. The Lijnbaan, which begins in the north at the newly constructed Boulevard Weena, runs parallel to the Coolsingel at present as far as the Oldenbarneveltstraat, where, at the intersection of the most important business streets, the large new department store, Bijenkorf,

has stood for the past year. The shop-lined walks and the department store supplement one another. Only together do they constitute a real urban business center. The Oldenbarneveltstraat connects the Lijnbaan with the shopping centers which lie east of the Coolsingel—with the Börsenplatz (Beursplein) and the Hoogstraat. There are plans for an underground pedestrian tunnel under the Coolsingel to be built at a later date. The Hoogstraat to the Nieuwe Markt, also for pedestrians only, Pannekoekstraat, Meent and Westewagenstraat together form a kind of circle of shops, connected to the residential areas in the east by business streets.

The "Bijenkorf" in Rotterdam (pages 257—262)

The sales floors of the Bijenkorf are closed off and are artificially lighted and ventilated. At the wish of the owner, however, small slits were provided as windows, most of them to be closed with shutters which could be opened when a customer desired to see the goods in the daylight. The architects utilized these slits to break up the wall area. At night the slits are lighted and this form of advertising with light can be seen from a distance, giving a special unique character to the Bijenkorf. The lighted advertising from this building is a part of the general conception itself, in contrast to the wild lighted advertising one often finds in business districts. Besides the window-slits, bands of windows break up the exterior wall in some places—where the function of the area makes an opening necessary. The Bijenkorf has four sales floors with eighty sales departments. On the ground floor are the goods in most demand; on the first floor, ready-to-wear, shoes, hats, etc.; on the second floor, furniture, arts and crafts, radios, toys; in the basement, also easily accessible to the customer, food-stuffs and household goods. In order to keep the traffic flowing smoothly, broad, straight aisles were laid out instead of the often-used "free-flow" arrangement of the sales tables, which compels the customer to go out of his way to reach a certain table. The deliveries are made by way of the service street of the Lijnbaan on the west side of the Bijenkorf.

The main kitchen is on the second floor with the restaurant; on the ground floor is the kitchen for the quick-service lunch counter and on the fourth floor the kitchen for the employees' lunch room. Besides this, the store has its own pastry shop on the third floor. Travertine, teak, and concrete in combination with large areas of color give the sales rooms their special character. The exterior walls, as well, are covered with Italian travertine, on the east and west side with slabs in honey-comb shape, in order to tie in with the name of the firm (Bijenkorf = beehive).

Department Store "Galerie modernes" Rotterdam (pages 263—265)

Above a basement four fifths of which is given over to sales space are two more sales floors. Deliveries are made at the back of the ground floor. Also at the back on the other floors are the offices for the management and, in the mezzanine, a snack bar. The second floor is used exclusively for offices and a large storage room. On the roof above is a two-story construction with advertising studio and technical rooms.

Department Store and Shopping Center in the U.S.A. (pages 266—269)

Since the end of the Second World War, the characteristics of the American department store have fundamentally changed. This change has affected the choice of location as well as the exterior and interior arrangement. Among the many factors which have brought about this development, without doubt the most decisive has been the incredible expansion of the American suburbs. The downtown department store has become increasingly isolated and inaccessible because of the increase in traffic. Other businesses knew how to take advantage of this situation; supermarkets, drugstores and others which had a number of branches spread out all over the country quickly moved in to fill up the gap caused by the change. As chain concerns which had been built up to provide a great number of sales outlets, they were in a better position than the immense department stores, traditionally bound to their location, to set up branch outlets wherever the opportunity arose. Along with the increase in types of articles sold

went the establishment of self-service stores, in which the goods are already weighed and packaged. Thus the large downtown department stores saw themselves suddenly threatened by dangerous competition; fewer and fewer shoppers found it worthwhile to go into town, while increasing numbers preferred the more favorably situated chain-store branch. Since the end of the war, in every part of America, hundreds of new department stores have been built out in the suburbs; the ground area they cover varies from 6000 to 50,000 m². In the past six years there has been a tendency to make the department store the leading element of a comprehensive, local shopping center, representative of what the city itself offers. In order to compete with the supermarkets, the department stores, too, have had to become more efficient. Great progress has already been made in the mechanization of certain jobs, such as moving the goods by conveyor belts and package tubes, organizational improvements such as conveyance of the goods directly from the place of delivery to the distribution centers, and electronic control devices. Today the department stores are being specially designed and built to serve a specific purpose, whereas formerly they could be found occupying any renovated shed. The May Company department store in Cleveland, which covers a ground area of 30,000 m², has a service core. Corresponding to the more limited expansion of the individual stores, this core was not placed in the middle of the building, but along one of the outside walls. Gradually a new type of structure is being developed; the planned, local shopping center. Completely unknown in the U.S. a few years ago, this type has now been realized in more than 50 examples throughout America. The department store, believed to belong to the past, will therefore be given new justification for its existence. Again it is beginning to play the role of the prima donna in an ensemble of retail shops. A new conception and its creative realization has succeeded in overcoming the growing competition of the supermarkets in the suburban areas.

Roosevelt Field Shopping Center, Nassau Center, Long Island (pages 270—280)

"Shopping Can Be A Pleasure" is the title of a reporter's article on the Long Island Roosevelt Field Shopping Center, which opened only last year. It is situated in the middle of the Long Island peninsula, on the outskirts of New York and can be reached from Manhattan via two of the large parkways. After careful consideration, the heart of Nassau County was chosen for the site, an area which has grown more rapidly in the past few years than any other suburban area of this New York. The buildings themselves are relatively close together in order to divert much of the pedestrian traffic from the lanes between the shops into the gardens and courtyards. From an architectural standpoint, the covered and uncovered pedestrian lanes and courtyards are cleverly varied as to width and length. The streets running lengthwise lead in the north to a recreation area with children's playgrounds, roller-skating rink, swimming pool, museum and other "attractions." The American thinks in terms of economics; such a shopping center is to attract the customers to remain on the premises for a longer time, to stimulate the desire to buy and to increase sales.

Project for a Shopping Center with industrial exhibits, "Roca Tarpeya," in Caracas (pages 281—284)

The Venezuelan capital, the fastest-growing city in South America, continues to surprise with its large-scale projects and buildings. In this issue we show a boldly-conceived project for a modern shopping center with space for industrial exhibits on the "Tarpeyan Cliffs" of Caracas. Branching off from the main highway, a spiral street is to lead up to the top of the Tarpeyan Hill and down again in such a way as to provide a shopping level between each two rings. Traffic will be divided on the spiral and the two one-way streets are to be connected at the top by an S-curve. Along this spiral street is to be a continuous line of shops and exhibit rooms. Since the north side of the hill, towards the city, rises more steeply than the south side, the depths of the shops will vary. In the steepest place, opposite the city center, an inclined lift with four cabins will be constructed, which will take the pedestrians quickly to the top, where a restaurant is to be built.