

January 7, 1955

Mr. Roger Greene  
Advertising Director  
Philip Morris & Co. Ltd., Inc.  
100 Park Avenue  
New York 17, New York

Dear Roger:

I told you that I would write you a letter about the "philosophy" of the new Marlboro advertising.

Here at the Leo Burnett Company we think the way to make effective advertising is (1) to know what the advertising is up against and (2) what you want it to do.

The job of Marlboro advertising is to take a new popular-priced filter cigarette with an old luxury cigarette name and give it a personality and a reason for being that will make it stand out among all the brands in a chaotic and fast-growing field.

Since Marlboro is going to be Philip Morris & Company's major entry in the popular-priced filter field, the advertising must stand out and be remembered in a field distinguished by conflicting and very similar claims.

We think we can take it for granted that a cigarette is to smoke, that most people smoke because they enjoy it, or think they do.

Filter cigarette sales have tripled in a year marked by widespread publicity on the possible harmful effects of cigarette smoking, so I think we can take it for granted that this publicity is the main reason back of the big switch.

Right here is where you run into a temptation to go off half-cocked. You say to yourself: "Hmmm, people are

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afraid smoking cigarettes may harm them. Then all we have to do is tell them that our filter makes cigarette smoking safe and we can lean back and watch the money roll in."

But when you compare Kent's 6% of the market to Winston's 21%, you avoid being led into temptation. Obviously, people like a liberal helping of flavor with their filter. They also like an easy drawing cigarette. And we have a pretty strong hunch that the psychologists know what they're talking about when they tell us that people who have "fears" resent being reminded of those "fears".

We have in Marlboro a cigarette that offers the smoker a good smoke as well as an effective filter. We decided to make the most of that fact in our advertising by letting people take it for granted that the filter on a cigarette sponsored by Philip Morris would be an effective one, and concentrating on the quality of the smoke. This was a hard decision to make, because the new Marlboro filter is an unusually effective selective filter so distinctive that 55 patent applications have been taken out in order to protect it.

The next product asset we had to consider was the new Marlboro package. This may well be the greatest advance in cigarette packaging since the cup package came out 38 years ago. We know this package is going to be a conversation piece. We suspect it will make a lot of initial sales and the temptation was to play it for all it was worth as a major theme in advertising.

We decided against this despite the fact that such emphasis might give Marlboro a temporary advantage. We wanted to establish the new Marlboro as a major factor in the filter cigarette business, not primarily because of its container. Accordingly, we felt the major emphasis had to be on the cigarette itself.

So this is the sales story we wound up with:

Major emphasis on the fact that the Philip Morris people have put out a new filter cigarette named Marlboro that delivers the goods on flavor.

Secondary emphasis on the fact that Marlboro comes in a new kind of crush-proof box, that it's a long-size cigarette at the popular filter price.

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Deciding on the basic sales story was only half of the battle. As every salesman knows, two men can take the identical sales story to the same kind of customers and

one can roll up an impressive record while the other fails dismally. The difference is in the way the sales story is told. That's what I want to talk about next.

We are out to capture a major share of the filter cigarette business and first impressions are as important to advertisements as they are to people. That's why Marlboro advertising both on TV and in the newspapers is clean, simple and confident. It's why the newspaper advertisements are in big space. We want to look and sound like a confident leader.

You'll notice all these advertisements feature men and you may wonder about that. This is why. Research by the Elmo Roper organization shows that many people think of filter cigarettes as a woman's smoke. Our own talks with smokers indicate that many people who know the old ivory-tipped Marlboro regard it as a fancy smoke for dudes and women. This is not the personality we want for the New Marlboro which must appeal to the mass market.

We know, too, that women often tend to buy what they consider a man's cigarette. So we show Marlboro being smoked by men who have been carefully selected to appeal to both sexes. These men aren't professional models. They're army and navy officers, and business men. We think they give our advertising virility without vulgarity, and quality without snobbery.

The cowboy is an almost universal symbol of admired masculinity. The man in the evening suit has a tatoo on his wrist. We think this will not only startle the reader into looking at the ad and cause him to remember it, but that it will say to many men that here is a successful man who used to work with his hands. To many women we believe it will suggest a romantic past.

This almost sounds as though Dr. Freud were on our Plans Board. He isn't. We've been guided by research and old-fashioned horse sense. Also we've taken these ads out and tested them with a lot of people. They stack up extremely well in getting over the points we want to get over.

It all sounds pretty simple, and it is. Anyone who wants to make advertising that will open people's minds to a new product or a new idea must constantly remember another kind of opener -- the can opener. Nothing could be simpler, yet it changed the cooking and eating habits of the world.

For all our sakes, let us hope that this advertising will do as well.

Sincerely,

*Les Burnett*

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