



SWIFT ENTERPRISES PRESENTS

## **The George Dilling Lectures: “YOUR FUTURE IN INDUSTRIAL ADVERTISING”**

Compiled by T. Edward Fox

While it is unlikely that most people interested in the creation and execution of industrial advertising will start at the top—as in having your first major job opportunity be with one of the top five industrial corporations in the country—it must be said that everyone begins with the basics.

George Dilling has been a longtime employee of Swift Enterprises and has seen them grow from their days as just The Swift Construction Company through their world-wide status as one of the premiere industrial complexes today.

This guide has been taken from three lectures given by George just this past year, and can prove valuable as an important tool for both the professional as well as for those seeking to ‘break into’ the world of industrial advertising.

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This book is dedicated to the men and women who create either effective or extremely clever advertising—or both. And, to those who never stretch the truth or disguise product inadequacies behind obscure or obfuscating phraseology. ‘Eschew Obfuscation’ is a poster hanging on George Dilling’s wall, and is a motto by which he—and good advertising creators—live by.

SWIFT ENTERPRISES PRESENTS

**HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL****The George Dilling Lectures****Thursday, March 11**

## FOREWORD

Talk about unsung! Oh, you've seen his name bandied about in many of the adventures of Tom Swift, Jr., but what do you really know about George Dilling? Communications man? Sure. But, what else?

Well, George is one of the most-tenured employees at Swift Enterprises and has worked his way up from his start as a copywriter working on—dry yet descriptive—press releases for all announced Swift inventions and products.

Today, he is head of a department of twenty men and women who do everything from writing the in-house weekly newsletter to publishing the Swift scientific magazine, to coming up with creative ways to introduce and advertise the many Swift products.

And, to think... it all began with an old Royal manual typewriter with an even older ribbon and the tendency to have all of the keys on the right side of the keyboard jam together when George typed a little too fast.

Enjoy this collection of lectures from three speeches George recently gave.

*Thackery E. Fox*

I want to tell you that it is an honor to be asked to come here today to lecture in the very same business school that absolutely refused to even consider me thirty years ago.

Having said that, let me assure you that I hold no grudges. In fact, when I set up my schedule for lectures this year, I was quite happy to place Harvard as my number one destination... for March eleventh.

A word of warning. Today's lecture and Q and A session will meander all around the actual subject of industrial advertising. It will be full of personal opinions and my own strong convictions. I will tell you this in my defense: I have been doing this for three decades and have been extremely successful for my employer, Swift Enterprises. I spend less money and have a track record of higher success rates than any other corporate advertising executive. Ever! The brag is now over.

Before I begin my ramble, let me hammer this one stake in the ground. When I say 'industrial advertising' I *do not mean* consumer advertising. Nothing that I do in my day-to-day job is directly aimed at the average citizen. Nothing that I do is directly going to become an add in *TV Guide* or *Ladies Home Journal*, nor is it going to play at exactly eight-twenty-three in the evening during the final ad cluster of the number one sitcom in that time slot.

What I do is aimed at a much more difficult audience than Joe and Sally Smalltown of Pocatella, Idaho.

Industrial advertising is what businesses do to let each other know that 'we already do that, so instead of reinventing the wheel, come on and buy from us... you know you want to!'

My sort of advertising provides a bit more latitude than

consumer work, but it also has a lot in common. I'll hit all this before the end of the lecture.

So, let me backtrack and tell you all a little bit about me.

As the board says, I am George Dilling and I am the head of communications for Swift Enterprises, the Swift Construction Company and the Swift outpost in space. And, anything else the Swifts decide to get into. My responsibilities include just about everything that communicates, other than water fountain gossip. Even I can't keep up with the speed of *that!*

I'm in charge of press communications, radio transmissions and just about anything that goes out of our buildings and to people who don't already work for us. And also those who do.

Allow me to take up the next several minutes, plus a lot of space on this white board behind me, giving you a synopsis of my life and responsibilities.

No... let's skip most of my life stuff. Suffice it to say that I was born and raised on the East Coast of the U.S., most of the early years in Virginia and then my formative teens and twenties in New York.

Take away four years spent in Chicago for college and three for an Army stint and you'll see me heading to Shopton in upstate New York to take a job offer at the Swift Construction Company.

I've been there ever since.

At first, my sole responsibility was to act as a translator. I see a few curious looks, so I'll explain. In any given industry, and especially in any technology industry, you will find a world of jargon being used.

Let me write up concept point number one:

*• Jargon equals lack of communication*

Oh, and for those who may be asking why a man who works for one of the top technology companies in the world is relying on an old fashioned white board rather than having everything on a nice, neat set of overhead slides complete with a slick set of handouts? I really prefer to be a bit more organic than that.

And, we will come back to *that* concept a little later.

As I was saying, I was flung into a dark and non-descriptive world of jargon. Jargon, by the way, that is absolutely and one hundred percent necessary for the techno-guys, but requires often significant translating in order to make sense to Mom and Pop America and all their little Americans.

So, I spent the first two years with the Swifts taking papers, scribbled notes from interviews and cryptic phone conversations and writing it up so that it could be put into press releases and the like. Something that started with a whole lot of 'Twidget XK37 puts flamajamit thingummy in the doodah' and making it read 'The new Swift ColorPicker model EK37 lets users change the background color of their appliance lighting with the press of a single button.'

Hands up all those who would rush out to buy something based on the first description over the second one.

Only one? Really, or are you just being sarcastic? Ah, I see the hand went down pretty fast. I guess that's unanimous then.

Going back to this first point, wherever you might end up on your path between school and retirement, even if it ultimately does not include advertising, the concept is sound. Wherever possible do not use jargon when trying to explain either the function of, or even more importantly, the reason someone should desire to purchase or use or fondle or whatever, that product or service you are promoting.

If your audience isn't the same people who typically use that jargon, then don't use it in advertising. It will absolutely confuse and turn off people's interests. It's hard enough to keep

someone's attention without alienating their sensibilities by using words they have no hope of understanding on the fly. As they hear them, I mean.

At the Swift companies—and if you care to, you can access our on-line library of press releases going back all the way to 1942—we always strive to make things we send out both easy to understand and as descriptive regarding the benefits of that products as possible.

That gives us point number two:

- *Benefits over cold, hard facts every time*

Let me go ahead and put up the earlier point and that will give me at least two things I need to come back to:

- *Communicate organically*

Back to my history. After the first couple years, Mr. Swift and my immediate boss, Fred Bartleby, recognized my work by promoting me to be a junior copywriter for their brand new advertising group. I say 'a' junior copywriter. I really mean 'the' junior copywriter. The Swift Company had never advertised anything as most of their products were either purchased by other industrial concerns or by the Government.

Suddenly, we had a handful of products that the general public might be interested in. While the Swift name was very well known in business circles, Ma and Pa America probably knew little to nothing about us.

So, this new advertising team of Fred Bartleby, a secretary named Susan, and myself set out to take the advertising world by storm.

You've heard the phrase, "Tempest in a Teacup?" Well, our initial impact was more like a small breeze hidden inside of the tempest in a very small thimble-sized cup.

Ah, you might well laugh, but think about it. If you are breaking absolute new ground for your company, and you start out with high-falootin' ideas, just how successful do you think you are going to be? On average, not very. Unless you know what you are doing, it is darn near impossible to communicate what people need to know about your products. Not a lot of people are successful at it. So, a lot of people try, and a lot of them find out that they need to do something else in order to eat. Advertising is not easy.

Let me give you a little fact here. The top five agencies in the country, that's four in New York and one in San Francisco, average forty-three copywriters each to handle all their accounts. Of that total of two hundred fourteen, the typical length of employment is just eight months.

I see a little shock out there. Welcome to the real world! Of every hundred who get hired, fewer than ten are still working in advertising three years after they start. After ten years, it's less than one from that original hundred.

There's more. I am not telling you this to scare you away from the world of advertising, and especially industrial advertising like it says up on that other board, but I want you to understand how difficult it is to make a mark and do things right.

Agencies are a lot less willing to give you a chance than in-house organizations. Well, at least a number of chances. Even when you are tied hand and foot by an ad exec who has ideas that no three-year-old would be fooled by, it is ultimately easier for everyone to point the finger at the copywriter—the low man—and let Joe Slick, the exec, slide.

Anyway, the three of us had to pioneer the art of industrial advertising. Plus, at the same time we were expected to come up with ads that could be used in *Life* magazine and *Look* and even *Ladies Home Journal*.

It took more than five years of creating multi-purpose ads for

the realization to hit us, but I'm here to tell you—it is just about as impossible to make one ad fit both markets as it is to breed a zebra from a gerbil and a snake.

Here is what we found that is vital if you want to discover a way that bridges them. To be successful, you absolutely must:

- *Know your audience(s)*

It sounds like a simple concept, but I can assure you that it is not. In the case of consumer ads, you have an audience that is so diverse that you can't please everyone. Don't look smug. Your instructors here are wrong. You can't! What works for people in the South probably won't cut it up in the Pacific Northwest. Or in Maine. Or Canada.

And, what appeals to a immigrant population primarily from Central and South American countries is probably going to be lost on immigrants from former Soviet nations. And, lord help you if you need to come up with advertisements for use outside of the country or North America.

In all cases you just can't expect to run a campaign that sells your product or service unless you make every attempt to know who it is that you are talking to.

In the Swift case, we finally split off the consumer ad development to another group and let them do the research and consumer testing and focus groups and small-market trials and all of that. They currently create specific ads for at least three different regions of the U.S. Same products, different approaches. But, I digress.

I, and by that I mean the three of us, set our sights on the industrial markets.

Don't get me wrong, we still had to do our research, but we could sit back and read through industrial papers and technology journals to see who was doing what out there.

Once we conquered that, and just about the time the Korean War was getting over, we found that our products were receiving a lot of press. That meant my going back to doing press releases for another four years.

Let me jump ahead a bit here. Did the PR stuff, got into a bit of radio work after that. King of the Top forty, that's me—no. I'm lying. By radio work I mean that I got into the world of physically using the radio waves to communicate.

We set up a worldwide radio and then television closed circuit system so that the home front, which by now included the new Swift Enterprises complex, could communicate with all of our concerns. Unlike today where video conferencing is fairly commonplace, we had limited time per communication to get messages across and to elicit responses.

That led to our creating a series of video presentations that could be used to introduce prospective clients to one or more of our products, to train our industry partners in products they were purchasing from us, and even to train and inform the buying public.

And by that time, Fred had retired, Susan had decided that spending time with her five children was more important than being secretary to a couple guys who probably didn't show their appreciation as much as they should, and I suddenly had a staff of five fresh-faced kids working for me.

Shortly after that, Mr. Swift came to me and laid out a need to provide training materials for many of our products. he slapped me on the back and told me that he had every faith in me. Ha!

Nobody in our team had a solid understanding about how to develop good training material, so I took a leave of absence and went back to school. Guess what I found?

No volunteers? I'll tell you, then. There was *nobody* back in the early sixties that had any idea about teaching via television.

Well, other than a few ‘here’s how to paint using a roll of toilet tissue’ shows on TV—don’t laugh; they actually existed—nobody was teaching the techniques of using that medium to reach our audiences.

I left school after a month and went back to Enterprises and sat down and wrote my own handbook. It pleases me no end to see that you folks are using the most recent edition of that as a classroom reference.

Since that time, I have split my time between being head of Enterprises Communications department and holding these lectures. Not to wrench my arm by patting myself too hard on the back, but my efforts have borne fruit. Of the thirty-one people I currently have working for me, a solid nineteen became interested enough in what I do from attending one of these lectures that they pursued the appropriate schooling and came to me ready to go. Complete with my biases.

Let’s get back to this short list. I’m assuming that I have bored you enough with George facts by now.

We covered the jargon thing. Just take away that except for communications within your department or company or people directly involved in what you do, *jargon is evil*.

The second thing I wrote up there is the thing about benefits. Yes. Very important.

No matter who your audience is, very few people will get excited about your product if all you give them are cold facts. After about fact number seven, they mentally begin to shut down.

Gamers may drool if you tell them that their console has the absolute latest graphics chip in it. But assume that they are all in their teens and it’s their parents that are going to buy the thing as a gift.

Tell the parents about the video RAM and a proprietary graphics chip that makes Pac Man eat more colorful ghosts,

and just stand back and watch their eyes glaze over. No, what you need to give them are the benefits of buying the unit. Perhaps the eye-hand coordination thing. Maybe the one the kid wants costs less than the competition’s unit. Both are good starts. But what *will* sell them is telling about how the console can use a cartridge to turn on and off all your household lights and shut the TV down at a specific time each night. Tell them about the exercise attachments that can make them fit for less than the cost of a couple month’s fees at a gym. Explain that kids who use the reading program score twenty percent higher on college entrance tests.

Tell them the benefits that are meaningful to them. If they can’t figure out how it will do them any good, why in the world should they consider buying it?

Think about it.

What’s the third thing? Oh, yes. Communicate organically. Here is what I mean by that.

Do not get headed inextricably down one path. Be able to shift gears to meet new needs. Don’t communicate concepts and benefits by jumping on the latest 3D bandwagon. Don’t get tied into something that you might need to abandon later. Don’t rely on flashing things past your audience at the speed of sound. Don’t use techniques that irritate any important segment of your audience.

Question? ...

Sure. I mean things like using handheld cameras that move and bob and weave around. There is a percentage of, and let me look at my notes for the real numbers... ah. Yes. Of the adult population over the age of thirty eight—and that is sixty eight percent of the people out there—greater than fifty percent of them get slightly nauseous watching that *cinéma vérité* technique.

Does anyone dream of annoying or nauseating a full third or up

to a half of your potential buying audience to the point where they turn the channel? Or, walk out of the room? Thought so.

Use natural motion in video ads. Study real life to see how people truly move and interact with each other. Real salespeople at car dealerships don't begin every sentence by walking across the front of the car and then out of camera range.

Electronics salesmen don't stand there flinging their hands forward and down to punctuate every sentence.

People don't buy mattresses by having one older man lying on a bare mattress while a much younger woman jumps up and down not dislodging a glass of wine.

I suppose that along those lines, not all minorities need to take out payday loans. But, upper class people also do not so why dress up a white bread and mayonnaise couple and put them in an ad for *Friendly Sharks Loans and Pawn*?

Don't talk down to or overwhelm your audiences. Treat them sell and they will buy.

I also mean that your communications, your ads, shouldn't always follow a formula. Along with using natural situations and movements, and using dialog that normal people can recognize, change things up a little from time to time.

How many times do we need to see a car careening around that same set of curves in California? Why does every car commercial feature a freshly wetted road surface? Plus, how many times do I want to be reminded that everything I am seeing was done on 'a closed course with a professional driver... do not attempt' before I get so bored that I stop reading the fine print?

Give me something fresh to watch. Toss in one screen of absurd fine print that I can only read if I record the ad and freeze-frame the tape.

That makes everything more interesting. Makes things a little interactive. And, here's the big one, it can make your audience want to see what you come up with next.

Of course, having said that, a lot of it doesn't apply to industrial advertising. Or, does it?

In order to keep our audience's attention we rely on changing up how we present information. Nothing severe but enough to keep them on their viewing toes.

No two of our aircraft ads feature the same sort of visuals. We highlight what is best about that aircraft type. And, we stay clear of trite situations. I'd fire anyone who came up with the idea to fly a jet at ten feet down a runway to highlight anything about it.

Aircraft that can carry many, many tons of goods get extensive inside the plane coverage while aerobatic planes for the private sector feature loops and Immelman's and vertical stalls and such.

We show the appropriate audiences what they want to see about the aircraft of their choice.

**COLUMBIA COLLEGE OF ART: Chicago****Monday, June 21**

Welcome back from our first break, everyone. Before we get back into things, I wanted to mention—apropos of nothing—that the last time I was in town, and about this time of year, I dressed for summer and got treated to the wettest autumn I'd ever experienced. At least the food was great.

Everyone settled? Then let's hit the next set of concepts. And, those are:

- *Thou shalt not steal; honor instead*
- *Humor me*
- *To testimonial or not?*

This first one is a bit tricky. A lot of people will tell you that there are no new ideas. You know, the same ones who insist that there are only seven actual stories out there and that everything else are just variations?

That might be true. I know that I see a lot of movies and TV shows that I swear I've seen before. I also know that the world of industrial advertising is a lot more constrained than consumer ads.

And, that brings up the age-old problem of doing ads in a way that they appear to be new, unique, different, strange or even avant-garde without stealing from the other guy.

Because the consumer was relatively naive in the 50s, one of the worst examples of outright ad campaign thefts occurred in the laundry soap arena. Entire ads were copied and recreated using different actors and slightly different words, but one company simply took the entire set and rebuilt it in reverse—

left for right—hired the twin sister of the original actress, and restaged it only changing the name of the soap and the tag line.

A few of you are nodding your heads. Have you heard of it? Ah. Good. Did you know about the court case?

Then let me tell you.

I'll just call them Company A and Company Z. Company A, the original commercial folks, filed a million dollar suit against Company Z. They made one of the first claims that included the term, intellectual property. They asserted that their ad people had been paid to come up with a unique approach to selling huge boxes of soap powder—powder, as an aside, that contained a high percentage of finely ground peanut shells as filler—using specific wording.

In the end, the judge and jury awarded them half of what they were seeking, saying that their 'intellectual property' rights had been infringed upon, but that the ads were different enough to not be classified as copyright theft.

What's that mean to you? Easy.

First, I strongly suggest that you try everything, including all-night bull sessions with colleagues and/or friends to come up with new ideas. Keep detailed and dated notes of your ideas. If your company or client has taken the time to come up with some new product, or one that's better than the competition, the very least you can do is to understand those differences and work out a way to present them in a special way.

Failing that—and many do—if you do have a favorite ad or campaign that you might like to, hmmm... let's say, 'borrow,' then the absolute least you can do is to honor that concept and not steal it outright.

Dissect the ads you like. Figure out almost frame-by-frame what it is that hit you. And why it affected you. Look at ways to instill that same sort of feeling in your new ad, but do it without lifting the original concept.



That's the last part of that line. Honor the original, mostly in your head. Don't be overt unless you are willing to first connect with the people who came up with that ad and beg to be allowed to use their notions, and then to talk your client into giving them on-screen credit for the concept.

Not an attractive idea, is it? No. I see lots of heads shaking right now.

Let me add one more thing to our list, and it really fits right inside of the first thing up there. That is:

*• No interior decorating*

Okay. Strange one, that. Let me describe a scenario to you.

Three rather well to do women in New York all hired interior designers to rework their living and dining rooms. Each one had a budget of fifty thousand dollars.

The designers interviewed them extensively about their likes and dislikes, their hopes for the rooms and what their friends might think about the rooms.

Three months later, the three women met for drinks. The first one began describing her new rooms. Floral this and gilt-clad that. Silk the other thing and wool whatnots.

Woman number two then described her new rooms. Wool this and silk that. Silver-clad other things and floral whatnots.

The third woman sat there looking a bit miserable; She refused to describe her rooms, but asked the other two to accompany her to her apartment.

When she opened the door, the other two gasped and let out angry moans. "That's exactly like my room except that the colors are all wrong," woman one exclaimed.

"My god! Your designer stole *my* apartment designs but where I have green over gray, you have gray over green!"

They each pulled the business cards of their designers from their purses and compared them. And, yes, you're already ahead of me here. It was the same designer. And, the same concept simply used and reused.

They were, shall we say, a bit upset and sued the designer into bankruptcy.

It's the same with advertising. Along with no stealing from others, don't steal from yourself. It is called ad incest and it is a dark and nasty road to travel down.

If a client or company pays you good money—and all money that can buy you food and shelter is good—for your ideas, give them their money's worth.

Then, if you go elsewhere or take on a new client, do them the respect of giving them *their* money's worth by coming up with something new and designed specifically for them.

Now, the next point involves the use of humor. It has a wonderful place in consumer advertising. I would much rather buy a stereo from one company that shows me the funny side of buying their product and having the speakers moving my pets around over the competition that uses plain, boring "It has RMS and watts and speakers and wires and an antenna and blah, blah, blah." That stuff doesn't make your ad stand out.

One the flip side, don't try to show me the funny side of landing a small plane without one of the wheels extended and expect me to want to purchase your product. While I absolutely love the flying sequences in *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*, I prefer to hear how safe my potential purchase is without watching it slam into a billboard or the ground.

That isn't to say that some products, even ones marketed to other industries, can't stand a little poking fun at.

Swift Enterprises makes a device called the Damonscope. Anybody familiar with it? No? Well, that's probably because the only people we sell to is industry and the Government. It is,

basically, a high-powered device for detecting radioactivity underground. Mount it on a plane and fly it over a location you suspect might have Uranium or any other form of radiation, and it spits out a continuous strip of film showing you what is deep under the ground.

So, how does humor come into it? Well, we wanted to try something different, so our first video ad showed an old prospector with a donkey and a pick wandering around the desert. The voice over said something like, “The art of finding important minerals has gone from the dark ages of the eighteen hundreds up through the dawn of the electronic age.”

At that point the old prospector is replaced with a younger man out in the same location but using a metal detector, basically a war surplus mine detector. Then the scene shifts to a young couple in that same location, now suddenly in color, and they are walking around with a Geiger counter.

The voice over goes on with, “Not so very long ago, the discovery of uranium ore brought out a whole new generation of prospectors. But, their equipment can only detect things a few inches under the surface. Not where you are likely to find significant deposits.”

The scene shifts to an Air Force cargo plane flying over the Rockies with a close-up of the lens portion of our Damonscope. The narrator finishes with, “So, the next time you and your family climb aboard your very own multi-million dollar plane and set out to find radioactive ore, may we suggest taking along a Swift Enterprises Damonscope?”

The final scenes show prints from the film strip definitely indication large deposits of something.

That’s it. Not overly funny to describe it, but the execution was quite well received. So well, in fact, that when a competing company came out with a slightly less costly ‘radiation camera’ a year later, they had almost zero sales and our sales actually increased in part because we re-released that light ad.

I see two hands, You on the right, first. The young lady ...

I’m sorry? How could we make light of the dangers of radioactivity?

Well, for starters, we know that our audience was not at all interested in prospecting for surface Uranium. From our research we knew that these people were interested in finding significant deposits and knew how to handle them with all the necessary safety in place. We also did a test viewing for a few military brass-types and asked them how they interpreted it. They unanimously saw it as a little wink-and-a-nudge making light of the prospecting concept, and one that would be seen as fairly harmless if the ad ever got out into the public.

But, they also saw the deeper message, the one about mounting it on a large plane and flying over vast areas. Finally, they saw the military as well as the scientific prospects. Mainly, those were that we could now fly over areas in countries we suspected of performing nuclear experiments, even those deep underground, and we could detect them. And bring back iron-clad proof.

Is that a good enough answer for you? Great. Now, where was that other hand?

You, trying to hide in the back row. If you don’t mind shouting the question out; the ventilation up here in front is a bit noisy...

Do we ever make ads that we would be ashamed of or frightened of if they were shown on television?

No. Simple answer. Anything we produce, unless it is for an audience that knows how to keep secret materials secret, we always ask ourselves if it is appropriate for public consumption. I’ll give you an example.

Back around, oh I think it was 1964, a major chemical supplier developed an amazing drain opener. Twenty seconds and it could dissolve any clog up to three inches thick. Amazing stuff, but only available to the professional plumbing industry. While

it was effective, it could eat through exposed skin in seconds and had the habit of making greasy clogs explode back up the pipes.

They made an industrial ad where they showed the hazards to exposed skin and the grease dangers by tossing a slab of bacon into a bucket of the stuff. It started to bubble and overflow the bucket. Fifteen seconds later and most of the meat was gone and the linoleum under the bucket was smoking. A powerful message and meant to drive the danger point home.

The problem was that one buyer for a large company took his copy of the movie home and showed his wife, friends and even had a party and showed it to more than a hundred people.

Someone borrowed the movie—back then we distributed things on 16mm movie film—and took it to a local television station. They showed it. Then, one of the networks got a copy and they showed it. Pretty soon, a senator from the Midwest convinced a Congressional committee to put a ban on the hazardous chemicals, and the company was fined almost half a million dollars for endangering the public.

Your question exemplifies just how important it is to not only know your audience, but to find the best way to tell your story to them, while keeping any unwanted audiences in mind... just in case.

If it were Swift Enterprises, we would have found a less shocking way to demonstrate the safety issues. Maybe dropping a small piece of steak in a large vat. That way, it would look more like something cooking in a deep fat fryer. Still gets the message across but doesn't cause panic.

Plus, we would be sure to have text superimposed over it stating that this is a video meant for our professional audience, *only!*

Generally, we don't get in that position.

We take enormous pains to understand our audience and to

make the ads appropriate for them without producing something that would be a disaster if it were to be shown, for instance, here on campus.

Alright. Let's get to the next point on the board. When if ever, do you use testimonials?

For industrial advertising, having actual testimonials, especially if they are given by notable individuals, are a huge plus. Our clients would love to hear Albert Einstein tell them that the Damonscope is the most universally specific and accurate device he has ever seen and used. What they don't want to see is a famous actor come on screen and tell them, "I'm not a doctor, but I know that Snowjob Cigarettes are the smoothest, best tasting and good-for-you tubes full of tobacco goodness you can find!"

Worse, are the ads that are suppose to show real parents telling us about how great Poopies disposable diapers are for their babies. The next day you see the same guy who was 'dad' in the ad starring in another spot with a different 'wife' and family telling us that he only buys RollAlong tires.

We'd be killed if we tried to pull that.

Swift Enterprises, when it is feasible, tries to feature real customers telling us their true feelings about our products. Granted, may not use everything they say—for time purposes, generally—but we are not constrained into thirty or sixty second spots. We can let them say more than a quick sound bite. Many of our ads are actually short films running between a couple minutes and up to a half hour.

Of course, we need to not simply convey a feeling that "I need to buy that so my family will be healthier or cleaner," we need to tell a fairly complete and often complex story that gives specific details as well as benefits and often about very complex devices.

See. It all comes back around to the benefits. Even when you're

talking about a helicopter, you need to give them the benefits. Folds up and fits in a standard garage. Can take off and land right from your driveway; no need to travel all the way to the airport. Lands itself with the push of a single button.

There have even been instances where we have started out creating an industrial and a year or so later, when we determine that there is a consumer market, we will edit that piece so it can be used on television. Do you remember the ads a year or so ago for the new *Swift AtomiCar*?

Well, we had been selling them to the military and to companies doing remote exploration for years. The market looked like it was going to open up, so we took a twelve-minute video piece and pared it down to the one-minute piece that ran for the first two weeks of the five month campaign. We then took other bits and changed the ad—I believe we made seven versions of it—so that it didn’t seem stale.

That’s an example of repurposing from sheer luck. We didn’t create the original piece with any intent of using it on TV. It just worked out.

Uh, back near the top. A question? ...

You see me trying to stifle a chuckle? If we had to do it all again, would we have made the original video different?

Since that time, we learned our lesson. We wanted to make at least two other versions of the TV ad, but we never shot the footage to support it, and none of us wanted to restage things so that we could have matching new footage. It was impossible, anyway. I mean, how do you restage specific cloud formations in the background of your shots? Right?

A quick aside. Sometimes it is best to shoot things two different ways. I can’t tell you how many times I see an ad where the director did a pan shot from right to left, usually showing a fountain or fire, and then edits it backwards so it looks better in left to right. Look carefully. You will be surprised to see lots

of water flowing backwards and flames being sucked back down into the fires.

Anyway, now we look more closely at the products we produce. If it is something that seems to have wide commercial appeal, then both halves of our creative team, the industrial as well as the commercial, work together to come up with a master shot wish list.

Sometimes I have to hold up a hand and say, “Sorry, folks. Don’t have enough budget for it all, so what can we drop?”

That, by the way, is another item for the board:

*• Create more than you need and chop to the best*

If you have problems killing your own advertising pet babies, then form a close relationship with someone who can pull the plug when necessary.

I get to be that guy for most of our team members, so sometimes if “That rotten bastard, Dilling!” but I feel that we end up with a better advertising product in the end. We have a library of wonderfully perfect shots that I’ve yanked because they weren’t right for that specific use. Beautiful, but not what was best for the product.

It also makes everyone aware that we have certain standards that we all must live up to, and certain limits we all must live within.

Okay, I’ll take one more question before the final break. We’ve had two men and one woman, so how about the pretty redhead over on the far left?...

Oh, that’s a good one. Costs. Do you mean overall department costs or what we spend on any given product?...

Well then, that has a multitude of answers, but it really boils down to this. For any given product, Swift Enterprises determines three budgets. The first is, what can be spent on

design and development? A lot of that is based on sales projections.

The second is what will it cost to build the first sellable version? That might include numerous test versions or certification versions.

But, you want to know about what we spend on advertising. Two main factors go into that.

Number one is the intended audience and potential unit sales. Number two is design and development cost recoupment.

If I know that Enterprises will make all of the up-front money back in months rather than years, I spend more. My bosses trust me to make good decisions based on lots of info.

But the bottom line is that if I can present an airtight case for spending a million dollars on a ten-minute sales ad for a new propeller blade, then I get that money. I'd better be right or the next time I'll have lots of resistance.

The secret is to know your product and to never push it. If I overspend on advertising and we don't make a lot of money, I'd have been out of a job years ago!

Let's take that break.

## UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

**Saturday, August 14**

Before we get to the third and final part of this lecture, let me tell you how grateful I am that all of you took time out of your weekends to attend this lecture. I would have mentioned it right up front except I didn't want to distract from the hero worship and adoration you all seemed to be feeling as you dragged yourselves in here at nine a.m. on a weekend.

I had really intended to be able to do this a week ago Thursday, and at a reasonable hour like noon, but we had an—well, I'll just call it an 'event' at Swift Enterprises.

Okay. Thanks and excuses aside, this final part of the lecture deals with a few of the bugaboos that I hate to see in advertising, but that really can really backfire in industrials.

Let's put those on the board as well:

- *No lies or truth stretching*
- *No continuing stories*
- *No false emotional roller coasters*
- *No happy, smiling idiot families*

My hope would be that the first of these final four is self-evident. My understanding from speaking with a few colleagues who have attended large, expensive business schools and taken their Masters programs, is that there is an attitude out there that you can stretch the truth just up to the breaking point as long as you don't pull it that one tiny step too far.

That sort of attitude has seen more than a hundred potential hires get ushered to the doors and told, not only "no thanks"

but “Hell no! Thanks”

I refuse to hire anyone who thinks it is okay to deceive our customers. I mean, what sort of moron could believe that telling the U.S. Government that our latest giant cargo jets can fly at Mach 2 when the truth is that they max out at Mach 1.4 in level flight? They can only hit the higher number in a thirty degree dive. Omission or lie?

Technically, it is true. Physically it can happen. Fully loaded and starting at thirty-five thousand feet you can hit Mach 2 just at a point one thousand feet too low to pull up safely and would slam into the ground at a speed so high that the largest piece that might survive intact would be about the size of a golf ball.

A very flat golf ball.

No. We manufacture things that people place their lives in the hands of. We can't tell them anything except the absolute truth. If the cargo jet can't fly at a steep angle fully loaded and pull up safely, we have to tell them exactly what point is on the survive side and what is on the won't survive side of the line.

Remember the story about the laundry powder from earlier? Well, I lived a nightmare in my early years, and the detergent companies almost killed me because they didn't want to tell people their dirty—if you'll pardon the pun—secret.

I am one of the thirteen million Americans who are so violently allergic to peanuts that I cannot fly commercial airplanes that serve them. The fumes make me sick. One nut and I'm in the hospital within twenty minutes, or I go to the morgue.

Getting that back to the laundry powders, they used ground peanut shells and nut husks to fill out the detergent so that women could feel better about buying a giant box for two dollars when they were getting only about one quarter that amount of actual soap.

My allergy meant that my mother couldn't buy her big beautiful box. She had to use concentrated soap that was sold

door-to-door. It did a great job, possibly even better, and my skin didn't turn red and itch, and I could breathe without wheezing.

When my father wrote to several of those companies to complain, they wrote back with things like, “Our proprietary formula contains special ingredients that we cannot divulge...” and other wording without coming out and admitting it.

And that is tantamount to lying.

The next one on the board is continuing stories. There have been a few clever ones in the consumer world. The issue with them is hitting that point where you run each of the episodic ads just enough times over a just-long-enough period of time before you bring out the next one. You have to make sure that the widest possible audience has had time to catch the latest ad without annoying them through continued showings.

Where about one in three consumer campaigns using episodes have been relatively successful, I have never seen episodic ads work in the industrial arena. The closest thing would be a series of ads or videos that all get delivered at one time. No industrial president or buyer wants to sit and wait week in and week out to get everything they need to make purchasing decisions.

Having said that, Swift Enterprises had a great deal of success with a multi-part campaign aimed at selling our line of desktop computers, the Little Idiots.

We created a set of twenty ads delivered on a single tape. Each one highlighted a specific use for one of the computers. We did it so that purchasing agents could determine what version of the computer would work for their company and then just show their superiors the segment or few segments that highlighted those specific uses.

An outside agency was hired to do a study a year later. Basically they asked whether we might have sold more or fewer units

had we provided one, full-length video showing everything.

Overwhelmingly, they discovered that we potentially would have sold about *half the number* if we had picked a single version running the full ten or twelve minutes.

And, that lost half of the actual sales numbers would have cost Enterprises the better part of one hundred and ninety million dollars.

I'd say that our decision to spend roughly eight thousand dollars more on splitting things up paid for itself. In spades!

I just thought of one thing to add to the list:

- *No bad language*

Let me hit that, briefly, before we go on.

There are several types of English. There is the proper form, the relaxed form, and the lazy form.

In proper English, words such as 'less' and 'fewer' are *not* interchangeable. It isn't my place to teach you English; you are in college, so you should know it.

What I will tell you is that if I ever see an ad and find out that you were responsible for the following crimes against the language, I will try to hunt you down and get you fired.

Here goes.

It is "*she and I*," not "she and me," or "her and I," or "her and me," or "me and her" or "me and she," and many other variations.

Always refer to the other person first, and as if that person is alone, and finally refer to yourself, also as if you were the lone individual in the statement.

I have seen advertisements for very expensive products that

feature bad grammar and it not only makes me cringe, it makes me feel that the product maker doesn't pay attention to what their ad agency or in-house group are saying.

Don't use non words or words of the moment. I'll scream the next time I see an ad that uses "schizzle" or "phat" or "wazzup" or any other word that has temporary meaning. If it isn't in daily use by the majority of the population, dump it.

And, as George climbs down off of his soapbox, and takes a calming breath, he looks up into the aghast faces of about half his audience. And he—or I—apologizes for the previous rant.

Let's go back to the actual list. No false emotions or roller coasters. You can advertise telephone services as being something to keep you in touch, even with a son stationed around the world in the military. You can tug a little on the heartstrings of people because you are actually driving home a benefit. You love your family and you want to hear their voice. Fine.

You can't use those tactics to sell telephonic switching equipment or a new line of extension cords. We're back in many ways to knowing your audience and also knowing your product. And, creating a message that bridges them.

In the world of industrial advertising, the only emotions we find acceptable are those that generate enthusiasm over the fact that we have presented buyers with a solution to a problem or need. Or, genuine enthusiasm from someone giving a testimonial.

Supply the military with a large-capacity cargo jet that can get equipment and troops to a point halfway around the globe in less than twenty hours and only needs to be refueled once and you've solved a slew of problems and logistic issues in one fell swoop. And that gets their blood flowing.

A word of caution, however. Don't hit them with the emotion or even hint at that. Understand the audience and create an

advertisement that addresses either a specific or anticipated need, then show them the product and finally tell them how wonderfully it overcomes their problems, issues and needs. Let them find the emotion inside themselves.

In the world of industrials, as we have discussed, you often have a long time to get your message across. Not a truly long time, but in the multiple minutes rather than seconds.

Final thing to add to the board before I get to that last point.

*• Attention span is only so wide*

This goes along with the roller coaster part of the other point up there. If you were making a movie, the best thing you can do is to take your audience along for a good ride. Bring them way up and full of excitement and then turn things dark. Toss the little orphan out onto the streets. But, you have to pick them back up and give them a loving home in the end.

And, you have ninety minutes or two hours to do it in.

You don't have that in industrials. If you are producing a training piece, then you take as long as necessary. The audience for that will want to see everything so they know not to push the red button, not even out of insatiable curiosity!

Industrial buyers are like most business executives. They have an attention span of no more than ten minutes. Even less if the material is of no interest to them.

Go much beyond that, and certainly if you are not coming to the end or just need that last minute to tie everything up, and they might just turn the tape off. In that case, your lack of brevity and getting to the point may have cost your client or company thousands or millions of dollars.

Alright. That last point. I can't put it off any longer.

While consumer advertisers like to see mom, dad and the kids along with their shaggy dog all grinning at the camera like

congenital idiots, it rarely flies in industrials unless the product you are selling is something your client will simply sell on under their own brand name.

In that case, and only if the product warrants it, you are actually providing them with both a good industrial piece, but also with ideas about how they might go about advertising it themselves.

It's such a fine knife edge that I suggest avoiding it at all costs.

I deal with products that range from the mechanical to the electronic, from aerospace to outer space. I also deal in services such as those provided by the Swift outpost in space. It is a wide range of items. Sometimes I think it might be too wide for just one man and his talented team to handle.

Then I take a look at what good those products have done for this country and the world. It makes me proud.

So, before I let you go, let me put one final—I promise—item up on the board. I think I just have enough space over here to the side:

*• Advertise proudly*

If you can get hooked up with a reputable company and find that you are creating advertising for products or services you can believe in, then you are miles ahead of some folks.

Don't allow yourself to just live in the moment when designing industrials or even consumer ads. My god. There are ads still available out there from back in the early 50s. They are available and people can see them even though many were performed live and might have died quickly if it hadn't been for the old kinescopes.

Image how long what you produce in a year or two or twenty might last. Create things that you will be proud to show your children and grandchildren while you tell them, "That's one of



mine.”

It really doesn't get any better than that!

It's like my coming in here and seeing that a couple of my books are in the shelf of your professor. I wrote them as best I could, and I feel pride when I see one of them.

So, how to close this out?

Well, you've got the bullet points up here. I guess that all I will remind you is that there are two worlds in advertising: consumer and industrial. While the concepts are similar, the execution is generally quite different. Understand where the line divides them, and you might just make a good industrial ad person.

I'll stick around for awhile in case anyone wants to ask a question. Otherwise...

Have a wonderful rest of your weekend. It had been a pleasure and an honor to be asked to come here, and a surprising delight that so many of you were able to make it.

Thank you.