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ADE AND PRODUCT BULLETINS

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# BACKGROUND OF TRADE CATALOGUES

The earliest trade catalogues were book lists distributed by booksellers. A catalogue of books issued in 1564 by Heinrich Steiner, an Ausburg bookseller is believed to be the first such catalogue. This was a subject list of 256 books. Following this, booksellers in England and other European countries also started issuing book catalogues. This was followed by catalogues issued by chemists and druggists. The first American drug catalogue was issued in 1760 by John Twiss, first and second by John Day and Company in 1771. During the 1780s metal manufacturers of Birmingham and Sheffield published illustrated catalogues of their products and sent to the agents in France, Italy, America, and parts of Russia. In earlier British trade catalogues, the manufacturer's name was not provided, so that the customers had to purchase the items through agents. Whereas American trade catalogues provided the manufacturer's name to facilitate direct ordering of goods from the manufacturer. With the growth of industry the number and range of trade catalogues also increased tremendously. Lawrence B. Romaine's *A Guide to American Trade Catalogs, 1744- 1900* is a detailed guide to early American trade catalogues.

## Features of Trade and Product Bulletins:

There is a considerable variety in format, size, type and amount of information presented in trade and product bulletins. It may range from a small advertisement in a periodical or a leaflet announcing a single product to a multivolume publication describing thousands of products of a single manufacturer or a large number of manufacturers. Some product advertisements appear just like a magazine article and editors often label them as “Advertisement” to distinguish them from the feature articles. For example, some of the advertisements appearing in Reader’s Digest magazine.

## SOME OF THE GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF TRADE AND PRODUCT BULLETINS ARE AS FOLLOW

- They generally contain application oriented descriptive information and do not provide theoretical details of research leading to the development of the product with the exception of trade literature describing medicines complex scientific equipment. A brief account of the relevant background research, supported by charts, diagrams, equations, and literature references is often provided in trade and product bulletins of medicinal products or scientific instruments.
- Trade bulletins are primary sources in which information about a product or process appears prior to its publication in any other form of literature. In fact, much of the information reported about specific commercial product is likely to be published in any other form of literature.
- Much of the information presented in these bulletins lose currency very quickly, because new products and processes are constantly being developed and improvements are made to the existing ones.
- These publications are usually distributed free and Trade catalogues issued by manufacturers are undated.
- The amount of information provided for products or processes vary considerably ranging from mere announcement to detailed description of the product or process.

The type of information usually covered is as follows:

- Historical overview of the company;
- Background research leading to the development of the product;
- Product description, application, operating characteristics, etc;
- Installation, operation and maintenance details;
- Illustrations, including photographs, layout plan, and circuit diagram, etc;
- Names, addresses of the agents and distributors;
- Letters of recommendations or testimonials from the satisfied customers; and
- Price of the product is usually not included

# FUNCTIONS OF TRADE AND PRODUCT BULLETINS

Trade and product bulletins are primarily published to promote sale but they serve as indispensable source of information for specialised group of users such as scientists, engineers, technologists, chemists, medical practitioners, etc

Trade and Product Bulletins:

- Provide latest information about industrial products and help the technologists to ascertain whether a particular machinery or a component of a machine or a specific product is available in the market or not.
- Help the technologists to compare similar products available from various manufacturers and select the most appropriate one.
- Provide easy access to names and addresses of the manufacturers, distributors of industrial products.
- Serve as important communication channel between manufacturers, dealers and buyers.
- Articles published in these bulletins are broader in appeal with colourful illustrations, charts and diagrams.
- Back runs of these publications serve as an important source of information for the study of industrial archeology, business history, and history of technology.

## SOURCES OF TRADE LITERATURE

Trade literature is available in wide range of sources. The basic sources are as follows:

- 1) Advertisements and announcements in technical journals and trade magazines.
- 2) Special issues and supplements of journals.
- 3) Manufacturers' catalogues, house journals and newsletters.
- 4) Product descriptions supplied at trade exhibitions.
- 5) Directories of industries, products and companies.
- 6) Companies' websites and trade portals on the Internet

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**Advertisements and Announcements in Technical Journals and Trade Magazines** Most fields of industry and technology are covered by at least one commercial technical or trade journal. These publications aim to cater for information needs of industry for repackaging information gleaned from other primary sources, in an easily digestible form for the management and practitioners alike. The journal's main functions are to report new techniques and products within the industry and report on new techniques developed outside the industry, which are of potential interest to the readerships. Most of these journals carry product advertisements. The major portion of the financial income of these journals is not derived from subscription but from the revenue from the manufacturers whose products and services are advertised in the journal. Almost each issue has an advertisers' index. Some of the trade journals are totally devoted to products' advertisements. Their main function is to advertise new industrial product, process or material. For example, journals like Chemical Product Finder, Industrial Product Finder, and Industrial Equipment News, etc.



Chemical Product Finder, published monthly by Jasubhai Media Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai, is a journal of materials and equipment for chemical process and allied industries. It carries profiles of latest products; plant equipment, process, material and services launched by chemical process and allied industries in India and abroad. Industrial Equipment News, published monthly by Sri Balaji Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai, is an industrial product news magazine. It brings out special issues on particular type of industry and covers write up on all products of that industry with illustrations. Each issue contains a section on 'Company Profile'.

Industrial Product Finder, published monthly by Business Press, Mumbai, is an industrial product magazine. It carries profiles of new industrial products, devices or services manufactured in India. This publication also carries information about the new industrial products developed abroad and available in Indian market. Products are listed trade and utility wise. From May 1997, the publishers have launched a web portal for the industrial products on the website (<http://www.industrialproductfinder.com>).

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## Special Issues and Supplements of Journals

Many technical journals publish an annual issue or a supplement, usually called 'Buyer's guide' or 'Directory Issue'. Annual buyer's guide issued by (a) Chemical Engineering, (b) Electronics For You, (c) Chemical World, (d) Machinery, (e) Nuclear News are typical examples.

## Manufactures' Catalogues

Catalogues, published by manufacturers, contain substantial technical data on company's products and their applications. These catalogues range from a single sheet of paper with technical description of one product to a bound volume containing detailed description and technical data of all the products of a company. These catalogues are supplied directly to the prospective customers by the manufacturers, their representatives or agents.

## Product Descriptions Supplied at Trade Fairs, Conventions, Exhibitions, etc

Manufacturers exhibit their products and distribute catalogue at conferences and conventions organized by professional societies. Trade catalogues are also issued at international trade fairs and exhibitions in the form of bulletins or brochures.

## DIRECTORIES OF PRODUCTS AND COMPANIES

- These are independent publications containing data on a number of companies and their products in any one branch of science, engineering or technology. World Aviation Directory, published semi-annually by Ziff-Davis publishing Company, New York, is an international directory of air carriers, manufacturers of aircrafts and related equipment, government agencies and other organisations concerned with aviation in over 160 countries. Books and other publications on aviation and aerospace technology are also listed. The 'Buyers' Guide section has a company index, a product crossindex and a trade name index. Other such directories are Kompass International Register Editions and Thomas Global Register.
- Kompass International Register Editions: Each edition published for over 70 countries provides corporate profiles, products and services of different types of industries. The four volume Kompass U.K. provides corporate profiles of 46,000 companies classified under 41,000 products and service categories. It covers company information, products and services, financial data, parents and subsidiaries and industrial trade names.

**Reference:-**

**1.<http://egyankosh.ac.in>**

**Thanks You**