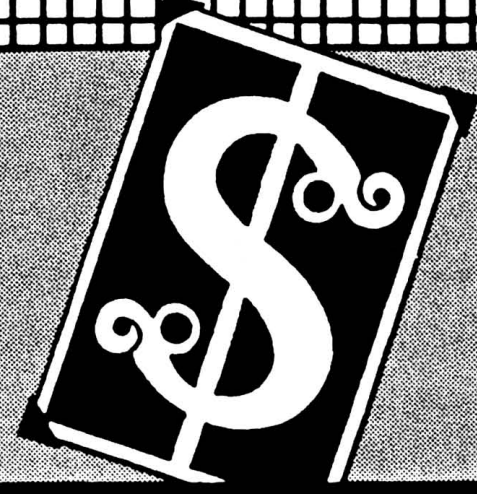


MERCHANDISING



It's cold—stay by the fire and plan your herd brochure.

With the disagreeable late winter weather what better time to stay inside and get to work on that herd promotion brochure you've needed for all these many years?

Sure, some of you in the sunbelt enjoy warm, sunny, frost-free days this time of year. But those of us who spend the winter above the freeze line, or the snow line, can't conceive good weather anywhere in the northern hemisphere in early March. So excuse our cabin fever and accept the fact that for you too, now is the time to get to work on your herd brochure.

Your brochure development should start with a well thought-out plan. Begin by writing down what you want the brochure to do for you, who will read it, and how you will use it.

More than likely you want a printed piece that creates a very positive impression of your herd, your family or employees, and one that makes people feel they want to do business with you. It should probably show your operation, communicate your philosophy on cattle breeding, and maybe even outline your goals. One herd brochure that came across my desk concludes "... our goal is not to raise 1,500-pound cows, but a functional cow that won't eat us out of business." And it's aimed squarely at the commercial cattle producer.

Next, list the ways you want to use the brochure. This will also influence the content of the piece and certainly how many you will print. Here are some possibilities, though all may not apply to you:

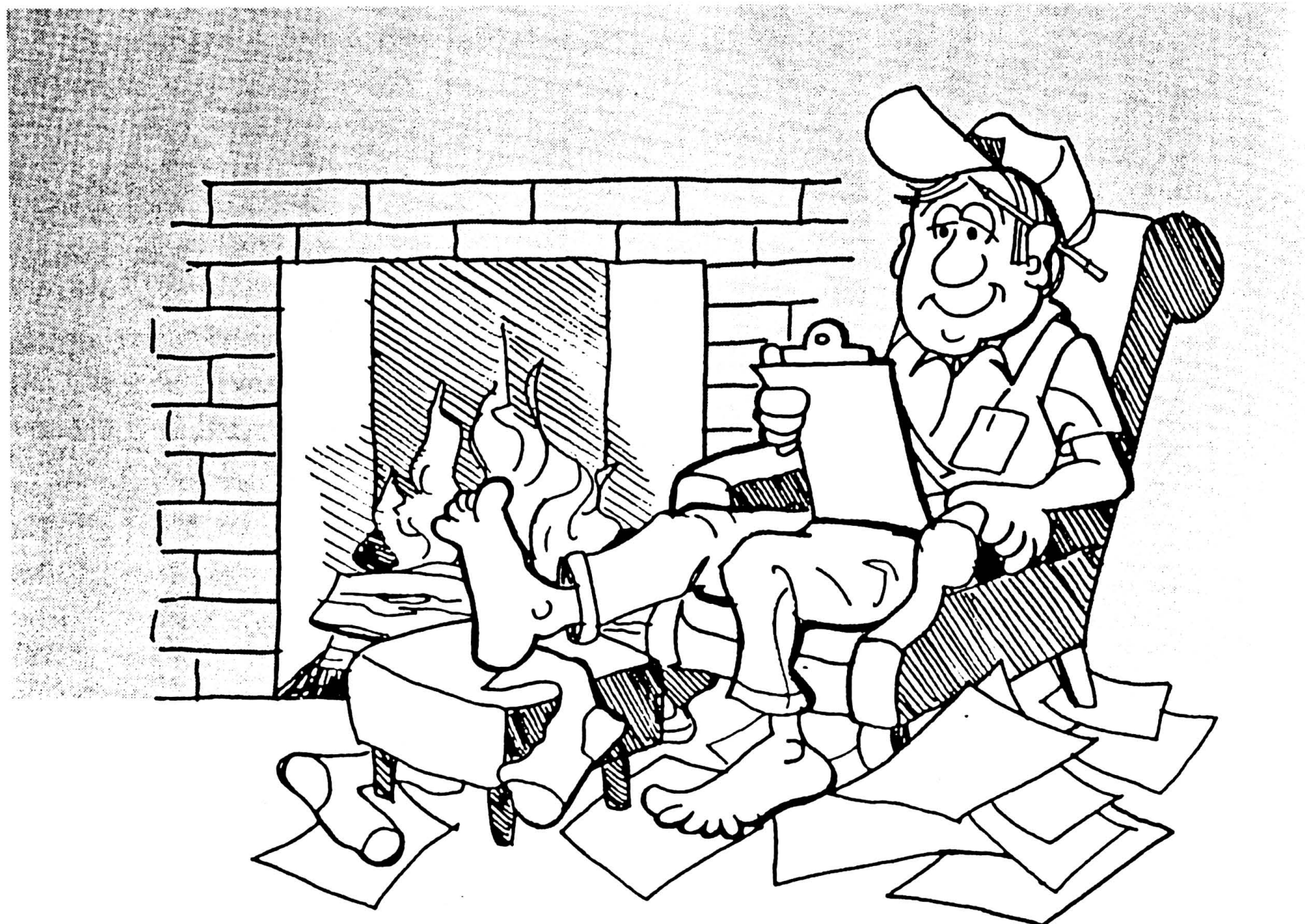
- Mail each year to past customer list.

- Mail annually to every commercial cattle producer within a 50- or 100-mile radius.
- Hand deliver one to every county agent, livestock extension specialist, agricultural banker, farm manager, vocational agricultural instructor and 4-H beef project leader in your trade area.
- Use as a "leave behind" piece whenever you call on customers or potential customers.
- Enclose with nearly every business letter.
- Pass out to all who attend a field day or other livestock event at your place.
- Have on display and pass out to interested people at cattle shows or any event where you exhibit cattle.

- Give to herd visitors when they leave your place.

Next, list those things about your operation that are important and will be of particular interest to your primary customers. These should be specifics that can be translated into benefits to purchasers of your cattle. Read pages seven through 10 in your "How to Sell Angus Cattle" booklet. If you don't have one, let me know. We will send you one free.

With these facts written down—audience, purpose, potential use and specific benefits you offer—you're ready to start production. Now you must make a major decision. Will you design and produce your own brochure in conjunction with a local printer? Will you hire someone trained in writing, layout and photog-



raphy to work with you? Should you contract with an organization that does this kind of work to produce the entire project right on through printing? The answer will depend upon many things: your own skills; the help that a good local printer can offer you; who's available for hire in your community, like an art or journalism teacher; and your own finances.

Regardless of how you end up, give the new Special Services Department at the *Angus Journal* a call. They can produce very effective brochures, using the artists and advertising experts that produce the *Angus Journal*. And it might not cost you much more than if you do it yourself. Remember, quality doesn't have to be expensive. And a high price won't guarantee a quality product.


If you don't have photographs available to illustrate the brochure, don't let that stop you. Once the brochure is planned and you know exactly what photographs are needed, they will be easier and less expensive to take. And if at all possible, get a professional photographer to do it.

Remember, if you wait until spring or summer to start the project, it probably won't get off the ground and you'll go another year without the extra business that a brochure program can produce.

One final word. Don't be afraid to include prices. Research shows that mentioning a price or a price range usually prompts more response than no price-mention at all. Also, outline benefits the buyer will receive instead of just listing the features of your particular herd. And compare the benefits of acting now with waiting or doing nothing.

So tell the family, as you sit by the fire planning your brochure, that you are involved in serious business—which you will be. Ask them to check for frozen stock waterers, and to bring in a few more logs for the fire when they return. When you finish the brochure, you might even want to plan your advertising program—as long as the family will let you get by with it.

AJ



**Director of Communications
and Public Relations**