

WHAT ARE THE UNSATISFIED NEEDS OF EUROPE TODAY?

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An article for

Business Abroad
New York, N. Y.

The European markets consist of people and their unsatisfied needs. Successful American manufacturers are going into the European markets (and other foreign markets, too) by asking themselves first: What kinds of unsatisfied needs exist in Europe today? We might have just the right kind of product or service; we could also develop appropriate services or merchandise for European markets to satisfy their needs.

Working for the European branches of many international companies (as well as for European countries) we have come up with a list of many unsatisfied needs which might offer interesting indications concerning new marketing possibilities that exist in Europe today. Food, clothing, shelter -- the basic needs are far from satisfied. First let's look at the potential for food products and services. Most Europeans still consume what Americans refer to as the continental breakfast. Today, however, a strong interest in fruit juices is beginning -- particularly orange juice. Marketers will be interested

to learn that orange juice is still not available in a convenient form, and is terribly overpriced. Other fruit juices and blends offer opportunities as well.

The cereal market offers many possibilities. So do frozen toaster-warmed baked goods, pancake and waffle mixes, breakfast meats, etc. Europeans would like to have as substantial a breakfast as Americans. They have simply not been stimulated enough up to now. Their acceptance of orange juice indicates that they have no "built-in" resistance to more substantial foods which exceed the confines of the continental breakfast.

Very often, the principal meal is still lunch. There are trends, however, in favor of change. For example, it is becoming more and more difficult to go home for lunch -- even if there is a two-hour lunch break. There is an unsatisfied need for conveniently-packaged mid-morning, lunch and mid-afternoon snacks. Good possibilities exist for canteens and canteen services.

The cocktail hour, while practiced, is still not as widely known in European homes as in the United States. Liquor manufacturers could enjoy a real opportunity for sales but success will depend on promoting the relaxing quality of moderate alcoholic consumption. Bars, office refrigerators and similar products in that direction represent related opportunities.

As far as dinner is concerned, the labor market in some European countries (such as Germany and Switzerland) is almost as tight as in the United States, and therefore, any product that can eliminate the use of domestic servants would be welcome.

Many European countries still have inferior quality meats because of smaller investments in good cattle feeding programs. There might be an opportunity for the American meat industry.

Not long ago, an American ice cream manufacturer introduced American ice cream in Vienna. Despite raised eyebrows on the part of the Viennese (who feel their confectionery and pastry industry is superior) this American ice cream was very successful.

The candy industry in Europe recently asked us to investigate the possibility of introducing individually-packaged, inexpensive "news-stand" types of candy to compete with the heavy, prestige-loaded bonbonniere type of boxed merchandise that still predominates today. American manufacturers could develop this market in Europe.

In the clothing field, the British are discovering that the typical heavy-weight British suit is not needed any longer because of the increased use of air conditioning. While they "look down" on American fashions light-weight ready-made suits certainly are becoming more popular, and open up new marketing possibilities for American manufacturers.

In the field of furniture and home furnishings and equipment, there is potentially a large market for air conditioning -- and modern heating systems, too. Another opportunity: Electric blankets, which are largely non-existent in most European countries. We recently did some work for the European furniture industry and found that: 1) Europeans hold on to their furniture much too long; 2) most furniture designs are cold, not particularly beautiful, and could stand much more color; and 3) there is a potential market for light-weight, mobile, modern-looking furniture (which could also be marketed successfully in the United States).

In France, one of the large companies is finally introducing modern colors into bed sheets, pillow cases, blankets, etc. To a large extent, linens are still considered to be heirlooms, and are "preserved" much too long.

Europeans are becoming more concerned with frequent laundering of linens, shirts, etc. but they still lag behind Americans in this respect. In Germany, for instance, linens may be laundered only once in four weeks, and an increased tempo of cleaning could offer new possibilities for laundry and dry cleaning machinery, equipment and supplies, as well as "disposable" products.

Around the house, there is a scarcity of mechanized garden equipment in European countries. Almost all types of American garden equipment could be adapted for Europe.

We recently did some work in Europe to educate the building industry to use more prefabricated materials in residential construction. For example: Most windows and doors are still individually handmade at a very high cost.

In the field of finance, we recently conducted a study on methods for motivating Europeans to accept the concept of mortgages, instead of waiting until the full amount had been saved to build a home. Europeans are still inclined to build homes to last 100 years or more but they could be educated to accept somewhat less "permanent" types of individual homes, American style. That this is feasible and potentially successful was shown by Levitt, who has been erecting his type of individual houses on the outskirts of Paris.

To summarize: Many products are apt to be retained for a long time by the average European, who is now just on the verge of accepting the concept of obsolescence. To throw things out was once considered to be immoral and wasteful, but many companies marketing in Europe today are finding it profitable to promote the idea of rejuvenation and replacement -- to sell the American concepts of modernization, disposable products, and "trade-ins."