

MUSEUM PUBLICATIONS

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I have had no experience of historical research into electric street tramways, hence I can only treat this aspect in the broadest terms.

AIMS OF MUSEUM PUBLICATIONS

You will presumably want your publications to be as widely read as possible to advertise your museum, and to reflect favourably on it. You will also no doubt want to make some profit from the publishing venture. With the right approach you should be able to achieve both these aims.

To ensure success you should look beyond the relatively limited railway and tramway enthusiast market. There is currently a boom in Australiana and nostalgia, this is the market to aim for.

HUMAN INTEREST

To achieve a wide market try to get as much human interest as possible into your publications, and search for historic photographs, particularly photographs showing trams in the environment of their times. The best way to achieve both these aims is to go out and interview as many people as possible who were associated with the tramway in its heyday. Interviewing does have its traps, for best success you need to have a very good background knowledge of the tramway you are researching. You cannot believe everything you are told, but used wisely the interviewing technique adds life to the bare bones of history and makes the publication marketable to a wide audience.

MARKETING

A marketing plan is vital before you commit your funds. No matter how good a publication may be, it will not sell itself. Financial embarrassment may be the result of bad marketing. Be prepared to circularise all possible outlets before publication, set a sales plan and constantly monitor actual sales against the plan to see how you are going. Calculate in advance the number of copies you must sell before you cover your costs. If sales lag, put more effort into your marketing plan immediately.

Have a team ready to handle orders promptly once the rush starts, because if you have planned everything well there will be a rush.

CALCULATION OF SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE

If, for example, you have received a quote of \$5000 for 5000 copies of a publication you can calculate a suggested retail price as follows:

Printing cost	\$5000
Profit desired	2000
Incidental costs, (e.g. postage, jiffy bags, publicity, out of pocket expenses etc.) say	<u>2000</u>
	\$9000

Divide total (\$9000) by print run (5000)
= \$1.80

add 50% for bookseller's margin
suggested retail = \$2.70

OUTLETS AVAILABLE

Get some well printed and detailed leaflets, circulate them widely:

- Try:
1. All other tramway societies.
 2. All railway societies.
 3. Seek reviews in all railway/tramway publications.
 4. If the book relates to a particular area try the local paper for a review. Contact local newsagents and historical societies. If a review is published in a local paper you should be ready to act immediately to fulfill orders of local newsagents.
 5. For a museum guide type publication consider tourist bureaux as a possible outlet.
 6. Consider circularising all libraries and schools. There is a fair market in this area, particularly for historical works.

SELECTING A PRINTER

It is worthwhile seeking quotes from two or three printers, as quotes for the same job can vary widely. A cheap quote may indicate second-rate work, so before accepting any quote make sure that the finished job will come up to the standards you expect. Check previous examples of the printer's work.

SETTING UP FOR PUBLICATION

A guide book which is absolutely invaluable is the Australian Government's "Style Manual for Authors, editors and printers", with a recommended retail price of \$9.95. Although originally intended to guide public servants involved in the production of government publications, it is so detailed and well presented that it is widely used outside the government, and has had exceptionally favourable reviews both in Australia and the United Kingdom. It covers writing and editing, preparing copy for printing, all aspects of designing publications, printing methods and their limitations, binding, typography, proof reading etc. etc. I use this book constantly and cannot recommend it too highly.

An editor should also have a good dictionary.

PHOTOGRAPHS

To get the best results, use sharp sparkling photographs. The offset printing process (which is used almost exclusively for the types of publications we are interested in) reduces contrast, so it is unwise to start with an original which has flat contrast. For this reason it is generally false economy to use mass produced 'super size' prints which rarely do a photograph justice.

SALES VOLUME

A production run of 2000 - 3000 is a reasonable and profitable one to start with for publications in the \$2 - \$3 range. A reprint, if needed will cost much less than the original print run. We had a print run of 2000 for "Tall Timber and Tramlines" and it sold out in twelve months.

There is sufficient market to justify printing a further 2000, but it would take much longer to sell the second 2000. In such circumstances money should not be invested in a reprint if it can be used more profitably in some other venture.

For a low priced museum guide, the print run would be influenced by the number of visitors to the museum. A run of 5000 may be reasonable for such a publication. In the case of museum guides, the advice of the Sales Tax Department should be obtained before committing yourself to publication. If the tax department considers the book to be an advertisement for the museum, it will be subject to 15% Sales Tax. It usually requires only a few minor changes to such a book to make it exempt of tax. I emphasize that the tax department's advice should be obtained before you commence publication.

PREPARATION OF COPY

Avoid padding and irrelevancies and use short simple words to get your story across. Relate your text to any maps, diagrams or photographs, don't add illustrations and maps as an after-thought - integrate them. Places mentioned in the text should be shown on the maps.

Text should be typed out, double-spaced, on one side of the paper, and hand-made alterations on the text should be as clear as possible. After the printer has done the typesetting he will give you photocopies of it. You should correct one copy of this, and use another copy to make up a rough paste-up of each page of the book, showing exactly where you want photographs and diagrams. The printer will use this as a guide to making up the final art work. You should insist on checking a final photocopy of this artwork to see that it is exactly as you want it.

In the offset printing process the final printing plates are made photographically from the artwork, so every mistake or unwanted mark will be faithfully reproduced in the finished job.

PROOF READING

This should not be done carelessly. In the case of "Tall Timber and Tramlines" we used three proof readers, each of whom read the entire text once. In addition, the editor read the text three times. Despite this, at least one typographical error escaped.

MAKING ARTWORK ONESELF

You can save on typesetting and artwork costs by investing in an electric typewriter (good second-hands cost about \$250) and preparing all your own artwork. Although this does not give a conventional type-face with a straight right-hand margin it does give quite a presentable result and has been used for all LRRSA publications up to now. An advantage is that the editorial team has total control over the layout of the publication. A disadvantage is the time that must be spent in preparing perfect typed copy and setting up the artwork. This must be done very precisely as every fault will be reproduced in the finished job.

MAPS

For clarity it is best to make these as simple as possible. If you wish to include a great deal of detail you can resort to multiple colour printing, which is not unduly expensive in the off-set process. As pages are usually printed four at a time, once you add an extra colour to one page you can also use it on three other pages without extra cost. But avoid the temptation of using a second colour in these circumstances unless there is a good reason to use it. To produce a

multi-colour map you should give the printer a separate tracing in black indian ink for each colour which will appear in the final map. Each tracing must be in exact register with the others.

COLOURED PHOTOGRAPHS

Whereas coloured maps are not expensive to print if the artwork is prepared in the right way, coloured photographs are expensive and unless very well done, are often very disappointing. It currently costs about \$520 to print 1000 copies of "Light Railways", a 24 page magazine with a full page black and white photograph on the cover. To put a coloured photo on the cover would cost approximately \$350 more. Such expenditure can only be justified in very long print runs where the high setting-up costs can be spread over many copies.

BINDING

A number of alternative binding methods are available, viz:

Saddle Stitching: consisting of two wire staples through the back of the book. This is the cheapest method, but above 100 pages the thickness of the paper makes it difficult. I believe it also has a psychologically negative effect on a purchaser, as a square-backed book looks thicker and more substantial than a saddle-stitched one.

Side Stitching: consists of individual sections of 16 pages with wire staples pushed through the top cover and all the pages, and bent over on the bottom cover. This is also simple and inexpensive, but has the disadvantage that the book cannot be opened flat, hence double-page spreads are not possible.

Perfect binding: In this method all the pages are trimmed on all four sides to make them individual leaves and are then simply glued down the back and stuck into a cardboard cover. This system has the advantage of low cost and simplicity, but the book cannot be opened out completely flat. Another disadvantage of this type of binding is that the pages fall out after a short time.

Section sewn: This is the best and most expensive method. It consists of printing the book in sections of 16 pages, these sections are then sewn together (by machine) and glued inside a cover. This cover should be glued (at least partly) to the first and last leaves of the book. If it is simply glued down the spine it will probably drop off - possibly before you have even had time to sell the book. This method is suitable for both soft and hard cover books. If well done, the book will not fall to bits, can be opened flat, and gives opportunities for double page spreads in the centre pages of each 16 page section.

Relative costs of a 96 page book, with a print run of 2500 using three binding methods are:

Saddle stitched	\$1.30
Perfect bound	1.34
Section sewn	1.39
Hard bound	2.50

BOOK BOUNTY

The Australian Government gives a bounty which amounts to a reduction of 25% on printing costs, on almost all types of books with more than 49 pages plus a four page cover. The bounty does not apply to periodicals, but reprints of periodicals are eligible providing they meet the minimum

page number requirement. To qualify for the bounty the book must not contain advertisements, except on the outside or inside of the cover.

PERIODICALS

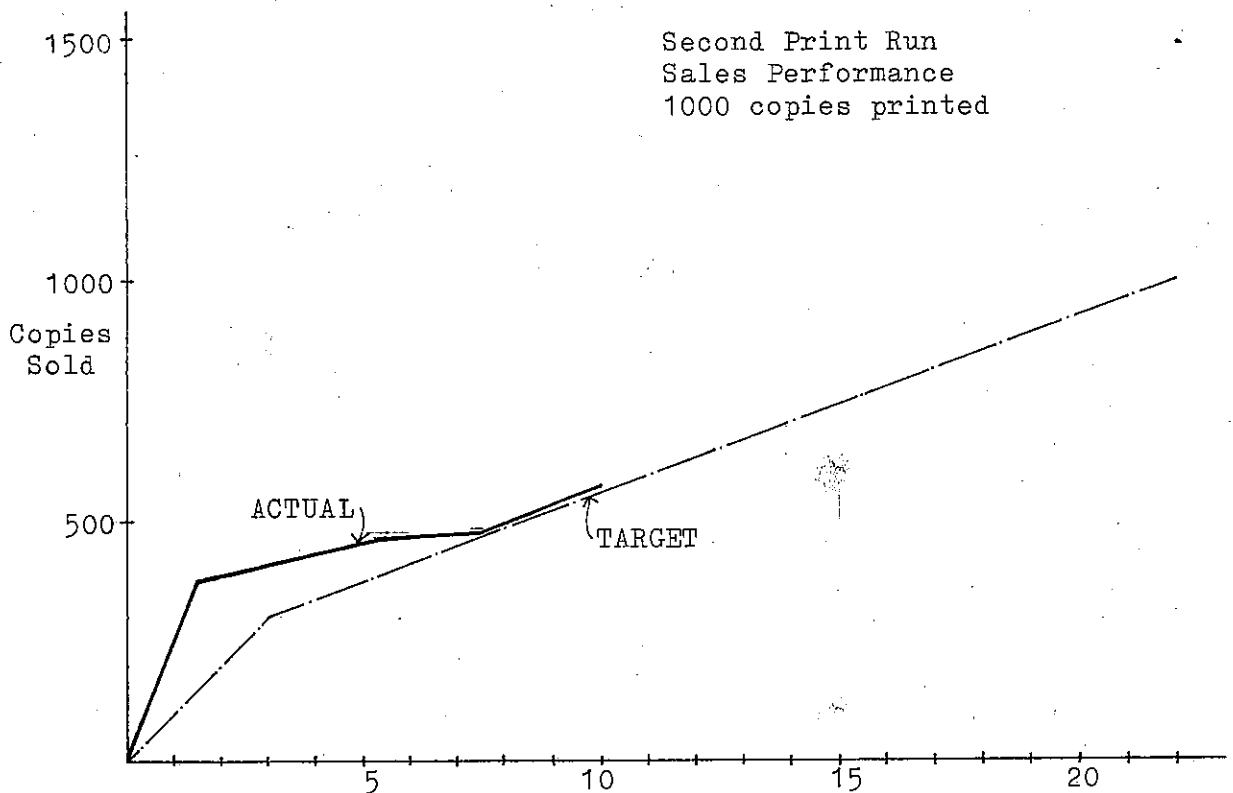
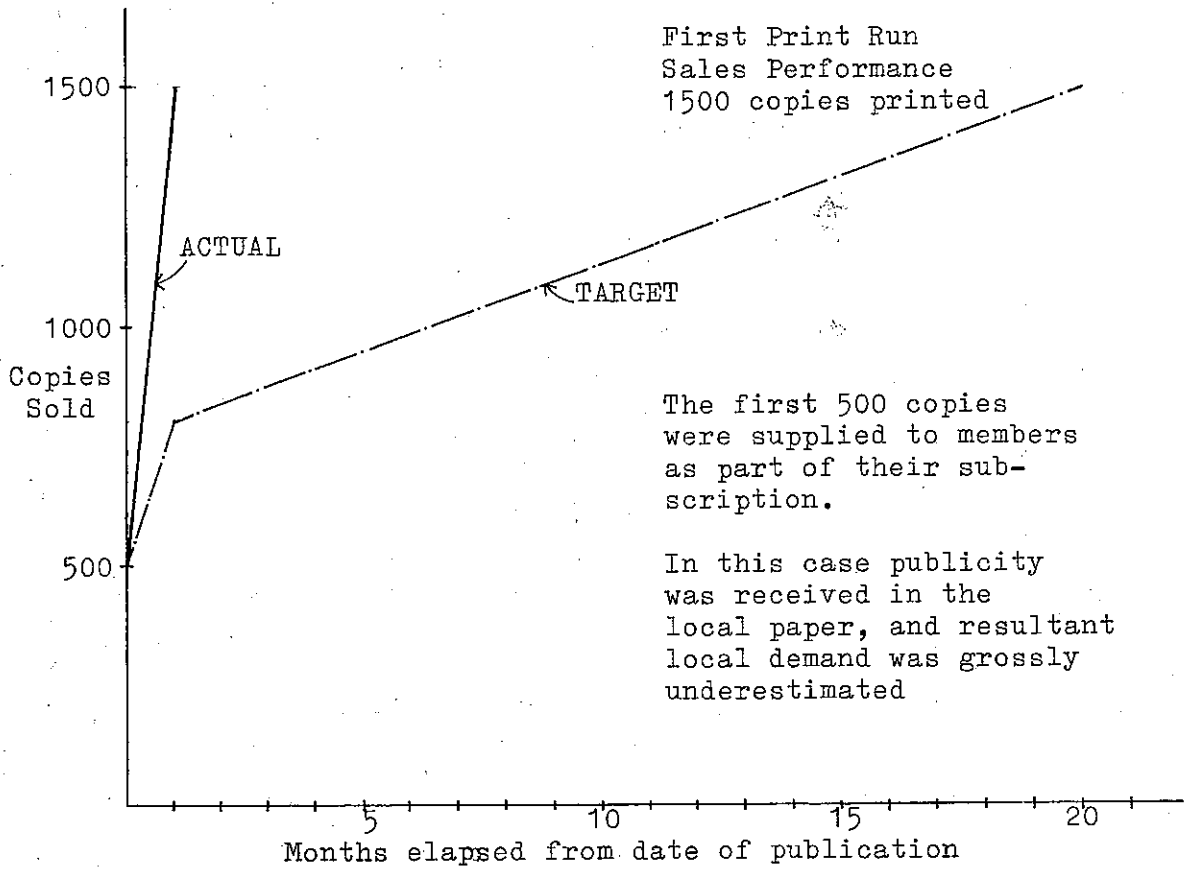
It is extremely difficult to produce a specialist periodical on a profitable basis in Australian conditions. It is probably safe to say that practically all periodicals produced by railway and tramway enthusiast societies in Australia either lose money or barely cover production costs. With no bounty, printing costs are higher than for books, they are on the booksellers shelves for only a short period before being replaced by the following issue, and the market is highly competitive - there are currently at least 14 periodicals produced by railway and tramway enthusiast groups in Australia, excluding duplicated news sheets. These duplicated news sheets are an economical and effective method of disseminating information amongst a Society's members.

Financial success for fully printed magazines is hard to achieve. Large circulation leads to lower production costs, but even a print run of 2000 is no guarantee of profitability. Distribution and maintenance of an up to date mailing list is also a serious problem.

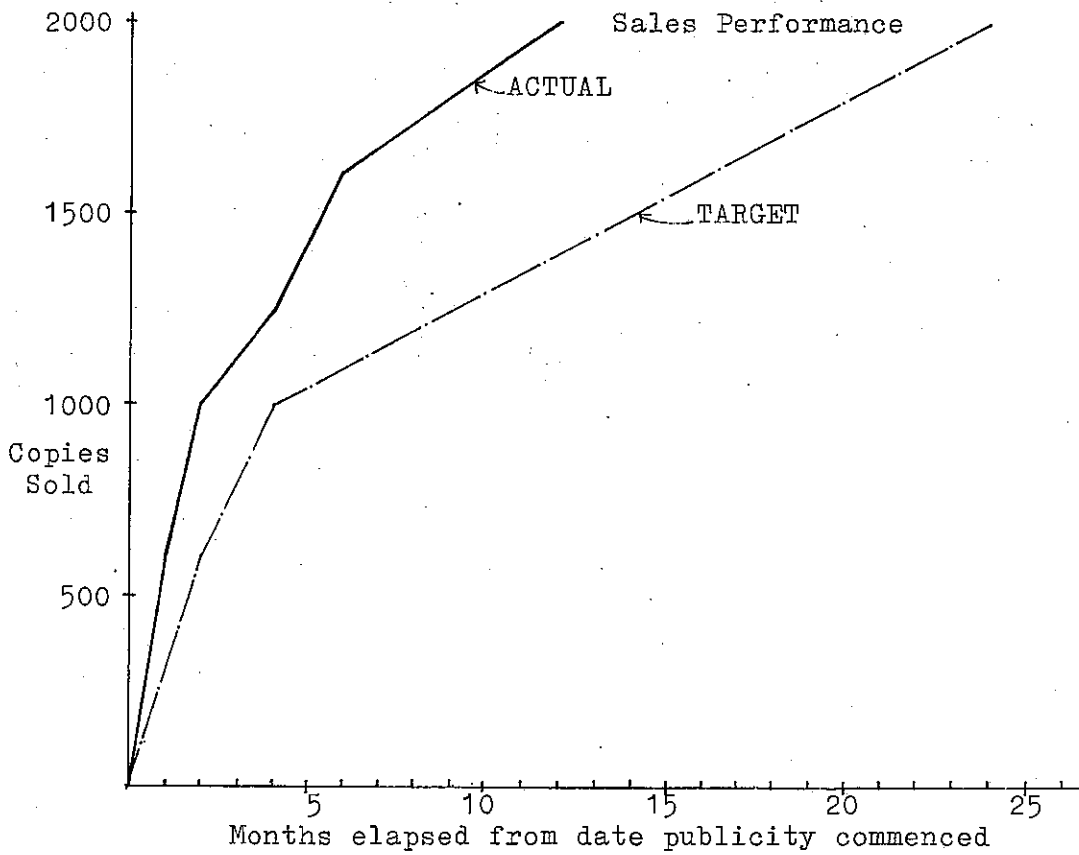
Before launching an off-set printed periodical you should be prepared to absorb substantial losses for at least the first three years of publication, and possibly forever.

The concept of "Trolley Wire" magazine is good, because with all societies pooling their resources, a larger market results, giving lower production costs.

"WEST OTWAYS NARROW GAUGE"



"TALL TIMBER AND TRAMLINES"



"LIGHT RAILWAYS"

