

MAYIBUYE EDITORIAL BOARD MEETING, 26/3/92

PRESENT: Abba, Peter, Mtutu, Lynn, Scratch, Shaune, Tito, Selby

APOLOGIES: Jerry

1. ADMINISTRATION

1. Agreed that Lynn will take minutes every month.
2. Time sheets for the previous week must be submitted to Peter on Mondays.

2. DISTRIBUTION AND PROMOTION UNIT (DPU)

The DPU initially indicated that they had not met as it was agreed they should at the January meeting of the Editorial Board (EB). Later it was reported that they did meet.

The memorandum Tito drafted to regions informing them that supply of MAYIBUYE was to be suspended until payment for issues already supplied was settled was read out. The question of deduction of money by Treasury on the basis of what regions order is still not working in practice.

Agreed :

- that memorandum should not be sent;
- regions should continue faxing their orders and we should keep a record of this.
- for the May issue, the regions should be supplied with a standard order form which includes an authorisation to Treasury to deduct the money.
- The regions should be given a much earlier deadline for placing their orders as this would allow us to adjust the print run in terms of demand.

Peter said that distribution is the main weakness of MAYIBUYE. People are supposed to be working on it full time. Many possibilities have been suggested. But the unit appears to be dormant. People are being paid for doing this work. It is not clear what people are doing if they cannot meet. N OFS has recently appointed a distribution person who is selling lots of MAYIBUYEs on the mines. We behave as if the regions are on another planet from us. An explanation is needed. Visits to the regions are vital to get distribution going and to resolve the problems between media officers and treasurers. On balance, the DPU is failing MAYIBUYE. Proposals are never followed up.

Mtutu reported that Selby called a meeting of the unit. But no decisions were taken about visits to the regions.

It is necessary to draw a line between distribution and promotion. Nothing has been done on the promotion side. One of the applicants for the job had a long list of ideas on how to promote the magazine.

Tito reported that he and Mtutu met with a group of alternative magazines to share ideas. WIP distributes at factories. He gave their distribution officers 100 copies of MAYIBUYE. They sold out at a Pretoria factory in three hours.

This shows what can be done. The DPU should not focus on buyers in the PWV area, but should concentrate on the regions.

Selby reported that he is trying to get Nigel to assist with driving for the visits to the regions. It was noted that Selby is assisting the unit, which must continue its work whether or not Selby is

present.

Agreed:

- A meeting of the DPU must take place in the next seven days.
- A comprehensive programme for promotion and distribution must be drawn up in writing.
- In planning regional visits, all MAYIBUYE personnel should be considered.

MAYIBUYE Stickers

Niran delivered a small batch of stickers on March 18 and asked what to do with the remainder. Peter told Lynn to refer the matter to Selby which she did. On Friday 20 Selby and Mtutu met with Allied who indicated they would take 1500. Selby assumed that Mtutu would follow this up, but this was not done and Allied only got the stickers on Wednesday 25.

Media Market Research (MMR)

A group of alternative magazines are considering a joint project to hire Kim Kruger of MMR to do market research on the publications. Each would get one project within a year. Funds would be raised for the project, but if MAYIBUYE participates, it would have to pay R5000 to R7500 for contingency expenses.

Agreed that this needs to be looked at as part of a comprehensive plan for promoting and distributing MAYIBUYE. It does not make sense to spend money when we are not doing the basic things to reach our market. Also Argus has offered to do such research for us free of charge.

Independent Media Trust

Noted that the EC is going to set up a trust to fund independent newspapers. It seems this is an about turn after they had indicated they would be withdrawing funding. The reason is thought to be that this is to counter the ANC's initiative to set up a trust and a democratic daily.

3. GENERAL REVIEW

Letter from Franz Auerbach

The letter was read. It complained that we cut his article after he had seen what he thought was the final version.

Agreed that when a writer's name is used, they must see the final copy.

Adverts

Mtutu was asked to explain why yet again, after the problem of lateness of ads had been highlighted, the ads were again left so late, and insufficient ads were arranged for the space allocated. Mtutu said the reason was negligence.

Other problems were that the budget year had just ended and people could only take up ads in the next issue. It was noted that circulation figures are not the only factor advertisers consider.

Mtutu disappeared from work on the Friday before final deadline without attending to the ads. Selby had to get the Human Resources Dept Ad. Mtutu came back to the office late on Friday, spoke to Peter and was asked to inform Lynn re the situation with ads. He left without doing this. Lynn said she felt this was irresponsible. Peter stated that this was a serious breach of duty. It should be borne in mind that it will be necessary to review whether we are doing the work allocated to us.

Agreed:

- Only possible to secure ads if you push hard; this means contacting people repeatedly until you get a commitment and chasing up copy to ensure it arrives in time for the deadline.
- Lists of potential advertisers need to be drawn up and followed up systematically.
- A written list of ads must be compiled, their size, duration and when the copy is due. Lynn to be given a copy of this list.
- Discounts should be given to ANC departments and allies.

Auriol and "Development" advertorials

Agreed that we get the copy for the two advertorials and if we are happy with it go ahead.

The Auriol story should be tackled as a lifestyle column if possible, where Auriol is an example in a story about "Do workers travel?"

CONTENTS OF MAY ISSUE

Refer list.