LETTERS

CRITICS’ CORNER

Sir - With reference to your February edition of Manufacturing Engineer, I bring to your attention the extremely poor spelling in one article (Cutting Remarks About the Jet Set p20). This makes it impossible in some places to read. I would feel ashamed if any of my colleagues were to get hold of this and to know that I am a member of what is supposed to be a professional institution. As I enjoy reading these kinds of articles, what can be done to prevent this problem?

P Worthing
29 Hobart Avenue
Pepean
Ontario
Canada

Sir - Following on from the letter from DFH Rushton (ME March 1991) concerning errors in your printing, I too would criticise such careless damage to our image. In wanting to check the punctuation of our new designated letters, I believed that the Journal’s listing of the officials of our institution would provide the correct details. Imagine my surprise to read that the President, Chairman and Secretary were all listed as FIMfgEs on page 2 of the March issue - not caught up yet, I assumed.

Imagine my even greater surprise (and dismay) to see that the same three individuals were all listed correctly as IMfgEs in the issue the month before! This may seem like nitpicking, but continued inattention to detail can only lower the confidence of your readership.

David Standing
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We have had a number of justified complaints about errors in the journal over the course of this year. The reason for this is primarily the switch we have made from traditional typesetting methods to desk top publishing - a new technology which is as much a curse as a boon. The article referred to by our Canadian correspondent is the most serious victim as we noted in our apology to that effect in IMfgEs in the issue the month before!

Sir - I am sorry to admit that each monthly edition of Manufacturing Engineer rarely fails to disappoint me by the lack of dynamism and virtually absent classified section.

If you are in the fortunate position that I am in seeing regular copies of New Civil Engineer and the magazine of the Law Society, I’m sure you would agree the classified sections of these magazines comprise often the most interesting and browsable material to be found between covers. Situations vacant give a clear idea of the scope of employment currently available and the worth of each profession on the open market. I am often irritated by the lack of these ads in ME and question the reason why.

Concerning the core material of the magazine, I feel sure you are going in the right direction running an article on marketing and its huge significance in any manufacturing environment. Would there be any scope in developing a section dealing with financial capital investment and the importance of financial justification of projects? I would be interesting to see a comparison of the differing views held towards financial investment in Britain, Germany and Japan.

John Hilton
14 Saundby Close
Bessacarr
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Classified advertising, by its very nature, is a product of the economic situation. When we have a slender classified section it is not by choice, but because we are in a recession and not enough companies have jobs to advertise. It is also a sad fact of life that there will always be more jobs for lawyers than manufacturing engineers in this country. On a brighter note, however, I am pleased that our correspondent feels the same way about marketing in manufacturing as does this journal. Readers may also be pleased to know that Mr Hilton’s point about financial articles has been taken to heart and several are scheduled over the coming months.

The Editor

Sir - It is inevitable that some manufacturers of equipment will stress the virtues of a product while omitting to mention its less effective features.

There are, however, instances where some claims are made about fork lift trucks which have been angled in such a fashion as to appear to offer advantages which cannot be substantiated.

Lansing Linde wishes to state publicly that it never makes a claim which cannot be fully justified. In the long run the company will suffer from doubtful claims. They hurt the user who has been encouraged to buy a truck which is not as efficient as he had been led to believe, and it hurts the manufacturing industry which risks losing its most valued asset - the trust of the buyer.

The time has come, I suggest, when all manufacturers who value their reputation for honest dealing should subscribe to a voluntary code of conduct which would outlaw these dubious and sometimes false claims.

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FAKING IT

Sir - With reference to Spacess in Between (ME Mar 91) you may be interested to know that Hal Mather is English, although he pretends to be American. (He is based Atlanta, Georgia, but originated in Newton Aycliffe!)

A few years ago, while telling me of his origins, he admitted that he presents an American/showbiz image in order to be successful as a guru.

I am not convinced that national values necessitate unique solutions (eg the success of Japanese management in the UK). However, I always enjoy reading Hollander.

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MERGER

Sir - It seems to me that one of the objections raised concerning amalgamation is the loss of individual institution identity. I would like to make the suggestion that amalgamation and retention of identity is possible if some thought is given to a unifying body. The other major professions have a central governing body which upholds the integrity of its members. The engineering profession needs the same, as the present registration system is not adequate. Surely the time has come for a Royal College or Institution of British Engineers? With a central body of distinction, all current disciplines could be represented.

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PLUGGING THE GAP

The Editor reserves the right to shorten letters.

Send to: The Editor
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or Fax to 081-579 2244

The Editor

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