

purchasing deadlines and target prices. Thus they may have to accept the first bid as final.

The Manufacturers' Representative

The commission agent or salesman is more commonly used as a sales channel in the United States than in Canada, and in the Detroit area this is especially true in the automotive industry. The better "reps" are highly qualified by education, training and experience. They know their customers and call regularly — not only on the buying level, but on engineering, design and quality control levels as well; thus they work in advance of model year buys and follow up on use of their principal's product.

Potential advantages of the "rep" include economy, closer contact with buyers — sometimes social — and nearness to the scene of possible problems. The Detroit office maintains information on the majority of manufacturers' representatives operating in Michigan, Indiana and Toledo, Ohio and can make suitable suggestions for Canadian manufacturers.

Delivery

Delivery must be exactly to customers' specifications and these are as rigid as any in the world. Many U.S. plants work on inventories as short as one or two days and could be shut down by a delay of a few hours. Failure to adhere to rigid delivery schedules is one of the surest ways of not being asked to quote again.