
□ Warehousing, Distribution and Showrooms

Forty-three percent of the respondents told us that they acted as distributors in addition to their representation activities. This is up 3% from our last survey. The number of those who have showrooms, 8%, hasn't changed from our last survey.

Five percent more of the respondents offer warehousing this time. The figure today stands at 30%. The warehousing picture is one that many agents express interest in. They are especially interested in knowing how those who warehouse make money for their service. We didn't attempt to get at any quantitative data in this portion of our survey, but we did get a lot of write-in answers that should at least give you an idea of the range of possibilities. These responses are not in any order of importance:

- Consignment fees
- Lower discounts
- Purchase discounts
- Extra commission percentages
- Do billing at a larger markup
- A percentage on merchandise shipped
- Fee based on value of merchandise passing through warehouse
- Additional shipping commissions
- Add percentage to factory list price
- A stocking and handling fee
- A percentage of sales from inventory
- Reimbursement of actual costs.

□ Where Are We Going?

The agency business is alive and quite well. And the trends are all in the direction that we feel are positive. There is ample evidence of strong professionalism in the agency of today. And there is more than enough evidence to show that agency owners are thinking about their businesses going on after they leave. This, we feel, is a critical issue in building strong relationships with both principals and customers today. In fact, when customers complain about sales service, they are most critical of salaried factory people who never seem to last long enough in the territory. The agency, on the other hand, represents the continuity that they want — and need.

It will be another two years before we undertake this survey again. By that time we expect to see still more positive shifts in the direction of continuity. More important to you, perhaps, we are certain that the income figures will continue to rise and that manufacturers' agents will continue to enjoy one of the highest standards of living in the entrepreneurial world today.

Good job!