June 27, 1968

Memo from David Mayhew to Dick Conlan re: 'Putting DSG mailing lists on magnetic tape'

David R Mayhew

Available at: https://works.bepress.com/david-mayhew/300/
MEMO TO: Dick Conlan
FROM: D.R. Mayhew
SUBJECT: Putting DSG mailing lists on magnetic tape

WHY DO IT? It's easy to have names stored, it's easy to use them once they're on tape, and the whole process is relatively inexpensive.

COST: At Business Concepts, the current Hart-Rustin list of names (total of about 3000) could be put on tape for about $4.60 - about $250 initial programming cost, and 7¢ for storing each name. (Compare this with the cost of putting 3000 names on Elliott stencils: about 2 months pay for a typist) The initial programming cost is also the final programming cost; that is, names may be added in the future, and taped names used in the future, with no further charge for programming. The future cost of updating the list is 4¢ for each name change or deletion. Business Concepts will accept our stacks of envelope flaps as raw data.

EASE OF USE: Taped names can easily be printed out on Cheshire labels for use on mailings channeled through Business Concepts.

TIMING: If we signed up now, Business Concepts could get our 3000 Hart-Rustin names taped within about a month. Thank you notes could be sent out in the beginning of August.

SECRECY: Business Concepts is emphatic in assuring that no one besides the DSG would have access to DSG names. There is no reason to question this assurance.

LOAN OR SALE OF DSG LISTS: The entire list of DSG names can be printed out on Cheshire labels, for loan or sale, at a small cost--on the order of $10 or $20.

WHO OWNS THE TAPE? Business Concepts does, but the entire DSG reel can be bought, on 30 days notice, for $30.

CONVERTIBILITY TO OTHER COMPUTER SYSTEMS: Business Concepts says that its tape files are compatible with any and all Control Data 160-A installations, and compatible through an easy conversion process with any IBM equipment.
WHAT NAMES SHOULD BE PUT ON TAPE? a) the Hart-Rustin list, as quickly as possible, with new names being supplied to Business Concepts as they come in. b) the Troika list, if we get one, and c) the 1966 DSG list, as soon as Business Concepts can handle it. I think taping the 1966 list is a wise move. It is true that we'll catch some of these people in the Hart-Rustin and Troika returns (maybe 10% or more), but most of them will not be reached in this way. And this does not make the other names useless. Russ Hemenway tells me that a polished NCEC list will bring a constant 17% response on any mailing, but it is never the same 17%. Lots of people respond now and then. We will have, from 1966, a list of over 2000 people not responsive this year, but who did once respond to a DSG appeal. And this latter characteristic ought to make their names still useful. Business Concepts tells me that it could "integrate" our 1966 and 1968 lists at no cost, or at nominal cost. This would involve a scanning of printed 1966 and 1968 lists to find duplicate names (or perhaps a use of our 1968 G-code to find duplicates), and the welding together of information about anyone who has contributed twice.

PROGRAMMING: How do we want to code the names? We could code for a) size of contribution, b) letter which evoked response (Hart-Rustin, et al.), c) list from which name was originally taken (Trans-Action, Commentary, et al.), and d) possibly for geography. The zip code may satisfy this last requirement, but whether it does will require further checking. Under a), we will also want to know which letter evoked which contribution, if respondent has contributed more than once.

WHAT COMPANY SHOULD WE DO BUSINESS WITH? We could check around with other companies for pricing, etc. But the fact that DSG has worked successfully with Business Concepts in the past makes it reasonable to go ahead and work with them.