

PRODUCTION

CHAPTER 5

ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT

The advertising department was responsible for developing and initiating the advertising budget to be used for promoting the film. Once the budget was established, the advertising department would outline their complete advertising campaign.

The black & white and color stills provided by the publicity department would be used in a number of ways, including the following.

Creation of Posters

The advertising department would select certain stills and provide them, along with a synopsis of the film, to the art department. It was the art department's responsibility to design and complete the poster art and other advertising material, either using in-house staff or contracting with a commercial artist.

Creation of Lobby Cards

The art department would also pick through the color stills provided by the publicity department to create the lobby cards and other color promotional material. Normally, the production code was removed to create the U.S. lobby cards, but occasionally, someone would slip up and leave the number on.

PRODUCTION CODE NUMBERS

The following shows a lobby card for the 1961 sci-fi release *Gorgo*. The production code number ("GO-42") can be seen on the bottom right.



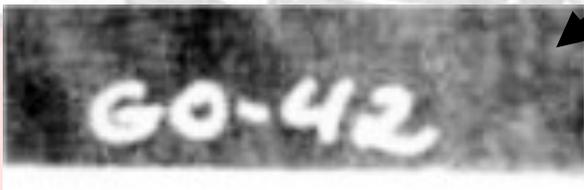
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"GORG0"

A King Brothers Production—An M-G-M Release

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It was more common to see production codes on international material. It was up to the distributor in whatever country was releasing the film whether the production code remained on their lobby cards.

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Here is an example.

The following image features a still from the 1933 film *Duck Soup* starring the Marx Brothers. The production code 1453 can be seen in the bottom right.



The Four Marx Brothers in "DUCK SOUP"
A Paramount Picture

Made in U.S.A.



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PRODUCTION CODE BASICS

On the Australian lobby card pictured below, the 1453 production code can be seen on the bottom right corner of the card.



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PRODUCTION CODE BASICS FILE

Creation of Advertising Clips

The advertising department would use both stills and artwork provided by the art department to create the ads that were used in magazines and by the theater managers to promote the film locally.

In the silent and early “talkie” years, this artwork would be sent to contracted companies to produce the ads on wood blocks that could be ordered by the theater and sent to the local newspapers for publication. This was replaced by the lighter plates and then eventually by ad supplements that had clip art that the theater could send to the newspaper.

Press

Prior to distribution rights being given to the National Screen Service (“NSS”), the advertising department would offer sets of stills to individual theaters for their use in advertising a specific film. When NSS took over the distribution of movie paper for the major studios, it would offer press stills to theaters and exhibitors along with the other sizes and types of movie posters and promotional materials. Beginning in the 1970’s, press stills became a part of the press kits that were distributed by NSS.

New York Newspaper Set

Starting in the 1960’s, the advertising department provided a basic pack of stills, referred to as “The New York Newspaper Set,” to wire services and newspapers around the country. This set included 30-40 stills selected from the key set.



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