

When he came aboard, NAPA was recognized as having the best distribution system in the business. The system was established and, besides the normal small crises, it ran smoothly and effectively. As a master salesman, Degnan took NAPA's distribution strengths, applied his marketing expertise and built an integrated system that has allowed NAPA to continue to lead the automotive aftermarket industry in the market-driven economy of the past decades.

One of his most important undertakings during his career at NAPA was the revitalization of the NAPA logo. Not long after he began as vice president, general manager, he decided that NAPA's logo needed to be modernized.

As was his style, he solicited and got the support of all those involved in the NAPA system for the logo change. Under his leadership the present NAPA seal, known nationwide, came into being.

With his sales and marketing instincts working overtime, Degnan then chose new colors for the NAPA logo, blue and gold.

The logo with its simple design and vivid colors has proven over the years to be one of NAPA's most effective and important marketing tools. It has become recognizable throughout the United States and Canada as a symbol of quality auto parts.



His emphasis on marketing gave rise to his "Wonderful World of Sales" program and the "Magic of Marketing" meetings. His energy and enthusiasm inspired individuals at every level of the NAPA system. He was indeed a motivator, and his energy could turn explosive if he felt that someone was not doing his utmost to further the NAPA cause.

He knew as many NAPA Jobbers as any one person could and related to them on an individual basis. If he needed something done or support for one of his many ideas, he would pick up his phone and call several managers around the country. He was also a friend of NAPA's suppliers. As a result of his relationships at all levels of the NAPA system, he was able to get

the support he needed to implement his marketing ideas.

He masterminded the creation of the first product lines manufactured under the NAPA name. NAPA Filters and NAPA Batteries began a whole string of NAPA name brands that, through the years, have increased consumer recognition of NAPA and reinforced its reputation in the industry.

After his retirement at the end of 1975, Degnan moved to California but continued to have a keen interest in NAPA. It was not unusual for him to drop in on jobbers in his area just to say hello and make sure everything was going all right.

For many years, he worked with GPC's Western Division staff, calling on jobbers primarily serviced by the San Diego and Los Angeles Distribution Centers. He continued to be active in the sales and marketing arena, attending Marketing Conferences, sales meetings and jobber meetings. Even after he was no longer able to continue his travel schedule, many jobbers continued to visit him because of the special relationships he cultivated with them as adviser, teacher and friend.

Because of his charisma and the rapport that he was able to build with his colleagues during his years with NAPA, Degnan will be missed by many not only as an inspirational, energetic leader but also as a personal friend.



*At his retirement from NAPA, Degnan (third from left) received a plaque recognizing his years of leadership as vice president, general manager. Making the presentation were (from left) Paul Rollins, Vice President and General Manager of NAPA; Fred Mancheski, Echlin; Bill Jasperson, General Automotive Parts; and Charles Lansdale. Tenneco Automotive.*