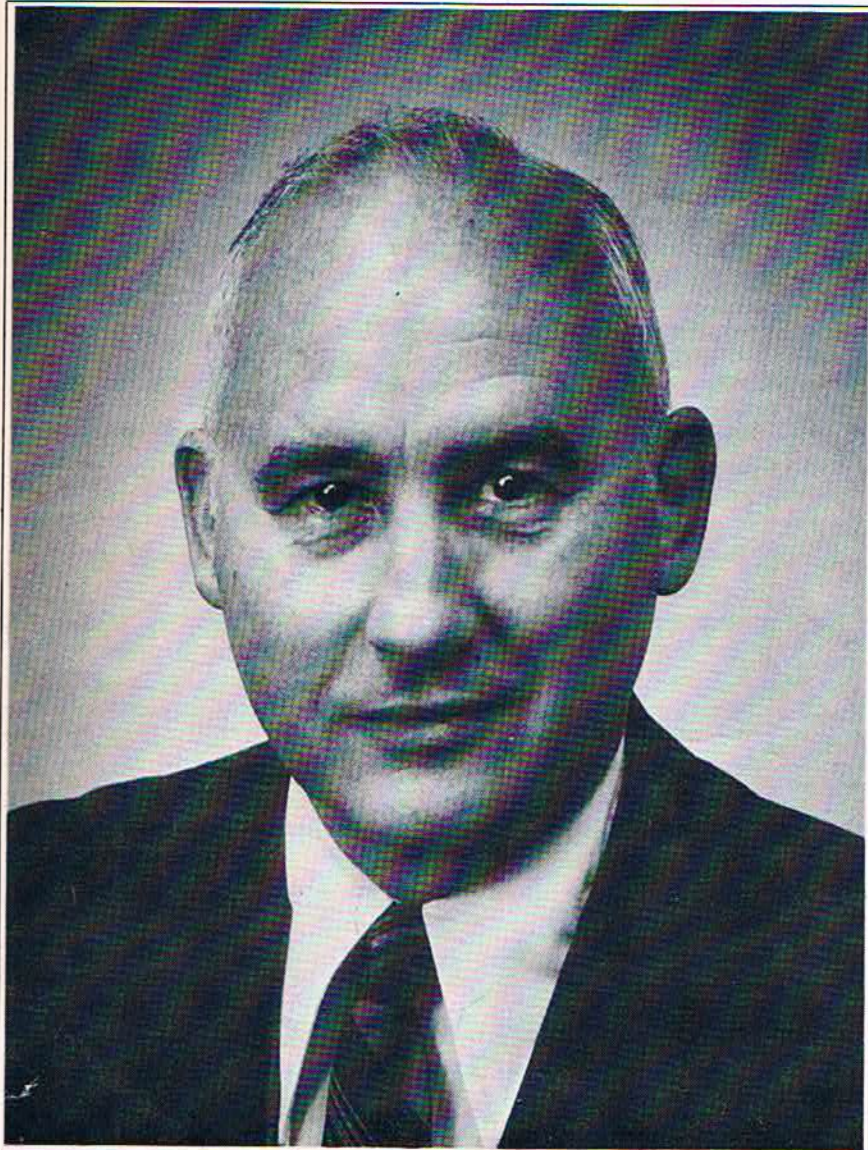


Microwave World

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*Blaha Lauded as
Outstanding
Ambassador for
Microwave Cooking
Industry*

*Industrial Applications
of Microwave Energy
Reviewed by
Jerry White*

*Microwave Cooking
Intrigues Minnesota
Sixth Graders*

PROFILE



by Sara Jean Thoms

It would be difficult to identify anyone who is better known internationally in the microwave cooking industry than Verle Blaha. In addition to his service as chairman of the Board of Governors of IMPI, Blaha also has traveled throughout the world for Litton Microwave Cooking Products, Minneapolis, and has represented the division at many national and international conferences.

Lauded Internationally

An expert in the technology of microwave ovens, Blaha is consistently lauded for the quality of his presentations as well as his personal contributions to the positive image of the microwave cooking industry. Here are just a few of the many comments that have been made about Blaha's involvement in the international microwave cooking community:

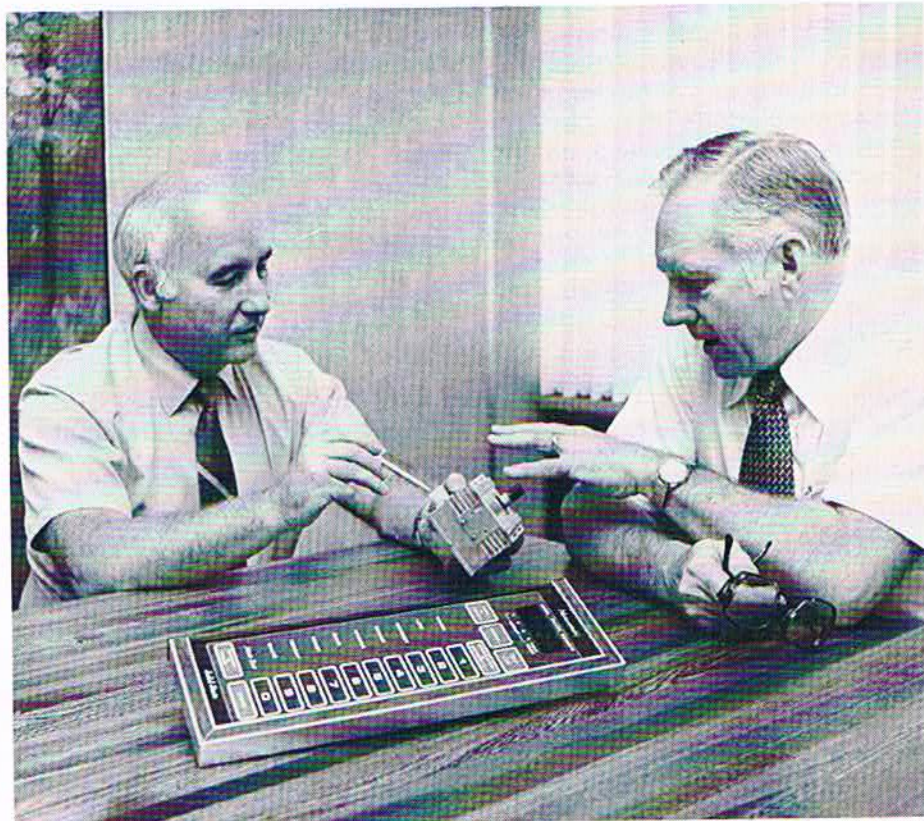
"The positive media coverage gained during Verle's visit, both press and radio, will hopefully stimulate the Australian market through improved industry, trade and consumer understanding."

"Without contradiction, Verle has gained the respect of all he has met in our electrical industry."

"He is an outstanding ambassador for both Litton and for microwave oven technology."

"His speech at the first meeting for the microwave oven industry in Italy has been highly appreciated by the press and formed consistent basis for their reports."

"We received many good comments on the conference and on Verle's presentation in particular. The information he provided was timely, well presented and well received."



Verle Blaha (left) is pictured here with Wayne Bledsoe, president of Litton Microwave Cooking Products, Minneapolis.

"It has been an honor and a privilege to work with Verle on the IMPI Board of Governors. His humor, insight and dedication have added immeasurably."

Long-time IMPI Member

A long-time member of IMPI, Blaha was elected to the Board of Governors in 1978. He served as treasurer and chairman of the board and will continue to serve on the board until July of 1982. Blaha has been an active participant in IMPI-CAS and has participated in many seminars sponsored

by the organization. In 1980 Blaha also joined IMPI's Biomedical Section to enhance his understanding in another field of microwave applications.

Blaha will leave Litton this year after having been with the company for 25 years. Most recently he has served as senior vice president for technology and development. As such, he has been the chief technology officer for the company and responsible for new business development as well as overall business technology guidance.

Leader of Litton's Consumer Microwave Oven Efforts

In 1970 Blaha was appointed vice president of engineering for Litton Microwave Cooking Products as the company began development of its first consumer microwave ovens. He was charged with responsibility for all engineering activities related to commercial and consumer microwave ovens and ranges.

Blaha directed one of the largest microwave engineering staffs in the world. Under his leadership, the firm introduced such innovations as automatic defrost, variable power, temperature control, combination microwave ranges, electronic touch control models with multiple memories, Defrost II[®], pre-programmed oven settings and Meal-In-One[®] microwave ovens. The commercial microwave oven line was expanded and incorporated much of the same technology, including combination timers, automatic defrost and variable power.

Blaha guided the division in development of an in-house electronic manufacturing unit, assembling much of the company's requirements for microprocessor-based control panels.

Recognized for Contributions

In 1980 Blaha was specially recognized for his contribution to microwave oven technology. He was chosen for inclusion in **Who's Who in Technology Today**, a distinctive reference compiled and edited by scientists and technologists and devoted to those individuals who are contributing significantly to current technical and scientific advancements in the United States.

Blaha's educational background includes the following: Electronics Material School, Radar Navigation and Radar Countermeasures School, U.S. Navy; Merchant Marine and Broadcast Radio, Port Arthur College; Electrical Engineering, Milwaukee School of Engineering; and a B.S.B., Engineering and Business, as well as an M.B.A., both from the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.^{MW}

January/February, 1982

Dutch Populace Begins to Accept Microwave Cooking

by Constance Lamberts

Household saturation for microwave ovens in The Netherlands is expected to reach 5 percent by 1990, up from one percent today. While sales of 250,000 (i.e., 5 percent) may not seem impressive in comparison with Japanese and North American figures, it should be remembered that two years ago, less than 5 percent of the Dutch population knew what a microwave oven was. Additionally, Holland's saturation figures are quite positive when compared with those of many other countries of Continental Europe.

Challenges for Manufacturers

The obstacles to greater microwave oven sales are similar to those throughout Europe. First, the Dutch way of cooking calls for food that is freshly purchased and cooked; frozen foods are not commonly used. Due to the Indonesian influence in Holland, deep-fried foods are very popular. And meats are often economical cuts that are stewed for a long time and served with large amounts of gravy.

The second obstacle is the size of the kitchen. A microwave oven occupies a great deal of space, which is at a premium in the ordinary kitchen.

While ovens are less sophisticated than many North American models, they are still very expensive, representing another deterrent to sales. Thus, most microwave ovens in The Netherlands are sold to upper middle income people.

Oven manufacturers, however, have a positive outlook for the future, and many brands are represented in the stores. Philips of Sweden is considered the number one manufacturer followed by National Panasonic. Other Japanese brands as well as many German brands and Amana also are sold in The Netherlands.

Microwave cookware is limited in availability. The only plastic ware for microwave use is a German product called Vitrotop of TPX (polymethyl pentane). Corning's browning dishes are sold through Philips and in housewares shops in the southern part of the country.

Food manufacturer interest in microwave cooking is minimal at best. Representatives of several manufacturers have noted that they are waiting for the market to expand before they will even take the time to inform themselves about microwave cooking. One small manufacturer introduced frozen meals on plastic-coated paper trays to save time, but they have since discontinued production.

The Emphasis Is on Demonstrations

To inform consumers about microwave cooking, manufacturers are focusing on demonstrations. Philips, for example, sponsors afternoon and evening demonstrations in hotels or restaurants. The sessions are attended by invitation, and these invitations are available at Philips dealerships, National Panasonic dealerships, and begin providing in-store demonstrations in the near future. Advertising for microwave ovens is minimal in Holland.

Manufacturers' efforts to inform consumers regarding microwave cooking is critically important at this stage. Discussion of microwave oven safety has waned, but some concern still exists. Traditionally, there is the belief that because the microwave oven does not do "everything," it is not worth the expense. And because there are no professional groups actively involved in microwave education, the responsibility of informing consumers is solely to the oven manufacturers.^{MW}