

\$100,000,000 IN EXPERIENCE!

Hundreds of millions of mail pieces for thousands of campaigns have identified certain basic principles that determine the success or failure of any direct mail program. Following these simple guidelines and avoiding common mistakes can help make your next direct mail campaign a success.



What Matters

1. **What determines success?**
The Offer - 40%,
The List 40%,
The Creative 20% (according to US Postal Service studies)
2. **Offers matter!** On a scale of 1-10 your offer must rate a 7 to 10 in order to have the best chance of generating results
3. Add a sense of **URGENCY!** Without a specific period within which to respond, consumers simply tend to forget
4. Remember to include **BENEFITS** as well as **FEATURES**. Benefits tell the prospect "What's in it for me?"

Target Marketing's

40
40
20
Success Rule

Understand the Postal System



10. The day your mail is entered into the mail stream is very important. Let a professional guide you in determining the best schedule for your event.
11. The postal entry point of your mail determines both the postage cost of the piece and how long it will likely take to get into homes. Small changes in distribution strategies can **save thousands** on postage.

Measurement & Results

12. Return on Investment - **ROI** is more important than the simple response rate of a piece.
13. Track your results and analyze where your response came from. Make each mailing better than the last.
14. Use call-tracking and other services to monitor how in-bound leads are being handled.

Targeting & Frequency



5. **Don't guess where your customers are coming from.** Map your existing customers and get a definitive answer. Retail locations should focus on their immediate markets, often within 7-10 miles.
6. **Customer lists, prospect lists and targeted saturation mail** all have their specific strengths and applications. Work with a direct mail professional to help identify the most cost effective approach that can generate the best overall results.
7. **"Touch"** your customers 4-6 times per year. If you don't stay in front of them, your competition will.
8. If it worked once it will work again, even better. **Frequency and repetition** are critical to getting your message across.
9. Letters go to customers; cards or flats go to prospects (letters can be more personal with someone you already have a connection with).

Preparation & Follow Up

15. Be ready for your mail to hit. Prepare your staff, inform your receptionist/phone operators and install effective signage and support materials.
16. There is no better way to establish your credibility and sincerity than through a **"Thank You"** note to a prospect or customer. Take the time to take this extra step with those who respond to your mail programs and you will be rewarded.

REMEMBER...

When done professionally, direct mail is not an expense but an investment in your business and its future.



DIRECT MAIL COPY MUSTS

- The headline is responsible for 75% of the response, **MAKE IT COUNT!**
- Headline should include: **YOU, YOURS, OR FREE**
- The mail panel should be no larger than it has to be. Once delivered it serves no productive purpose
- Extra space around your offer or other elements can be used to draw additional focus, but white space without a reason **SELLS NOTHING!**
- A general discount offer in dollars towards any purchase works best. Special pricing or package deals are great too!
- If you're providing price points, include the retail price, the retailer's everyday discounted price, and then show the special or final sales price. **ALWAYS SHOW THE FULL VALUE. THEN, THE TOTAL SAVINGS**
- Set and promote a definitive time period for the offer or sale. **CREATE A SENSE OF URGENCY.** Limit the window of opportunity (This weekend only, 1 Day Sale, ect.)
- Remember to **SELL THE DREAM.** Try to put the product or service into the consumer's life. Note Features but **STRESS THE BENEFITS** (What will it do for me?) How would it be to have, get, experience, etc.
- Let interesting pictures tell the story
- **ALWAYS PROMOTE THE WEBSITE.** (As long as it adds something of value to the experience and the company is going to respond appropriately to web generated requests)
- Use a map if the location is not centrally located and include a toll free number if available
- Tell a story that makes the event a **UNIQUE** opportunity. ("Factory Surplus Sale", "50th anniversary sales event")
- Don't make the company name bigger than the headline or primary offer, communicate the offer first
- Try and make the consumer feel they are **PART OF A SELECT GROUP** ("For our valued customers", "By invitation only", "You qualify for...")
- Ask yourself: **WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S THE DEAL? HOW DO I GET IT?**

PROMOTION PREPARATION KEYS

- **PREPARE YOUR SALES STAFF** with the details of your mailing, such as dates/times, offers, new products or package deals
- Make sure your sales staff has an advance copy of the mailer and alert them to the drop date
- **IN-STORE SIGNAGE** - use point-of-purchase signs, posters and window displays. This is the "Silent Salesman"
- **OUTSIDE SIGNAGE** - Sandwich boards or yard signs where permitted are great for catching passing traffic
- Prominently display and feature the products you are promoting
- Have ongoing product demonstrations related to the features and benefits
- **BE PREPARED FOR INBOUND CALLS** and inquiries. A short greeting (or short script) announcing the "Big Event" and a telephone fact sheet about the sale are helpful
- Have driving directions by the phone for clear instructions
- Always give general information on the phone but don't talk about the specific specials or any restrictions. **REMEMBER, SELL THE APPOINTMENT** or idea of coming into the store
- Log all calls and walk-ins, even if they don't buy today. **ASK EVERYONE** what brought them in. Keep track of the totals
- Know how many prospects bought and didn't buy. This is critical to measuring your **CLOSING RATIO** and how successfully you and your sales staff have performed
- **SEND A THANK YOU CARD** to all new customers and anyone who gave their information for future follow-up



