3 Keys to Creating
Effective Direct Mail

Why Direct Mail

Why is direct mail one of the most effective channels to grow your business?
According to one study, 80-90% of direct mail is opened compared to only 20-30% of email.[1]

On average a person receives 6,000 to 10,000 ads a day and spends only 8 seconds on any given message . Digital content is bombarding the landscape through online pop-up ads and/or emails. The average household receives 157 emails per day compared to only 2 pieces of direct mail.[3] However, email messages can be blocked as "junk" or missed due to the mass volume received.

Mail, too, can be considered "junk", but only after the person sees it, reviews it and then makes a decision. The key is to provide value and interest on the mail piece so the recipient takes action.

77%
of people *sort through their mail immediately.[2]*

70%
of consumers *say direct mail is more personal than online interactions.[4]*

82%
of millennials *view print advertisements as more trustworthy than digital marketing materials.[5]*

Neuroscience studies regarding how humans react to print advertisement also supports direct mail. One study found that direct mail generated "more brain responses connected with internal feelings, suggesting greater internalization of the ads."[6]

[1] *Small Biz Trends*
[2] *Forrester Research; Digital Information World*
[3] *USPS Marketer's Guide @USPS; USPS*

[4] *Fundera*
[5] *Myths About Millennials and Mail @USPS*
[6] *Using Neuroscience to Understand the Role of Direct Mail @MillwardBrown*

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The **Audience**

Identifying your targeted audience is essential to successful marketing. Pinpointing utilizing demographic,

psychographic and transaction information allows for refined messaging and imagery. Relevant content can deliver a higher response rate. Below are suggested data points for both B2C and B2B audiences:

BUSINESS TO CONSUMER	**BUSINESS TO BUSINESS**
• *Geographic location*	• *Geographic location*
• *Occupation*	• *Job Title*
• *Family size*	• *Age groups*
• *Age groups*	• *Gender*
• *Household income*	• *Education level*
• *Gender*	• *Industries or specific departments*
• *Education level*	• *Company size and/or revenue*
• *Hobbies or interests*	• *Number of employees*
• *Order history/amount*	• *Order history/amount*
• *Order frequency*	• *Order frequency*
• *Anniversary*	• *Anniversary*
• *Birth dates*	

In some instances you may need to invest in renting a list for your mailing. The different types of lists include:

* *Occupant lists –* "all address" lists that are available for residences and businesses. Typically, mail pieces are generally addressed, e.g. "Current Resident" or "Business Owner."
* *Compiled lists –* lists obtained using demographic and/or psychographic information such as public records, online registrations, questionnaires, direct response, directories, court records, etc.
* *Specialty lists –* lists obtained from associations and/or membership groups.

If a list only has minimal data points, you can consider doing a short survey and/or questionnaire in order to obtain more specifics from your targeted audience.

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The **Design**

When creating a direct mail piece there are three things to keep in mind: visual design, copywriting and the offer. All three of these items need to work together to compel the recipient to act. A person receives anywhere from 6,000 to 10,000 messages a day – yours needs to stand out and be relevant.

Simple design and concise copy is easy to understand and delivers your message quickly. Brand recognition should be immediate through the use of color, imagery and logos. Try to utilize imagery and color that will evoke emotion in your recipient. Keep the copy minimal and be sure to present the right offer to the right recipient. Relevancy is key.

You can test your offers by randomly selecting people in your database and varying the promotions and/or imagery in your pieces. The outcome of your tests can be used for future mailings.

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The **Metrics**

Tracking the effectiveness of your direct mail piece justifies your program and provides guidance for future direct mail. Your plan should identify success metrics so you know what to track and how to track it. These metrics can include:

- *Quantity mailed*
- *Database cost*
- *Creative design cost*
- *Print cost*
- *Finishing cost*

- *Postage cost*
- *Total cost*
- *Cost per piece*
- *Total response*
- *Individual and total orders*

- *Closure rate*
- *Average sale*
- *Total revenue*
- *Return on investment*
- *Cost per acquisition*

Equally important are ancillary comments from your audiences. Be sure to consider options to obtain your customers feedback on your products and/or services. You can extract feedback from social media, online product reviews, and/or other forums. Obtaining user feedback, both positive and negative, can prove to help you refine your messaging, instill actions to your product and customer service teams.

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