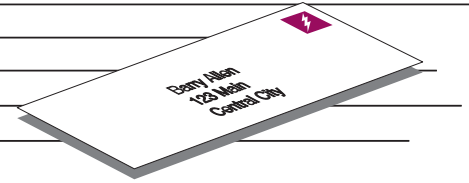


A.M.

LetterLink

Your Resource for Direct Mail Marketing



Published by A.M. Mailing Services, Inc.

Vol. 10 No. 3



“Providing seamless direct mail solutions”

Marty Ochs - President
Dan Topel - Sales Manager
Jeff Veesenmeyer - Sales & Mktg.
Fred Schulze - Print Manager
Barbara Weller - Sales Rep.

INSIDE...

- New NCOA requirement
- Designing better replies
- Beware of do-not-mail
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Evolution of DM presented at CADM Expo

Direct marketing is changing. This was the message presented at Direct Marketing Days & Expo 2007, sponsored by the Chicago Association of Direct Marketing.

Over 1,000 direct marketers and exhibitors attended the two-day Expo in Chicago recently. The keynote presentation was “The New Face of Direct Marketing.” Yvonne Furth and Lor Gold, President and CCO of Rivet Chicago were the co-presenters. They offered a unique perspective of how direct marketing is evolving into a multi-channel discipline that includes interactive, direct mail and emerging media.



Yvonne Furth, President of Rivet emphasized that consumers will no longer give too much time to any brand.

Furth and Gold believe there are three catalysts for change in direct marketing.

1. Technology – It’s changing so fast that marketing can’t keep up.
2. Globalization – Global ways of thinking are redirecting traditional marketing.
3. Time – The lack of time is driving how marketing is produced.

They believe that creativity is where these three catalysts intersect. “You can’t say everything to every one all the time” says Furth. “You must cut the unnecessary communications.”

“The market continues to change about every three days”

Lor Gold gave a case study of how the Apple Ipod built an 85% market share within a couple of years. They knew that 70% of all TV advertising is skipped. Today’s consumer will pick the medium and the time that they accept marketing.

Apple created a multi-channel marketing campaign that included TV, outdoor, unconventional viral, interactive, direct and international media. “The market continues to change about every three days,” said Gold. The Ipod campaign evolved along with the consumer response and feedback. Apple built a branded community for the Ipod with the knowledge that you can’t say everything to everyone, all the time.



“Products are being created faster than marketing can be produced - some products are launched in three months or less,” said Lor Gold of Rivet.

The DM Days seminars provided many solutions to the new marketing challenges. Over 40 breakout sessions offered ideas from new customer acquisition to marketing concepts that win. Here are some of the tips that were presented.

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DM News & Tips

Standard mail growing

The USPS reported a 4.9% increase in Standard Mail volume during the 4th quarter of 2006. First Class Mail showed no increase in volume from the prior year. Standard Mail has now surpassed First Class mail in total volume. Direct mail growth can be attributed to it being an effective medium for integrated marketing strategies. It also provides the measurable response data that is required with tighter marketing budgets.

NCOA required in 2008

The National Change of Address (NCOA) service helps reduce undeliverable mail. The service updates addresses within your database for residential or business moves. Currently the USPS recommends cleansing your database through NCOA every six months. Later in 2008, the USPS will require that NCOA cleansing take place every 3 months for First Class mailers. It will recommend the same hygiene level for all other classes of mail. This will reduce costs for USPS and improve ROI for mailers.

Two color package improves ROI

The Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA) has found less to be more. They cut back their lead generation mailing to a simple two-color #7 envelope package. This replaced their more elaborate four-color, photograph filled 6x9 envelope control.

The new package is designed to look like an official mailing from the State of Alaska. They ask recipients to mail back a 4x6 BRC to receive the four-color travel guide. Response rates have been 9 percent to 15 percent on rental lists and nearly 20 percent for the house file. This has proven to be the most cost effective mail package they have tested. Showing less and reducing costs increased ROI significantly.

Researchers find DM great investment

A research team for the Print Council analyzed cost to sales ratios for direct mail. They found that direct mail marketers spend \$167 per person to sell \$2,095 worth of goods and services per person. That's a return on investment of 13 to 1.

Why is 8.5x11 the standard paper size?

The Dutch invented a two up paper mold in the 1600s. They made the vat 44 inches wide to match the average length of a man's outstretched arms, for ease of handling. The length of the two molds was 17 inches. This made two sheets of 17x22 inch paper. When cut in half, the sheet measured 17x11, or 8.5x11 when quartered. This size varied a little over the next couple of centuries. Then in the 1980s, President, Ronald Reagan made the 8.5x11 the official standardized paper size.

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- Customer Review – Send an e-mail follow up thanking customers for their business and asking them to write a review. Ask several simple questions. This makes the customer feel important and valued. Their feedback provides valuable data and great testimonials.
- WIIFM – What's in it for me? Every direct marketing communications needs to answer the questions... Why should I respond? What do I have to do?
- The Rule of 3's – Say your offer three times, in three different ways to get action. Then repeat that at least three times using multiple mediums... direct mail, e-mail and display advertising for example.
- Ask for the order quickly – You have only a few seconds to hold a prospects attention and get an action. Just 2-3 seconds to get an envelope opened. Only 4 seconds to read a magazine or e-mail ad. About 12 seconds at a website. And 26 seconds once into a direct mail offer.
- Mistakes on offers – Give time to respond, but not more than 4-6 weeks for direct mail. Make offer valuable but not too good to be true. Don't give multiple offers because that will reduce response.

There is a new face for direct marketing. As Lor Gold pointed out, "you can manage change or change will manage you."

The new Zip + 4 CASS/LACS/DPV software is now available at A.M. Mailing Services, Inc. Don't wait until this new requirement becomes effective in August 2007. You can improve your address quality by contacting your A.M. representative to schedule a list cleanup. Call 608-884-3452.

GUEST COLUMN EDITOR'S NOTE: Article provided by ©North American Publishing Company. All Rights reserved. This article originally appeared in TM Tipline, Target Marketing Magazine's weekly e-mail newsletter offering practical tips and solutions for profitable direct marketing. To learn more, visit www.targetmarketing.com.

Put Your Reply Device to the Test

By Tracy A. Gill

A reply device can be more than just the means by which prospects share their information; it can be an active and effective part of your sales message, according to direct mail veteran Sandra Blum. In her book, "Designing Direct Mail That Sells," Blum outlines 19 questions that you can use as a guideline to determine whether your response mechanism simply takes orders or leads to them:

- * Is it easy to understand?
- * Is it easy to find?
- * Is there a clear statement of the offer?
- * Does it highlight the benefits?
- * Does it encourage action?
- * Does it spell out how to respond?
- * Does it highlight the guarantee?
- * Are the price and terms clear?
- * Is the sales tax spelled out?
- * Are shipping and handling costs indicated?
- * Is delivery time stated?
- * Are time limits stated?
- * Are any rules and regulations handled positively?
- * Is the return address included on the reply form?
- * Are phone, fax, and e-mail included?
- * Does it fit in the reply envelope easily? Without folding?
- * Did you ask for a change of name and address?
- * If possible, are the name and address of the responder filled in?
- * Is postage-paid return provided if payment, credit information or confidential information is requested?



Beware of Do-Not-Mail Legislation

Fifteen states have introduced do-not-mail bills in their state legislatures this past year. Most of these are attempts by politicians to capitalize on the very popular Do-Not-Call Registry that became law several years ago and is now regulated by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). Bill sponsors claim these bills are also aimed at the prevention of identity theft and reducing paper waste.

Opposition to these bills has come from the USPS, The Direct Marketing Association and even the FTC. Their efforts caused two bills to be withdrawn in Montana and Colorado. Those bill sponsors were convinced of the devastating effects do-not-mail would have on the postal system and mailing industry as a whole.

In 2006 the USPS delivered 213 billion pieces of mail. About 51% of it was from direct mail. The USPS estimates that do-not-mail legislation could cause a 35% loss of postal revenue. To compensate, First Class postage might double, some local post offices could close and many postal employees would lose their jobs. Paper mills, printers, lettershops, ad agencies, retailers, suppliers and manufacturers would all be adversely affected.

Ironically, it's the consumer who might be hurt the most. In 2004 the FTC prepared a do-not-email study. They concluded a do-not-email registry could not be adequately protected from spammers. They say that a do-not-mail registry would have to contain much more personal information than just a phone number or email address. It would require a unique identifier...like a driver's license number or even a social security number. Identity theft - the very thing legislators are trying to prevent - could become easier by creating these directories.

Direct mail marketers can do their part by improving their database marketing techniques. A mailing that is irrelevant to the recipient irritates many consumers. Targeting only the best prospects can change how they view direct mail. Mailings to the deceased can cause real anguish to someone who has lost a loved one. Removing known deceased names from mailing lists is imperative.

The DMA already maintains a do-not-mail file called Mail Preference Service (MPS) and a Deceased Do Not Contact (DDNC) file. Scrubbing your list against these files can help. Encouraging customers who complain about your mailings to sign up for these lists can also help. Got to www.thedma.org to learn more about these lists. Direct mail marketers need to be more proactive if they want to prevent legislation that could derail the industry.

Don't convert to slim-jim yet

The U.S. Postal Service is rethinking slim-jim specs. A slim-jim catalog or publication is about 6-1/8 x 11-1/2 inches and less than 1/4 inch thick. To qualify for the letter-size rates it must be 3.3 ounces or less.

The new postage rates for flat mail went up significantly May 14, 2007. Many catalogers have been considering a switch to the slim-jim format to save on postage. Revising your magazine format publication to fit the slim-jim format is an expensive undertaking. It would be wise to hold off on converting for now.

The USPS is finding that some of the slim-jims are causing the letter sorters to jam. They will be testing various types of slim-jims and booklets over the next several months. Based on the results of the tests they may find that some revisions to the slim-jim standards will need to be made.



This 8.5x10 catalog mails as a flat while the 6x11 slim-jim mails as a letter under current postal regulations.

Meet A.M. Employees



Barb Weller
Sales Representative

Barb Weller is the newest addition to the sales force at A.M. She will be working in the Milwaukee sales office. Barb's account list includes mailers in southeast Wisconsin as well as national.

Barb brings a strong background to A.M. in printing and direct mail. She previously sold graphic design services, offset printing and variable 4-color digital. Her sales positions provided experience in on-line procurement systems, data processing, list brokering and mailing services.

Hometown for Barb was Levittown, Pennsylvania. She moved to Wisconsin and attended UW Milwaukee where she majored in Physical Ed before switching to Social Work. She spent eight years as a social worker before making the career change to direct mail sales. "I enjoy meeting new people and working with customers to make sure their projects go smoothly from start to finish," says Barb.

Barb lives in Milwaukee with her cats Bo and Misha, and hopes to get a dog someday. She enjoys spending time with family and her many friends from the athletic club where she plays racquetball and volleyball. Barb is a fan of baseball, football and college basketball. Why did she join A.M.? "I want to continue selling printing and mailing, and I feel A.M. has a good reputation and many dedicated employees," said Barb.

A.M. exhibits at Chicago Direct Marketing Days and Expo 2007



Over 1,000 direct marketers converged on Chicago recently for the annual DM Days sponsored by the Chicago Association of Direct Marketing (CADM). The featured speaker was Greg Gumbel, host of The NFL Today for CBS. Gumbel stopped by the A.M. booth and visited with Marketing Director, Jeff Veessenmeyer (L) and President, Marty Ochs.

The annual DM Days brings direct marketers and vendors together for two days of education, networking and sharing of ideas. A.M. Mailing Services, Inc. is a charter sponsor of the new CADM Corporate Sponsorship Program. This program helps support DM Days and the many other direct marketing activities provided by CADM.

*Read more about direct mail marketing in A.M. Letterlink past issues.
Visit www.ammailing.com*



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Mark your calendar for these print, mail and marketing events

August 14, WDMA MONTHLY MEETING

Milwaukee, WI, Lunch meeting topic is Best E-mail Marketing Practices presented by Melinda Krueger of Direct/Interactive, sponsored by the Wisconsin Direct Marketing Association, for details and registration call 414-760-WDMA (9362) or go to www.WDMA.org.

Sept 9-12, GRAPH EXPO

Chicago, IL, McCormick Place, Annual printing, mailing and converting show, exhibit hall, seminars, call 703-264-7200 for details.

September 11, AMA MADISON MONTHLY MEETING

Madison, WI, Clarion Suites, Lunch meeting 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., meet the new board of directors for the Madison Chapter of the American Marketing Association, speaker to be announced, call 608-232-9696 ext. 12 for details and registration.

September 13, CADM BASIC COURSE BEGINS

Chicago, IL, Direct marketing basic course sponsored by the Chicago Association of Direct Marketing, for those new to direct marketing or re-entering the field. Runs through November 29th, call 312-849-CADM (2236).

September 19, NPCC DAY – EAST MEETS WEST

Milwaukee, WI, Milwaukee and Madison Postal Customer Councils will join for their National PCC Day Conference, mailing updates, training and USPS consultation will be available, for registration and details, e-mail information@lakelandpcc.com

September 25, WPPC GOING POSTAL! STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

Pewaukee, WI, Country Springs Hotel, learn how to manage your postage, sponsored by the Wisconsin Publishers Production Club, for details call Marty Ochs at 608-838-9899 or visit www.wppc.org.

Oct. 15-18, DM DAYS

Chicago, IL, McCormick Place, four-day conference and expo sponsored by the Direct Marketing Association, call 866-229-2386 for details, visit A.M. Mailing Services, Inc. at booth 773.

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