

A.M.

LetterLink

Your Resource for Direct Mail Marketing



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“Providing seamless direct mail solutions”

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INSIDE...

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- DM survey results
- 5 ways to increase response
- Multi-channel works
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Direct mail marketers must move forward or get left behind

For the savvy direct marketer – these are the best of times.

Think about it. Twenty years ago you would mail an offer. Wait for it to be delivered. Wait some more for the first response. Calculate your break even date. Then wait for the first profitable responses to arrive. And finally, about 60 days later you could begin calculating the ROI of the promotion.

Today, a direct marketer can mail an offer. Follow up with an e-mail. Then point the responders to a web site or PURL. You can capture response data and sales volume...**in real time!** Is that cool or what?

Never were there so many tools available to direct marketers. Those who are utilizing multi-channel marketing tools are seeing dramatic improvements in response.

Most catalogers have found that their e-commerce sales spike after each direct mail catalog hits the mailbox. E-mail marketers have found that their open rates are better when a postcard is sent to prospects first. Combining direct mail, e-mail, social marketing, public relations or print advertising is the way of the future.

Yes, direct marketing has changed. You can join it or be left behind. Here are some tips that you should consider when planning your next marketing campaign.

- Make use of multiple response tools – Not all customers are alike. Allow them to respond by whatever method they prefer. Provide business reply card, an 800#, an e-mail address, a web landing page and an address for walk-ins (if applicable) with directions or a map.
- Capture contact information from every response – Not every offer leads to a sale. But everyone who responds has interest in your offer. Adding them to your database allows you to nurture prospects into future customers.
- Make follow-up contacts relevant – Solidify new relationships by referencing the source of their sign up. Was it from direct mail, trade show, e-mail or your web site? When reminded of why you know them, they react more favorably to future contacts.
- Identify behaviors that allow target messaging – An e-mail responder will be more receptive to e-mail offers. A prospect requesting a free whitepaper might be interested in more information on the same subject.
- Combine branding with direct – Branding is no longer limited to traditional advertising. Take the best elements of your brand and incorporate it into every marketing channel that you utilize.

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DM News & Tips

How 5-day mail affects DM

The USPS will most likely stop Saturday mail delivery soon. Monday and Tuesday will be the heaviest volume days for carriers. Wednesday and Thursday could be the lightest days for carriers. Retailers will need to adjust their in-home dates for sales. Printers and mailers will need to adjust production timelines. Everyone needs to allow more time for postal delivery. In-home delivery will be slower and less predictable.

Does NCOA correct all addresses?

NO! The National Change of Address (NCOA) is a required service on all presorted mailing lists. But the reality is that about 5% of the people who move – don't tell the Post Office or anyone else. That's the result of the economy. Many people don't want to be found by creditors. On Standard Mail, Undeliverable As Addressed (UAA) mail is thrown away. That's a huge waste to you. Adding an endorsement line like Return Service Requested is recommended to clean out the UAA from future mailings. Another option is to add "Or Current Resident" to your address label.

Survey shows 82% open rate

A Household Diary Study shows that 18% of people who receive direct mail don't read it. That's the equivalent of clicking the delete button for e-mail. But it means that a whopping 82% of direct mail recipients do read or scan their direct mail...which is the equivalent of clicking on and opening an e-mail. The average click and open rate for e-mail is about 5%. Direct mail still reaches more eyeballs and provides a level of branding, involvement and shelf life that e-mail can't match.

Quote from an adman

"Set your headline, and indeed your whole advertisement, in upper-lowercase. CAPITAL LETTERS ARE MUCH HARDER TO READ, PROBABLY BECAUSE WE LEARN TO READ in lowercase. People read their books, newspapers and magazines in lowercase."

David Ogilvy

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Direct marketers must refine their tactics to make each contact profitable. To drive sales you must combine multiple channels and utilize direct response methods in every communication effort. By bringing your direct people, brand folks and sales force together, you'll create more profit and strengthen brand loyalty.

A.M. Mailing has all the resources to be your RIGHT SOURCE. We'll analyze your needs and recommend services that would improve efficiencies or reduce costs. Call 800-410-MAIL (6245) for more details. A.M. will make a difference for you and your organization.

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5 Ways to Double Direct Mail Response

By Ethan Boldt, editor-in-chief, *Inside Direct Mail*

In his latest report, 101 Ways to Double Your Response Rates, copywriter Ivan Levison declares the secret of better direct response lies in the taking care of all the tiny details of whatever you're writing. There is no magic bullet when it comes to rapidly increasing response rates, but if you handle these details appropriately and apply proven techniques to your mailing, success is likely around the corner.

Here are five ways to boost response that he mentions in this report:

1. Put the right information in the Johnson box.

What should you include there? The offer. The main product benefit. The phone number to call or the URL to visit. The expiration date of the offer. The guarantee. Mix and match these as appropriate.

2. Use the Johnson box in the right kind of letter.

If you're writing a non-personalized letter that's going out bulk rate in a window envelope using teaser copy, a Johnson box will fit right in. After all, it's part of the "classic package" format. (Don't scoff at it. It still works!) But if you're writing a first-class letter, in a close-faced envelope riding First Class, the Johnson box will look cheap and out of place.

3. Be clear. Be honest.

Your guarantee should spell things out in simple terms and never scare people away with legalistic clauses or "fine print." You know those TV commercials local car dealers run? The ones with the eight sentences of unreadable type that flash on the screen for a nanosecond at the end? You want your guarantee to do just the opposite and make an unqualified promise of satisfaction.

4. Use a border around the guarantee.

Never, ever bury a guarantee in body copy! That's a great way to lose one of the most compelling elements of your mailing. The guarantee should float as a separate element surrounded by a corny border, or at the least, a one-point ruled line. You want your guarantee to jump out and get read. Many companies ignore this rule and miss out. Don't let yours be one of them!

5. For the brochure, give your Question & Answer section a title.

Never just say, "Questions & Answers" and let it go at that. Always try to warm things up with a little personality and add a "finished" quality. Some headline title examples:

"Five commonly asked questions about contact management software."

"Do you know the answers to these important database questions?"

"How to select tax preparation software—straight answers to tough questions."

"Do you have questions? We've got answers"



FACT: Direct mail fundraising is alive and well

EVIDENCE: In 1995 the A.B. Data Group and The Mellman Group conducted a national survey. It included 800 progressive direct mail donors. They found that these top tier donors were on average, 65 years old. About 40% would pass away in 10 years. Not good news for nonprofits.

In 2007 A.B. Data and Mellman conducted the same survey. But this time they sampled 600 direct mail donors and 600 e-mail donors.

Eureka! The survey results mirrored the one taken 12 years earlier.

A new generation of donors had been found. The average age was now 68. They discovered that direct mail fundraising was a life cycle, not a generational, phenomenon.

More importantly, a whole new segment of online donors had emerged. This added a new pool of potential contributors for political and nonprofit causes that could be reached by e-mail. It added the multi-channel approach of direct mail *plus* e-mail.

The 2007 survey also found that 33% of online donors will also give through the mail. But, 67% of this segment will not respond to mail. Similarly, 22% of direct mail donors will also give online, but the other 78% will not respond to e-mail.

The conclusion is obvious. You will not maximize response unless you use both channels. Direct mail provides at least 15 times more donor revenue than online. But, multi-channel donors contribute over 2.5 times more than their single channel counterparts.

CONCLUSION: There are enormous multi-channel opportunities out there for smart direct marketers with open minds. The direct marketing strategies that work in “nonprofit efforts” will almost always work in the “for-profit” world too!

Meet A.M.'s Project Managers



Robin Jenkins
Senior Project Manager



Julie Herheim
Senior Project Manager



Diane Lowe
Project Manager



Angela Buss
Project Manager



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Inside:

**Your LetterLink Newsletter Vol. 13 No. 1
 from A.M. Mailing Services, LLC**

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PLEASE RECYCLE

Mark your calendar for these print, mail and marketing events

Feb. 9, AMA MADISON MONTHLY MEETING
 Madison, WI, luncheon meeting sponsored by the Madison chapter of the American Marketing Association. Register at www.amamadison.org.

Feb 15, POSTAL HOLIDAY
 United States Postal Service will be closed on Presidents Day. No mail entry or delivery.

Feb. 15, AAF MADISON MONTHLY MEETING
 Madison, WI, Concourse Hotel, luncheon meeting sponsored by the American Advertising Federation Madison chapter. Go to www.aafmadison.org to register.

Mar 16, WPPC – PUBLISHER VENDOR EXPO
 Pewaukee, WI, Country Springs Hotel, 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.; network with friends from the publishing, printing, paper and mailing industries over cocktails and hors d'oeuvres; sponsored by the Wisconsin Publishers Production Club. Call Marty Ochs for registration and details at 608-838-9899.

April 11-14 – NATIONAL POSTAL FORUM
 Nashville, TN, The mailing industry's premier trade show will include 120 workshops, for details and registration go to www.npf.org or call 703-218-5015.

April 14, DIRECT MARKETING CREATIVE STRATEGIES
 Chicago, Allerton Hotel; direct marketing guru, Herschell Gordon Lewis provides expert insight into how to make your copy stand out in today's clutter. To register go to www.education.org/inperson or call 212-790-1500.

April 14 - 15, SOCIAL MEDIA BOOT CAMP
 Des Moines, IA, Marriott Downtown, learn the latest social marketing tools and how to deploy them in your marketing mix. Sponsored by the American Marketing Association. Go to www.marketingpower.com/calendar for more details and registration.

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