

GETTING STARTED WITH DIRECT MAIL

The First Three Steps to Launching a Great Campaign

If direct mail isn't part of your marketing plan, it may be time to give it a try. According to an article in *DM News*, as many as 94% of consumers say they take action on promotional offers and coupons they receive in the mail. Direct mail allows you to target a specified group of prospects with personalized offerings.

On a per-sale basis, direct mail is a low-cost, high-yield method of marketing, because it allows you to focus in on a very select audience. This allows you to control the quantities and cost, and then scale it upward once you create a mailer that is providing positive ROI.

① Step 1 - Buy a Targeted and Accurate Mailing List

By having a clear concept of your target customer, you can tailor the messaging, look and feel of the offer to match the prospect's age, gender, professional status, and hobbies.

It's crucial to note that contact data is in a constant state of massive change and turn-over. It's estimated that every year, on average, 8 million Americans change residences, and 80% of business data in America changes annually.

Old data can and often does ruin otherwise perfectly executed direct mail campaigns. It's not worth the small savings you'll receive on discount data – in fact you'll almost certainly pay a lot more for it on the back end in the way of reduced response.

Good data is the one variable you can hold constant, and confidently test all the other variables against it when developing your mailer.

② Step 2 - Start Small

Direct mail will encourage you to think very carefully about who your ideal prospects are, and how to speak to them clearly and effectively. For this reason we encourage all businesses to try at least one small direct mail campaign.

Whatever route you choose, the investment doesn't have to be substantial. A small, carefully-crafted mailing can be an effective way to test the waters for a larger campaign.

And direct mail is generally considered to be the most predictable of the marketing approaches when scaling it upward.

③ Step 3 - Measure the Results

It's vital to measure the response of your direct mail campaign – a coupon code or other special offer is usually the preferred method. Then you can measure the cost of your investment against the return, and set your next budget accordingly.

Marketing guru Jay Levinson said this about direct mail: “Because it's so accountable, it lets you know if you have done a good job making your offer, pricing your merchandise, constructing your mailing package, writing your copy, timing your mailing and selecting your mailing list.”

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