

# MAKING EMAIL & DIRECT MAIL WORK TOGETHER

*First Impressions Mean Everything in Marketing*

Your message should be reinforced—many times, and in multiple channels—until the decision maker you want to influence sees you as a recognizable brand. InfoUSA offers advice on the best ways to multi channel market by utilizing both email and direct mail campaigns together. Elite sales and marketing executives identify how prospects prefer doing business in order to customize their sales pitches accordingly, but many other marketers force a prospective customer to view their message through only one channel: direct mail vs. email. A one-size-fits-all approach can lead to marketing oblivion, but this can be avoided by using direct mail in concert with email.

Response rates often increase across the board when direct mail and email are combined in a multichannel campaign. If executed well, it should more than double the results! This two-ply marketing also strengthens your brand, especially if your marketing campaigns maintain a consistent look or theme across channels. You'll gain mindshare, and that can lead to greater ROI.

The average B2B prospect may not always respond when a postal piece arrives, but your previous message and brand will spring to mind when the email hits. Now that the tools to coordinate a synchronized, multichannel campaign are available to everyone, where do you begin?

**There are five elements to consider: Branding, Timing/Frequency, the List, the Call to Action and Analysis.**

## 1 Branding

Your email HTML design should contain the slogans, logo and other identifying marks used in the print piece, and the channels must reference each other. Similarly, the email subject line could repeat the envelope copy or a prominent line in the postal piece. Keep it short, 30 to 40 characters, and make it brand-specific, action-oriented or benefit-driven. The from line should match the name (business, group, service, etc.) used on the postal piece. The channels have different strengths—direct mail confers legitimacy, email is interactive and easy to use—but the message should be the same in both.

Make sure your website maintains the consistent design of your marketing materials. Prominently feature the domain name/URL in every piece, link to your website from your emails, and make sure the site offers information on your products. It is best to create custom landing pages that look identical to your print offer or campaign.

## 2 Timing & Frequency

Reams have been written on what time of the day to send emails. This is actually less important than the timing in connection with the print mailer. In most cases, the first email should hit a week after the postal mailing piece arrives, give or take a day or two. The printed piece goes first because it has a longer shelf life, and it's very difficult to predict when it will be opened by the prospect.

How often should you mail? It depends on what you're sending. Brochures and catalogs should be

mailed quarterly, accompanied by monthly emails. Postcards and other basic printed pieces can be mailed more often. The general rule? Send two to four emails for every printed package.

B2B purchases are less spontaneous than consumer ones, so you want your information in front of a buyer often enough that you get the sale when the time is right.

### ③ The Call to Action (CTA)

Remember the line from David Mamet's *Glengarry Glen Ross*, "Always Be Closing." This is especially true in a multichannel campaign. Well, you can't close a deal unless you tell your prospect what you want them to do; therefore, every piece in every channel requires a strong call to action to lead to the close. You should also restate it multiple times, so there is no doubt and your message is reinforced.

There are five critical components of a strong call to action: Visibility, Verbiage, Direction, Immediacy, and, most importantly, Value.

**Visibility**—Make sure your CTA is prominent in your campaign. In email messages, use both text and image based CTA links to ensure they can be viewed regardless of image blockers. The location of your CTA should be in the top third of your email so it can be viewed in most preview panes.

**Direction**—Tell readers exactly what to do, and direct them to a custom landing page that further controls their experience.

**Verbiage**—Be assertive and use short, concise verbs to command an action. Avoid a passive voice.

**Immediacy**—Readers must feel a sense of urgency. They should understand that if they do not respond to your offer, they will miss out on a tremendous opportunity that may never come around again.

**Value**—Give prospects value, and they will give you their attention, and ultimately their business.

### ④ Analysis

Some marketers insist on identifying response by channel, but that's the wrong approach. The results should be viewed together as a straight pass or fail. A prospect may respond to an email, but it is possible the postal piece actually drove the sale. Or a customer may phone in an order after reading both a direct mail piece and an email. The channels are designed to work in harmony, and they should be evaluated that way.

What can you do if response is tanking in one channel? There may be tactical reasons if a medium is failing. These can be addressed with tactical solutions. By all means, test everything, but don't reduce volume or eliminate the channel completely. That will hurt response across the board. As we know too well, email recipients don't always open or read messages. Give them a reason to click through, even when you're not asking for an order. Offer a free white paper or other incentive to drive them to your website. Once they are there, make sure there is a registration form or additional interactive activity to engage them. The success of a marketing campaign should not fall on the shoulders of a sale, but on the initiation of dialogue.

**For additional advice on integrating email and direct mail campaigns, or to learn more about InfoUSA's campaign services contact a marketing expert at 888.297.0899.**



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