



Direct Mail Dos and Don'ts

As you know, direct mail is a great way to market your message to a specific audience. Often clients look only at their budgets and fail to realize that there are very specific things they should and shouldn't do in order to achieve good response and maximize their return. Here are some guidelines to remind them of the next time you present a direct marketing campaign:

Dos

Use a good mailing list. Make sure it's targeted and up-to date. These days you can customize them by dozens and dozens of criteria, from age and income all the way to the car they drive and how many pets they own.

Keep the message simple. You have a second to capture the reader's attention, and only a few precious seconds after that. Make your words count by being succinct.

Include an offer or incentive. If it's a direct mail letter vs. a postcard, include a P.S.

Code the mailing. Sometime called a key-code, these allow you to track how many leads, phone calls and customers the mailing produced; that is, if you have someone keep track of it.

Mail more than once. Many business owners think that a one-time mailing is enough. In reality, it takes up to six to make an impact. Repetition is key to true customer action and retention.

Don'ts

Don't forget your existing customers. Make sure they're on the list.

Don't use a lot of copy. Highlight benefits, not features, and put them in bulleted form rather than sentences.

Don't send out a mass mailing from the get-go. Start with a smaller, targeted, test-mailing in order to measure effectiveness and see if there's anything in the piece or list that you need to tweak.

Don't rely on direct mail as your total marketing campaign. Direct mail is most effective in conjunction with other marketing efforts, such as web presence, radio ads or telemarketing.

Don't let the campaign end without conducting a post-direct mail analysis. Set up a system to keep tabs on how many leads and/or sales were generated by your efforts.

Direct mail is a medium that still remains a very effective method of selling a product or service if the time and effort is taken to implement the campaign in the right way.

Labels: direct mail, direct mail dos and don'ts, direct mail lists, direct mail message, mass mailings, marketing campaigns, tips on direct mail