

## Direct Mail Campaigns that Deliver Results

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Here are some ideas to consider before starting a direct mail campaign, and some tips to take advantage of while writing sales letters:

### 1. Laying out goals for your project

#### A. How will you be getting leads?

Depending on your time and business you can handle, you may want to contact a list provider for leads. Many list providers will allow you to select leads based on the demographical criteria that are most important to you, so you contact only the most profitable leads.

#### B. How many leads can you handle pursuing at once?

This depends, and there are two things to remember here. 1. You can expect your direct mail response to be less than 5%, so you can't put all your eggs in one basket for one property to come through. 2. You're not going to want to mail 300 letters unless you plan to follow up with phone calls on all the properties that you have phone numbers for - otherwise your efforts, time, and money, go wasted.

#### C. Will you be telemarketing, direct mailing, or a combination?

If you are getting your list from a data provider, make sure their phone numbers are scrubbed against the Do-Not-Call list, and ask them how often they check lead addresses for accuracy with the U.S.P.S. Consider your own time and objectives with doing either telemarketing and direct mail.

#### D. What to mail: Postcards, flyers or letters?

The type of mailing you do should depend on your prospects. Although great for getting immediately attention, postcards are probably not the best route for targeting foreclosure prospects, as anyone in their situation wouldn't appreciate their public business displayed for the mailman to see. Flyers may not be bad for putting on a homeowner's door, as they will get immediate attention from the homeowner, but this would require your time going from door-to-door. An attractively mailed letter may be the best route, as it will appear more professional, and may be more time- and cost-effective.

Again, if you use a list provider for direct mailing, look for one that will allow you to merge your prospect list right into letters, for minimal effort on your part.

### 2. Start with a good mailing list

This is critical to avoid the costs and time involved with return mail. Make sure your mailing list includes qualified prospects that are in need of the services you are able to offer. Determine how you plan to manage your lead lists. Create your own spreadsheet of prospects or use one that your list provider offers. Mark the date you called or mailed the prospect, and include follow-up dates and notes.

### 3. Writing a direct mail letter that sells

Even if you are writing to give away free Porsches you will not get a call back from a prospect if they don't read your letter. Here are some tips to get your letter read and responded to:

#### A. Personalize the letter by using their first and last name

You're not writing to a DEAR HOMEOWNER, you're writing to a Mr. or Mrs. Smith. Consumers respond more to personalized communications, and a simple mail merge program will allow you to easily customize similar letters with the prospects name and/or address on them.

#### B. Write in layman's terms

You may have an English degree but most people read mail quickly and don't have the time or patience to comprehend fancy words.

**C. Get to the point, and right away**

If you can't catch the reader's attention your letter will be disregarded quickly. Use the first paragraph to quickly state why you are contacting them, what's in it for them, and why they should respond today.

**D. Content of the letter**

You don't need to explain the entire history of your company, all your products and services, and how great you are, those things only matter to you. Always focus on the benefits of the product and not the features. Your focus is telling them what you can do for them, how they will benefit from your services, and why they should call TODAY.

**E. Use keywords that readers respond to**

Think about your prospects desires and what appeals to them. Use keywords like **NO-OBLIGATION, FREE, NOW, CALL TODAY, LIMITED-TIME OFFER.**

**F. Make the reader an offer**

You may have a great service that the reader wants, but if you give them no real reason to contact you today, they may put your letter to the side for when they feel like calling YOU. By including a coupon, promotion, or discount if they respond by a certain date, you are encouraging the reader to take action and get in touch with you instead of vice versa.

**G. Include convenient contact methods**

Don't forget to include an e-mail address or a Web site if you have one, to give the prospect more methods for contacting you. Not everyone likes to pick up the phone for more information. E-mail and Web site form submits are more informal and may make the prospect feel more comfortable.

**H. Include at least one P.S.**

Studies show that the P.S. is often one of the highest read sections of a direct mail letter. Include in this P.S. another compelling reason as to why they should contact you TODAY.

**I. Have two other people proofread your letter.**

Ask someone with little or no knowledge of your business proofread your letter. This is the best way to get an honest opinion. The letter should flow smoothly from one topic to another, and leave the reader understanding what action they should take and why. Make sure there are no misspellings or grammatical errors to build credibility for yourself.

Remember that as an entrepreneur, you're not trying to reach anyone else's sales goal but your own, because it's your own time and money involved. Direct mail requires persistence and trial-and-error, but with a little planning and hard work, you can get the results you desire.

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