

## Giving Your Direct Marketing A Shot In The Arm!

The most exciting area of marketing is direct marketing. When you hit on a mailing that gets winning results, it is a thrilling experience. There are not many things that can compare to opening your mailbox only to find a flood of envelopes or emails filled with orders and checks that all have your name written on them! If that is your first experience with direct mailing, then this will surely entice you to continue your efforts with it. If you can increase the response rate to your offer by only a fraction of a percent, then a slight profit is very likely to be turned into windfall profits. This will certainly fuel your entrepreneurial spirit! A key question on the minds of marketers is, "How do I increase the response to my mailings?" In this first part of a two part article, you will learn 25 of the 55 of the great techniques for ensuring that your mailings will pull a stronger response. Not all of these techniques are foolproof - some will work while others will not. Whenever a mailing is planned, you should review these techniques. Choose the ones that best fit your situation and have them work for you. Your bank account will thank you! You will be smiling all the way to the bank!

1. Carefully target your audience. You must have the ability to carefully identify your target audience. You might even create different versions of your sales package so that you tailor each specifically targeted audience. You must know what group your product appeals to. Is it something that the younger generation can sink their teeth into, is it geared toward the aging "baby boomers" or are you gearing your product or service toward the elderly? Are you considering offering a weight loss product or service? Then you should only consider targeting those people who suffer from being overweight. Get the picture?
2. Solve your customer's most irritating problems. You will find that most customers will not buy products. However, they will buy solutions to problems that irritate them. If your product solves a critical problem, then you are going to have to pull out all the stops to let your clients know.
3. Help your customers achieve significant goals. Here is the complement to the previous point. If you can show without a doubt that your service or product will make your customers' lives better or easier, then your sales volume should skyrocket.
4. Focus on your customer's needs, not your product. Customers only have a limited interest in your company or product. However, they do have an unlimited interest in their own needs, getting a solution to their problems and making their lives better. You should always concentrate on fulfilling their needs by getting them to use your product or service.
5. ALWAYS stress benefits. Stress the benefits of your product to your customers. Appeal to their logic as well as their emotions. Push the right "hot buttons" and your sales will explode through the roof!
6. Repeat your key benefits in the beginning, middle, and end of your email, letter or brochure. The one thing to remember is that people buy benefits. You should reiterate this through your sales letter, brochure or email.
7. Use the "4 to 1" rule. You should have in your sales copy four "you's" to every one "I". Customers never cease tiring of hearing about themselves. A very good way to let the customer know that you understand their needs is to use a lot of "you" language.
8. Use a stop-them-in-their-tracks headline or first sentence. You must use a very powerful headline or first sentence to convince your prospects to read your sales letter.
9. Use sub-headings liberally. It is very beneficial to use subheadings as they break up large blocks of copy. These subheadings, if chosen wisely, will act as a "hot point" outline to pull the reader through the key elements of your ad or email.
10. Seize the reader's attention immediately. Begin your letter with your blockbuster points. You just have one or two paragraphs to convince your prospects to go on reading your letter. See to it that they get what they need in order to continue reading your letter.
11. Flatter your reader. People are much more sophisticated today when it comes to advertising. They can pretty much guess that you got their name from a mailing list. However, you can turn this fact into your advantage.
12. Share some "inside" information. Direct mail is able to appeal to a person's need to feel special. You can do this by sharing some exclusive information. Be sure that your prospect knows that this offer is only being made to them.
13. Issue a personal letter from the President. People like to deal with people at the top of the command list. The use of this kind of message is a confidence builder.
14. Never end a sentence at the bottom of a page in a sales letter. One very good technique to use is to use a broken sentence at the bottom of the page so that your customer will have to keep reading.
15. Feature the offer. People often jump at a good bargain. It is your job to design an offer your customer just can't refuse and make it a key focal point of your email or sales letter. If you use the "bait and hook" method, you will be able to convert the "maybes" into concrete orders.
16. Give something away for FREE. Plan on giving away free samples, demonstrations, information, trials or consultations in order for your customer to be able to have a hands-on try of your product. Everyone loves to get something for FREE! This is a good sale closer.
17. Run a contest. Give away a free subscription to your newsletter, a free enrollment in your seminar or anything else that appeals to your customers. It seems that people are drawn to contests just like playing the lottery. Taking contests can be especially appealing to the younger set.
18. Use a special "before the price increases" offer. If a price hike is in the future, make a special offer to your customers at the old price for a limited time.
19. Repeat your offer. You can overcome a customer's reluctance by making them an offer they just cannot resist. Make sure it appears at least two times in your sales letter or email and again on your order form.
20. Make a time-limited offer. Offer a special deal for only a limited period of time. This will make your customers think that they cannot dilly dally in making a decision to buy your product or service.
21. Base your offer on a limited supply. If you are offering a close-out of your inventory, this can help to create a strong demand. An offer that is in limited supply can designate prestige and exclusivity. It seems that everyone nowadays is looking to have that "one of a kind!"
22. Offer a special deal to the first 100 people who order. You can offer a special deal to the first 25, 50, 75, 100 and so on. Remember that the key is to keep it to a meaningful limit so that your customers will act quickly. Keep a sense of urgency in your tone so that your customers will feel that they have no time to lose in accepting this offer.
23. Make a charter offer. This approach is great for new products, service agreements and subscriptions. If you have no new product, then consider starting a membership club where you can offer charter members special benefits.
24. Make a "last chance" offer. If you want to win more orders, have a final inventory close-out or an end of the line blow out before a model changes.
25. "Buy 1 get 1 FREE" always out pulls "2 for the price of 1." Even though the savings are identical, the first format sounds like the customers is getting a better bargain. A previously mentioned, every one of these techniques will not work for every mailing you send out. You are going to have to pick and choose the ones that apply to your situation and put them to work for you. You must put a lot of deliberation and thought into

the techniques that you use so that they will maximize your profits.

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