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Direct Mail Marketing

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Direct Mail Marketing

Sometimes marketing can seem akin to throwing a fistful of darts at random moving targets in hopes of getting a single bull's-eye. The savvy marketer, however, knows that to be effective, messages need to be targeted to the audiences most likely to be receptive, or in a way that is most likely to resonate. This is perhaps a reason as to why direct mail marketing has been the go-to marketing strategy of many businesses for centuries. In fact, according to the Direct Marketing Association, more than 75 percent of marketers use direct mail and according to Infotrends, 69 percent of consumers prefer traditional mail over e-mail for direct marketing.[1]

Direct mail offers a number of other appealing benefits to marketers. For instance, it can be highly targeted. Not only can the message be delivered to a targeted recipient, but the message can be tailored to each individual. It can be addressed directly to someone, including a personal note, featuring a letter using language most likely to appeal to that specific individual or referencing an actual experience the individual has had with a business, product or service.

Direct mail also offers the opportunity for customers to hold a business's message in their hands. What's more, some businesses choose to include items like coupons or branded swag, in a mailing that make the message more interactive.

Additionally, and in comparison to ad rates of specific publications that offer little wiggle room in what a business can expect to spend, direct mail has so many approaches and options that it can be a friendly marketing option at any price point, offering ways to cut costs if needed. Some businesses with larger budgets seek help with direct mail campaigns from outside agencies, designers, printers or mail houses, while smaller businesses are able to produce campaigns entirely in-house. Keep in mind, though, there is a huge difference between a strategy that is plain cheap and one that is cost efficient.

Perhaps the greatest benefit offered by way of direct mail marketing to businesses is its ease in measurement. On the most basic of levels, it's about measuring the number of coupons redeemed, donations garnered, shift in sales, attendance, Web traffic or telephone inquiries.

Even with the advent of the Internet and in an age of instantaneous communication, direct mail still has the power to capture the attention of

1 Fielding, Michael. "Direct Mail Still Has Its Place." Marketing News 1 Nov. 2006. Print.

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recipients and help a marketing campaign successfully execute a call to action. According to the Unites States Postal Service™ (USPS), 98 percent of consumers bring in their mail the day it's delivered and 77 percent sort and read mail immediately[2].

Direct mail pieces like letters, postcards, booklets or small packages containing promotional items produce higher response rates than those of e-mail, newspapers and magazines combined. Many businesses and organizations have made the switch from direct mail to e-mail marketing, but often the proof is in the pudding: E-mail marketing efforts can be thwarted by SPAM and junk filters and are considered to be more intrusive than paper mail to many consumers.[3]

The thing is, just like e-mail, not all mail is opened and there are no guarantees for follow-through on the recipient's part. But there are steps businesses can take to improve response rates: The recipe for a successful direct mail marketing campaign can be found in a well-considered distribution list, a thoroughly effective message and an appealing presentation. Additionally, each successful direct mail campaign also includes budgetary, print, distribution, testing methodology and measurement considerations that should be addressed before the campaign can be truly effective.

Setting objectives and planning an approach

Objectives help to shape the why into the how. Why is a business pursuing a direct mail approach? What is it that a business hopes to achieve through a direct mail campaign? Most direct mail campaigns are either trying to create awareness of a brand, product or service or they are trying to make a sale or elicit a donation (in the case of nonprofit organizations). They are focused primarily on either reaching out to new audiences or tapping into the power of current audiences. These objectives, while broad, set the stage for the entire strategy a business will take.

It's at this initial step of developing the strategy that most businesses will take into account the overall marketing strategy and business goals, often incorporating research from other marketing campaigns, to determine if a direct mail strategy aligns with goals and is ultimately the way to go. While direct mail is a tried and true strategy, there's a chance it may not be for everyone—it may not make fiscal sense, it could be that audiences have proven indifferent to mail

2 Fielding, Michael. "Direct Mail Still Has Its Place." Marketing News 1 Nov. 2006. Print.
3 "USPS - Direct Mail." USPS - The United States Postal Service (U.S. Postal Service). Web. 07 Mar. 2010. <http://www.usps.com/directmail/planyourapproach/budget.htm?from=planyourapproach&page=startbudget>.

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in the past or perhaps other channels better align with a brand, product, service or message. If your business doesn't have precedents or prior research to go on, testing will help—more on that later. For now, let's take a look at the big picture direct mail methods to better determine who it's right for.

The check's in the mail

Budgeting for a direct mail campaign is best done by first setting a price point and dictating all other decisions—the format, the postage and perhaps the message—to fit within it. Alternately, it may be the number of people a mailing is needed to be sent to that dictates the rest of the direct mail strategy—more recipients means higher costs in postage and distribution and therefore potentially fewer dollars left to spend on expensive design, glossy brochures or irregular shaped mailings. It often helps to reach out to a mail house, direct mail marketer or the post office at this point to determine your business's options. Even if your business chooses to keep the mailing in-house, you can still call for quotes and estimates based on specifications and postage.

As mentioned, direct mail is often considered a viable marketing strategy for many businesses due to its flexibility in costs. Direct mail can, however, become very expensive very fast if a business doesn't have a handle on all the potential costs associated with a campaign, no matter if it's done in-house or outsourced.

- If a business is looking to keep things in-house, it should budget:
- Employee time spent researching the market and developing the mailing list.
- Employee time spent on and the ability of staff to write and design the piece.
- The cost of materials—including ink, envelopes and paper used by printers; the cost of any promotional items that may be included in the mailing.
- The cost of postage, including employee time spent assembling the mailing.
- The cost of list cleaning and National Change of Address (NCOA) processing required by the United States Postal Service® and potentially

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the employee time spent presorting and delivering bulk mail to the local Post Office™.

If a business is looking to go out of house, it should budget: Target market research; mail list acquisition or cleaning; hourly design and copywriting fees; cost of finished materials; labor for mailing, assembly or fulfillment; the cost of postage. Businesses should also keep in mind that many print and mail houses offer different equipment that handle different sized runs. So it's important to request quotes from a variety of vendors to ensure the project is partnered with the best vendor based on that vendor's capacities.

Generally speaking, and according to the 2007 Direct Marketing Association's Annual Fact Book, the average cost per piece (based on 100,000 pieces) of a direct mail campaign is as follows[4]:

- Creative: $0.1125
- Art and preparation: $0.0975
- Printing production: $0.2344
- Mailing list acquisition: $0.1235
- Computer procession: $0.0232
- Lettershop production: $0.0403
- Miscellaneous fees: $0.1355
- Postage: $0.2420

Note that this list does not account for materials—such as paper and finishing—nor does it account for hourly rates or employee compensation that is associated with implementing a direct mail strategy or campaign. Also note that often times average costs of design or printing and production can fluctuate based on quantity—the more pieces ordered, the cheaper the piece can become.

Additionally, campaigns aimed at seeking new audiences are likely to require more hits—more pieces mailed within a shorter frequency—and often in larger quantities in order to see worthwhile results.

4 *"Hershey Sweetens Direct Mail Results With Segmentation | Sweet Segments." DIRECT Magazine Online, the Information Resource for Direct Marketers | Direct Mail, Postal Mail, Email Marketing News and Resources. Web. 15 Mar. 2010. <http://directmag.com/mail/0801-herseys-segmentation-mailings/>.*

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Bottom line: When developing a budget for a direct mail strategy, you can't just think about the materials—think about the quantity and the quality of piece, too.

Putting the direct in direct mail: Audiences and lists

While the objectives turn the why into the how, the list turns the who into gold. Unlike the myths of alchemy, direct mail lists cannot be created out of thin air—these lists, because they aim to be so targeted, often require research and segmentation either through an in-house list or by way of a third-party provider. Businesses seeking to aim their message at existing customers are often better suited by in-house lists, while businesses searching to expand current target markets could be better served by outsourcing the list acquisition.

When a business uses its own mailing list, this list is most effective when it is more than just names and addresses—it's a report of each audience member's purchases, interactions and responses. Gather customer information and begin researching specific demographics and patterns, thereby segmenting your audiences. Then, consider surveying these segments further, through phone interviews or online survey tools, to learn about specific interests, tastes and experiences individuals may have with your business or organization. Afterwards, the list will not only be fleshed out, but the direct mail strategy can become further tailored to these segments and findings.

Segmenting an audience can often boost the likelihood of response rates just enough to tip the overall direct mail campaign into success. Hershey Entertainment and Resorts, for example, claims to have increased revenue by 17% and bookings by 10% simply by segmenting its audiences more than ever before and targeting those segments with messages and images thought most likely to garner a response.[5]

Alternately, when a business turns to a mail list provider (also called a mail list house, processor or broker), like Experian™ or Melissa Data®, much of the segmentation has already been done for a price. Essentially, this route involves paying a fee to purchase a list for use and reuse or, renting a list for a single use. Fees can range anywhere from a couple hundred dollars (general interest lists obtained from local government offices, Chambers of Commerce, etc.) to thousands of dollars and beyond. Pricing is usually based on the provider, the

5 *"Melissa Data Customer Success Stories." Melissa Data | Data Quality Tools | Mailing Software | Consumer, Residential Lists | NCOA. Web. 10 Mar. 2010. <http://www.melissadata.com/success/solutionOne.htm?Id_Solution=11>.*

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audience, the level of information provided in the list and the number of contacts included.

Sometimes the mail list providers can be other businesses or other direct mail outlets, like magazines. For example, subscribers to the popular magazine, "The New Yorker," comprise a direct mail list available for purchase that is highly sought after by many nonprofit arts organizations. The thought process being that those that read "The New Yorker" are perceived to be educated, wealthy and interested in arts organizations and are therefore likely to respond to like-minded direct mail solicitations.

Whether in-house or outsourced, lists should be compiled and segmented with a few questions in mind that will help to connect the dots between the objectives, the message and the target audience:

- **Who is your buyer?**
  What age, gender, race and ethnicity are they? What is their household income? Their marital status? Where do they live? Where do they work? What is their level of education? If in the B2B realm, what type of businesses are your customers? What industry? What size? How many employees? What is their sales volume?

- **What are the buying habits?**
  Online or in-store? How do they pay? When do they buy? What do they buy, how much and how often?

Once a mail list is compiled, it's important to take care of it—especially as it could become a highly valued asset following a successful direct mail campaign. Mail lists require maintenance over time and care should be taken that names and addresses are spelled correctly, ZIP codes are correct and that each time a list is used it is run against an NCOA database (done through the purchase of software or through a mail list provider) to check for outdated or incorrect mailing addresses. Lists should also be checked for duplicate entries—don't waste money and put egg on your face by sending the same person the same mailing multiple times.

Case in point: The Del E. Webb Center for the Performing Arts sends marketing pieces to a direct mail list of almost 13,000 individuals. Prior to running this list against a NCOA database, each mailing the Webb Center conducted wasted $1,400 in printing expenses and $950 in postage on mail that could not be

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delivered, $1,700 in returned mail fees and an extra $500 to resend mail pieces to correct addresses as provided by the Post Office.[6] This certainly illustrates that a good list can help in keeping costs down, doesn't it?

Throwing the darts

Distributing a direct mail piece can be easiest part of the entire direct mail strategy—if you know what you're doing and are prepared. Additionally, distribution and the cost therein will also be dictated by part of your overall budget and therefore impact the options your business or organization may have in format and design.

Postage

Before conceptualizing the direct mail strategy, and long before delivering the direct mail piece to the Post Office for delivery, businesses should choose postage rates that best fit USPS specifications and meet the objectives and needs of your mailing without breaking the bank.

First-Class Mail®

Consists of postage stamps either obtained at the Post Office or through your office's own postage meter. The postage required is determined by weight and shape of the mail.

Use it if…

- Your mailing is going to fewer than 100 recipients
- Your business mails direct mail pieces less than once per month

Standard Mail®

This method is said by USPS to guarantee the lowest possible postage for a piece, but requires a permit and is ideal for bulk direct mailings. It consists of using pre-cancelled stamps, meters, or the use of an indicia printed on your direct mail piece in the design process, featuring an assigned bulk mail account number. Beware that when done in-house, you will have to sort a mailing based on USPS regulations, such as numerical order by Zip Code, then alphabetized by last name. The postage required is based on a combination of weight of the mail along with the number of pieces being mailed. The purchase of a bulk mail permit is required in addition to the cost of postage.

Use it if…

6 Ferrari, Jack. "How to Create a Direct Marketing Campaign." Business & Small Business. 01 Nov. 2007. Web. 10 Mar. 2010. <http://www.entrepreneur.com/marketing/marketingbasics/marketingmaterials/article80786.html>.

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- Your mailing is going to more than 100 recipients
- Your business mails direct mail pieces frequently

Other options for postage are available for nonprofit organizations and mailings with special considerations like library or media mail, express mail and others. Additional considerations when thinking about postage will include return envelopes (also known as reply or remit envelopes). They will require cooperation with the post office prior to distribution in order to ensure that postage is covered when a recipient chooses to use this envelope to respond to a call to action or send payment or a donation. Smaller businesses or individuals often include a preaddressed envelope with a stamp affixed to serve this purpose, but permits can be obtained from the post office that will allow a business to only pay postage on the envelopes returned. The printing of a special barcode, verbiage and/or indicia on materials may be required based on your business or organization and budget.

Testing

Always test direct mail campaigns with a small percentage of your overall intended distribution, especially when using newly acquired lists or if your business is feeling unsure about the potential response from recipients. Testing smaller populations can ultimately save money in the long run, allowing for alterations to be made to correct response rates prior to buying the whole farm. Author and marketing expert, Jack Ferrari, recommends testing 10 percent of your list and no less than 250 pieces.

"This will give you enough of a spread across variables to make the results worth something," says Ferrari. Ferrari also recommends setting the bar for the test market response rate that will determine whether or not the full mailing will take place. Typically this could comfortably be a 3 to 7 percent response rate.[7]

Test runs will also help a business gauge what kind of commitment will be necessary, in terms of manpower and resources, to handle a full run. If your business offers a free trial or a particularly generous discount that turns out to be quite popular in the test run, it may be more cost effective to go with a smaller run than initially planned or to reconsider the call to action offer.

Frequency

In most cases, direct mail strategies will not reach the heights of success if the target audiences are only hit with a mailing once or, if they are hit with multiple

7 Ferrari, Jack. "How to Create a Direct Marketing Campaign." Business & Small Business. 01 Nov. 2007. Web. 10 Mar. 2010. <http://www.entrepreneur.com/marketing/marketingbasics/marketingmaterials/article80786.html>.

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mailings at an infrequent rate. Ideally, a business's direct mailing will show up in a consumer's mailbox just when they are primed to make a sale and that piece is just what it takes for them to act which may mean business's will have to make a few attempts before this moment occurs. Be prepared to make contact with your direct mail lists multiple times at regular intervals throughout your direct mail strategy to see optimal response rates and return on investment.

Beyond the channel to the medium

Approximately 40 percent of the impact from a direct mail piece comes from the value of the offer or call to action, while roughly 20 percent of the impact comes from the design and copy. In order to grab the target audience's attention, communicate a message clearly and successfully to see follow through. Serious thought has to be put in to what exactly the direct mail piece says and looks like.

Choosing a format

Options abound when it comes to direct mail pieces, from traditional sales letters to postcards to booklets to newsletters, business have untold opportunities to communicate with their audiences.

Letters

Letters are the perfect fit for direct mail objectives that require an introduction to a brand, product or service, or are seeking to build rapport or persuade audiences. Successful direct mail letters are rarely sent alone—they usually include other marketing pieces, like a brochure or a recent newsletter, remit envelopes, coupons or discount cards, or a branded freebie. Letters are often thought to be easily produced in-house and while this may hold true for smaller mailings, the larger the campaign the messier and more time consuming letters become in terms of assembly and distribution. Letters can also be limiting in that if they become too long, recipients are less likely to read all the way through to a call to action. And, when sent alone often hold little visual appeal.

Postcards

Great for drawing immediate attention to a message, postcards are great for promoting a sale, a program or an event, new products or services, special offers and coupons or as a thank-you note for a recent purchase. Postcards don't rely on recipients opening them to be read; all the information is right there. Postage for postcards is typically cheaper than for letters and can usually be printed fairly inexpensively through online vendors. The downside, postcards have limited space—take care to make messages clear and concise and don't go overboard with graphics, colors and images.

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Booklets, flyers and brochures

Helpful in reinforcing a direct mail letter, booklets and brochures allow for messaging to be expanded and expounded visually. These pieces are great for reaching new audiences, sharing brand messaging, featuring product and service information, or highlighting an aspect of business.

Flyers can be standard paper size and mailed alone or with other contents such as a letter. Flyers also are effective as buck slips or fall slips, which are one- or two-sided and about the size of a #10 envelope.

Self-mailers are a cross between a booklet and a flyer but are entirely self-contained and are usually a sheet or two of paper folded together, tabbed and mailed. These pieces can be very versatile, working alone or with other mailings.[8]

Catalogs

Catalogs are for those businesses looking for a way to showcase a wide array of products, services or programs in one place. Additionally, these often offer the space to use both text and images to convey messaging.

Dimensional mail

This format describes any direct mail piece that is not mailed as a flat letter or postcard and is typically called lumpy mail or thump mail due to the often irregular shape or noise the package makes when filled with promotional items, literature, product information or samples. This type of direct mail requires a larger investment—both in the cost of any items a business sends and in the packaging and postage required to distribute to audiences.

Sometimes businesses will use a variety of these formats in one mailing or as part of a direct mail campaign in order to cut costs and make mailings most effective based on target audience segmentations.

Writing direct mail copy that works

Not only should a direct mail piece visually represent a brand and align with direct mail strategy objectives, budget and audiences, but it also needs to include two very important things: A strong message and a call to action.

Before a business or organization begins working with a writer or internally drafting the copy of a direct mail piece, the following questions should be addressed:

8 Ferrari, Jack. "How to Create a Direct Marketing Campaign." Business & Small Business. 01 Nov. 2007. Web. 10 Mar. 2010. <http://www.entrepreneur.com/marketing/marketingbasics/marketingmaterials/article80786.html>.

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- Why do audiences care? Why do audiences need the brand, product, service, etc?
- How does the brand, product or service benefit the audiences?
- How is the brand, product or service different?
- What is it that a business wants an audience to do after reading a direct mail piece?
- How will audiences reply to an offer or call of action? Is response by way of this reply measureable?

A good direct mail message is written in conversational tone, void of jargon or acronyms, and walks the line between highlighting a brand, product or service and divulging the benefits to the audience. All messages should be written in a clear and concise way that evokes emotion in the reader. Furthermore, messages should use "you" more than "I" or "we" in order to convey that the focus is on the recipient.

Under no circumstances should you forget the call to action—one or two sentences that clearly tells the reader what it is that they should do, why they should it, how they should respond and where. Ferrari believes that businesses sometimes make the mistake of simply sending existing marketing materials to their target audiences without any context and missing the call to action. "You need to create a direct mail piece with a strong offer that will spur the recipient to action."[9]

A good call to action is one that relates and is of value to target audiences, is clear and explains how the offer can be redeemed. Consider calls to action that incorporate an offer of some sort, like "Buy today and save 20%" or "Call today for a free gift." Because vague calls to action may convert someone who had already had intentions to something, but calls to action with an offer create motivation and a sense of urgency.

Note: Our Blue Paper on Online Coupon Strategies outlines some great couponing and discount tactics.

Designing the final product

Once a general format has been conceptualized and copy has been written, the

9 Ferrari, Jack. "How to Create a Direct Marketing Campaign." Business & Small Business. 01 Nov. 2007. Web. 10 Mar. 2010. <http://www.entrepreneur.com/marketing/marketingbasics/marketingmaterials/article80786.html>.

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design can be executed. Businesses with larger budgets have the benefit of hiring experienced professionals to create beautiful direct mail pieces or sometimes have qualified employees on staff to help. However, it's often a different story for small businesses and nonprofits, but that doesn't mean the direct mail piece will necessarily be less effective. For those designing in-house with a basic design program, keep these pointers in mind:

- Allow only one main element to dominate a page or a series of smaller elements.

- Brand your direct mail pieces—make sure the logo is prominent, as is the Web address and contact information.

- Don't fear open space (called white space)—it's inviting to the eye.

- Use only images or illustrations that are relevant and reinforce the message of the direct mail piece. See our Blue Paper on Photo Libraries for tips on selecting an image that's best for your message and brand.

- Stick to two fonts—Either one Serif (like Times New Roman) and one Sans Serif (like Arial). Or you could pair a decorative font with either a Serif or San Serif font that complement each other. Any more than two and the design will look cluttered and loud.

- Keep in mind the CRAP design principles—Contrast (use contrasting colors, fonts, font sizes, etc. and make different design themes very different or totally the same), Repetition (Repeat motifs, logos, etc. throughout the design), Alignment (align text and images to be appealing to the eye) and Proximity (things that go together, like a point in the message and a photo, should be close to one another).[10]

Other design considerations revolve around postal regulations and should be discussed at the onset of any direct mail campaign. And that's because the price of postage fluctuates based on the piece's size, weight, thickness and shape. There are also very thorough specifications for some types of mail, like self-mailers, that dictate how a piece can be folded and if the fold can be on the top or the bottom of piece, how many tabs or staples are necessary, and printable area (so as not to be interfered with or covered up by mail sorting stickers or printed codes). Visit www.usps.com for endless details on every direct mail piece imaginable for

10 Williams, Robin. The Non-designer's Design Book. Berkeley, Calif: Peachpit, 0820. Print.

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guidance or page through the United States Postal Service physical standards for retail mail.

So take note: Don't design a piece first without knowing exactly what specifications need to be followed for its mailing. Or, you could end up completely having to redesign a piece to meet your budget and mailing regulations!

Adding a personal touch

Personalization in direct mail doesn't just come into play in the targeting of lists or in the tailoring of messages, it can also come into play in the small details that call attention to the mail piece or give audiences the feeling or impression that a real human being took the time and care to assemble a letter or package just for them.

"Direct mailers who find ways to personalize their communications, either through variable data printing, customized microsites or simulated handwritten notes continue to see a better response rate than those who don't," said Crystal Uppercue, marketing manager at EU Services.[11]

Variable data printing—printing that allows for certain elements of a print piece to vary during the printing process, such as names, addresses and salutations. Instead of "Dear Valued Customer," variable data printing allows a business to insert the name of someone on the mailing list.

Customized microsites—personalized URLs (PURLs) or Web sites included on a mail piece allow recipients to go to a Web site created by your business or organization that is tailored to them as an individual or as a segment of your target audience. The print piece drives recipients to this personalized page for more information, providing valuable content to them and measurement tracking for your business's ROI.

Simulated handwritten notes—usually in the form of a sticky note, these notes are affixed to a direct mail piece to draw attention to both the overall direct mail piece and any message on the sticky note, like a discount, special offer or a PURL. Uppercue shares that according to Post-it® note manufacturer, 3M℠, Bell Atlantic℠ reported a significant boost in response rates from direct mail pieces that included a sticky note. Of 100,000 letters mailed only 10,000 featured the

11 *Uppercue, Crystal. "Trends to Watch in 2009: Clear Mailing Ahead." The Fundraiser's Complete Source for Multichannel Strategy and Integration Techniques : FundRaising Success. Web. 27 Apr. 2009. <http://www.fundraisingsuccessmag.com>.*

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note and that smaller population garnered an 18 percent increase in response rate over those who received the direct mail piece without the note.[12]

Johnson box—a box on the outside, top or bottom of a direct mail piece that pulls the targeted message or call to action out of the direct mail piece to call attention to it.

Finally, to make sure all bases are covered, a business should ask a few last questions before moving to print:

- Does this direct mail piece relate to the target audience?
- Does this direct mail piece have emotional appeal? Does it create excitement?
- Will this direct mail piece prompt a response to the call to action, NOW? Does the direct mail piece make it clear and easy to respond?

Tracking the bull's-eyes

Once the mailing has been distributed, measurement begins. Measurement of direct mail campaigns depends largely on the objective and the messaging. Direct mailings that include some sort of offer are particularly measureable in that redemption or response rates can be directly tracked through purchases or the number of recipients who contact a business to take them up on an offer.

Monitoring Web site traffic for increases or decreases in traffic following the date a mailing drop is another way to measure exposure, as is tracking phone calls or e-mail inquiries.

Another way of measuring direct mail campaigns regarding list segmentation is coding. Nonprofit fundraisers for years have included a tiny code, numeric or alphabetic, that is unique to each individual mailing on remit envelopes included in direct mail appeals. In doing so, not only can direct mail efforts be measured in donations received, but further data and measurement can be gleaned—such as which appeals are most effective or which zip codes yield the largest gifts—for use in future direct mail campaigns.

12 *Uppercue, Crystal. "Trends to Watch in 2009: Clear Mailing Ahead." The Fundraiser's Complete Source for Multichannel Strategy and Integration Techniques : FundRaising Success. Web. 27 Apr. 2009. <http://www.fundraisingsuccessmag.com>.*

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Measurement of response rates or the effectiveness of campaigns can mean the success or the failure of the next direct mailing—so pay attention and make alterations when necessary.

In a nut shell

Direct mail strategies have been the go-to marketing strategy for many businesses and it's one of the few truly traditional marketing strategies that have stuck around through generations, cultural shifts in consumerism and the marketing industry. When done right—with research and purpose—a direct mail strategy can be an extremely efficient, effective and affordable marketing strategy for any business or organization to pursue, and it's much better than a fistful of darts flung at moving targets.

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