

6 Parts to a Successful Direct Mail Advertisement



Direct Mail Advertising: Top 6 Components of a Successful Direct Mail Marketing Campaign

Grab the Consumer's Attention. Direct mail advertising pros and local business owners will tell you that crafting a mail piece that doesn't get thrown away is the greatest challenge they face.

According to 41pounds.com, a group that measures such things, Americans receive 41 pounds of direct marketing mail each year. Not only that, but 44 percent of it ends up in the trash without being read.

The truth: No matter how much time one spends designing the art, writing the marketing message, or choosing the kind of mail to be sent, small failings in other aspects of direct mail advertisement creation cause prospective customers to ignore the message.

Without an eye-catching direct mail piece and a clear and concise message, new customers won't be bothered to act on your mailer.

Direct Mail Marketing - How to design effective direct mail advertisements

There is a lot of advice in the direct mail advertising world on how to design effective direct mail pieces. Whether you take advantage of community mailers, postcards, bi-folds, tri-folds, or other formats to present your marketing message, the industry recognizes 6 attributes that all successful direct mail advertising pieces share.

6 COMPONENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL DIRECT MAIL CAMPAIGN

73% of Americans prefer to be contacted by brands via direct mail



STANDS OUT

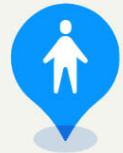
70% of former customers buy again when they see the right mail piece

Grab consumers' attention with your graphics & message. Emotional Marketing rarely misses.

PERSONALIZED

Address the consumer by name.

Demographics such as income, age & gender can also be used.



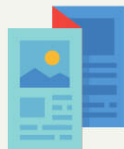
IN COLOR

The brain responds to colors as they elicit emotional response. Use this to your advantage.

STRONG OFFER

66% say Direct Mail has convinced them to buy

A memorable offer is concise & entices the consumer to take further action. Sell a solution.



FULL USE OF SPACE

Employ all sides of the piece, yet be sure your messaging is to-the-point. Less is more.

TRACKABLE RESULTS

By 2D barcode or otherwise, analyze your campaign's success by monitoring your offer redemptions & overall ROI.



The first step in the creation of effective direct mail pieces is to not design and send a piece of mail that a consumer could consider junk. While that may sound like a no-brainer, you'd be surprised how many direct mail marketers don't take the time to learn what most would consider junk mail. In other words, learn what everyone else is doing and stray from going down that same path. Be different.

Take a look at what you receive at home or at your business from other direct mail campaigns. Go through your mail and see what catches your attention. What turns you off? What looks bland? Where is the type too small or the message unclear?

Now do the opposite.

Below are 6 rules to follow when designing a successful direct mail advertisement.

1. Make sure your direct mail advertising piece stands out from everyone else's

Avoid graphics that simply repeat what the written message clearly says. If the graphics repeat the written message, the reader doesn't have to pause and think.

A photo of a man painting a house isn't out of the ordinary. A homeowner standing in a paint bucket, his eyeglasses askew, sends a message that the new customer is better off hiring a pro. Humor rarely misses; engaging the reader to think and arrive at a light-hearted truth goes a long way. Our Town America, the nation's leading New Mover Direct Mail Marketing organization, creates an enticing welcome package that holds well-designed gift certificates equipped with the psychological triggers that compel new customers to look inside.

2. Be sure to personalize the direct mail advertising piece

This is where knowing your customer – especially those who shop local – pays off. The more you know about the individuals and the market, neighborhood or financial bracket they inhabit, the more specific you can be when addressing the

recipient. Demographics such as income, age, and gender can be used when addressing the customer.

Options abound when personalizing a direct mail advertising piece. Use the customer's name on the envelope, if doing a community mailer, or put it right on the offer. Splash the prospective customer's name across the piece in unusual ways to grab attention. Informal salutations – such as, “Hey Mike, how's it going? We wanted to catch up with you!” – will make anyone look twice.

Our Town America mails new mover welcome packages in the ZIP Codes chosen by a local business, perfecting the piece by making it personalized to the new mover on both the envelope and right on the offer.

3. Color is key in effective direct mail advertising pieces

Many businesses design direct mail advertisements in black and white. However, as a local business deciding which direct mail advertising company to go with, it's important to know that the brain responds to color. In fact, it can create urgency and desire when used correctly. Choose colors based on the emotional response they elicit. Colors speak volumes; bright is loud, dull tones are quiet. Warm colors energize, cool colors refresh.

Don't trust just anyone to design the graphics and other visual elements of your marketing piece. Our Town America's graphic artists, for instance, are expert at using color and other elements to design effective marketing pieces.

4. Strong offer to get the customer to visit your business

Once you've designed a personalized direct mail piece that stands out with its use of color and graphics, you must write a strong offer that grabs the reader's interest and entices him to take further action, such as visiting your business and buying your product or service.

The offer should stand out, be concise and convince the reader that you have something that's valuable to him.

New customers want to purchase solutions, not products or services. New customers accept *offers to help them solve solutions*. They can see you do auto tune ups, but they *accept your offer* of 25 percent off the price of a tune up.

According to Our Town America, who has been creating successful direct mail advertising pieces for their customers for more than 45 years, how you word the offer matters. If you offer '1 FREE Large Pizza', it's twice as effective as stating, "Buy One, Get One Free." A bona fide, no-strings-attached free gift speaks volumes and entices the customer to get out of his or her house and visit your business.

5. Full use of space in designing an attractive direct mail advertisement

The graphics experts at Our Town America know the importance of designing a colorful and attractive direct mail piece that employs a strong offer that creates a response. The New Mover Mail Marketing organization also knows the importance of full use of space, whether on a postcard or a community mailer.

Whether you're using a tri-fold mailing piece or postcard, use the front and back to relay a message. Empty panels don't help sell.

Though you should put as much information as necessary to get the reader to respond, less does mean more. Don't use too many images or too much text; employ white space as a graphical element so the message isn't lost.

6. The results should be trackable so you know how well your direct mail advertisement is working

You won't know how well your direct mail advertising piece is working unless you can determine who responds to your offer and when. If you're targeting people who shop local, you should be able to dissect your mailings by customer category, ZIP Code or other geographic boundary.

For example, every new mover gift certificate that Our Town America mails out includes a 2D barcode to track the certificate. The comprehensive tracking system allows businesses to monitor their return on investment, validate redemptions,

control timing of the second mailing, gather detailed demographic data of new customers, monitor survey feedback and respondent mapping, and analyze data to perfect supplemental marketing/advertising campaigns.

Our TruTrak® mobile app allows local business owners to see just how many new movers have been welcomed each month, broken down by ZIP Code. Local businesses also can take advantage of the Positive Postings™ feature for Facebook, which spreads the word to gain new customers.

So, forget about how many pieces of direct mail are thrown away, consider the fact that at least 56 percent of direct mail pieces are not thrown away, which shows that direct mail pieces work when they are designed properly.

According to the **Direct Mail Association**, 66 percent say direct mail pieces convinced them to buy something. Businesses also reclaim former customers in direct mail marketing programs: 70 percent of former customers start buying again after they see the right mail piece.

Our Town America knows how to develop direct mail pieces that grab the reader and create new customers. We can design multi-touch campaigns that build and maintain loyalty between local businesses and their customers.