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Direct Mail Success Tips From the U.S. Postal Service *Generate Leads, Guarantee Results*



Augmented reality is the next big thing for direct mail.

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WASHINGTON — Direct mail spending rose to \$21 billion in 2011. Up 2.9 percent from 2010, according to the Magna Advertising Group, direct mail is one of the largest advertising channels for U.S. businesses.

“Direct mail creates a one-on-one connection that’s hard for other media channels to match,” says Tom Foti, manager, Direct Mail and Periodicals. “The average household receives only two pieces of direct mail a day compared with 157 emails. It lets you incorporate coupons, reply cards, mobile barcodes — such as QR codes — URLs and other response mechanisms. Direct mail is a workhorse for generating leads, traffic and sales.”

Direct mail is a powerful part of an integrated marketing campaign. By using it, businesses can target advertising dollars on those most likely to respond. By choosing what to measure — from offers to creative elements — businesses can reach almost anyone and then use the data to improve effectiveness. “Tell customers the complete story; mail is not limited to a 30-second sound bite,” added Foti.

Virtually everyone has a mailing address, and direct mail allows businesses to tailor each mail piece with highly personalized messaging, offers and graphics — enabled by today’s technologies. Tap into countless creative formats, touching every sense through product samples or QR codes. Begin to learn more about your customers with surveys or reply cards. And as a highly trackable medium, mail lets you monitor impact and return on investment.

Foti shares simple tips for guaranteed direct mail success:

1. Feature an offer prominently on the front of your mailpiece to boost readership and

response. Choose the format, list and offer for highest ROI, rather than the lowest cost. And then track responses to measure the effectiveness of the mail piece.

2. Include mobile barcodes — such as QR codes — certificates and product visuals to engage the recipient. Use your mail piece to ask your customers what they want or need but be careful to avoid overwhelming the reader with too much copy or graphics.
3. Think of direct mail as an ongoing customer relationship management tool that picks up where other media leave off. Be sure to understand that customers will feel misled and will likely ignore your messages in the future, if you mark the piece “urgent” when it’s not. And even if someone can afford your product, they still might not want it.
4. Use mail to achieve your business goals such as acquisition, relationship building and stakeholder communications. Find out how well your other media are doing by mailing a short survey. All while saving time and money by keeping your mailing list up-to-date and eliminating bad addresses before each campaign.
5. Lastly — don’t forget to consider using Every Door Direct Mail, a direct mail service that allows you to reach every address in a neighborhood without the need for names or addresses.

For more information about how to be successful with direct mail, visit usps.com/mail.

The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

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A self-supporting government enterprise, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that reaches every address in the nation — 151 million residences, businesses and Post Office™ Boxes. The Postal Service™ receives no tax dollars for operating expenses, and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations. With 32,000 retail locations and the most frequently visited website in the federal government, usps.com®, the Postal Service has annual revenue of more than \$65 billion and delivers nearly 40 percent of the world’s mail. If it were a private sector company, the U.S. Postal Service would rank 35th in the 2011 Fortune 500. In 2011, Oxford Strategic Consulting ranked the U.S. Postal Service number one in overall service performance of the posts in the top 20 wealthiest nations in the world. *Black Enterprise* and *Hispanic Business* magazines ranked the Postal Service as a leader in workforce diversity. The Postal Service has been named the Most Trusted Government Agency for six years and the sixth Most Trusted Business in the nation by the Ponemon Institute.

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