

Direct Mail – Don't Assume, Just Test and Track

Where to Start:

Most novice marketers have definite fixed ideas about direct mail that are way off base - most often in the area of what to spend and how much to do. You should determine what you are able to spend for your marketing budget, spend it, and determine the maximum number of leads that you can create. For instance, I've heard this statement quite often: "We aren't that large of a company. How could we send out 2,000 postcards all at once?" because "What if they all call?" – seems like a valid concern, right?

Here is the reality behind it: Unfortunately they won't all call. However, a good deal of them very well may and making sure that your traffic in is not more than you can handle is something to think about. Truthfully, there is no sure way to tell exactly how many people will call if you haven't done this type of marketing before. Think of it this way. What would happen if they did all call? You may not be able to handle all of them, but you would handle as many as you possibly could, right?

In this scenario, you would have maximized your income for that time period providing you could close up all those callers! You can also explore the idea of expanding your operation to handle the number of leads that you can create.

What if you didn't max out your promotion at the very start? You can afford to send out 4,000 pieces every two weeks but you think that you will simply get too many calls to be able to handle them all. You, instead, send out only 2,000 and the response is decent. However, you still have some down time where you are having to try to "manufacture" sales.

You saved \$400 in marketing money but you had enough down time where you could have closed quite a few more sales than you did. The question now is "Which gives me more money in my pocket? Saving \$400 on marketing or closing quite a few more sales and earning an extra couple of G's potentially." More than likely the answer is to spend as much as you possibly can on your marketing, right?

By spending all that you can afford on marketing when you start a program you maximize your income almost immediately.

Okay, Time to Track Results.

Hopefully you have more than one way that you try to recruit new customers. So how do you know which ones are working and which aren't? Set up a system to track the results.

Let's take for example a situation in which you decide to start a Postcard Marketing Campaign for your business. The first week you send out 3000 postcards. When they start hitting homes you get 30 calls. Did all of these leads come from the postcards? Probably not. Because the week before you got 8 calls and hadn't sent out any postcards yet. So how can you tell who actually got a postcard?

The Answer: All you have to do is ask them. "So how did you hear about our company?" The hard part is making sure that any employee in your company who answers the phone and may talk to a new prospect remembers to ask the question every time. The fewer prospects who answer this question, the less accurate your information will be when making future marketing decisions.

Now let's assume that you have been sending out postcards for a while and you have a good number of calls coming in. If you ask the question "So how did you hear about our company?" they may respond, "I got your postcard in the mail." But, by now you have mailed postcards to 4 different lists, 3 times each. How do you tell which list and which mailing this customer was from?

The Answer: Put a marketing code on the postcards that will tell you which specific postcard they received and when it was mailed.

Give each list a name and work the date into your marketing code as well. And the only thing your representatives have to ask is "Would you mind reading me the marketing code above your address?" This code should give you all the info that you need to know and help you keep your Marketing Results Tracking as accurate as possible.

Try not to operate off of assumptions about "how to market" if you haven't educated yourself. And make sure you collect all the data and make your future marketing decisions based on the facts.

About the Author

Joy Gendusa founded **PostcardMania** (www.PostcardMania.com) in 1998, her only assets a computer and a phone. By 2005 the company did over \$12 million in sales, employed over 100 people and made *Inc. Magazine*'s prestigious *Inc 500* List as one of the 500 fastest growing companies in the nation. She attributes her explosive growth to her ability to choose incredible staff and her innate marketing savvy.

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