

Prevent Your Direct Mail from Becoming Trash

How many of your direct mail pieces go unread? Find out from the direct marketing experts how to avoid the waste basket.

The most critical aspect of a **direct mail** campaign is targeting the right prospects - and getting them to open the mail! So what can you do to ensure that your direct mail pieces get opened? We asked marketing experts for some simple techniques.

Targeting of Direct Mail

If you want your direct mail to get opened, it must be relevant. Sending a promotional piece about pet products to an individual who doesn't own a pet is a waste of money. It sounds obvious, but how many times have you received a direct mail piece that wasn't relevant to you?

Focus your efforts on acquiring the right list, making sure your direct marketing is targeted to the right individuals. The only way to make it past the mailbox is for your *direct mail* to be relevant. It also has to be timed appropriately.

Timing of Your Direct Mail

As many as 69% of consumer products customers say that timing is the most important factor in determining whether they open a direct mail piece. Did the offer arrive at the time that a product or service was needed? Use event related triggers to drive the dissemination of your direct marketing pieces. For example:

- A special date or anniversary
- Frequent purchases that qualify the customer as an advocate
- Inactivity periods
- Life changing events
- Purchase in a new product category

When your direct marketing piece arrives at the right point in the decision making process, you'll have a direct impact on your prospect and move one step closer towards making a sale.

Make It Look Interesting

Nearly 2/3rds of customers say that they open mail that "looks interesting". Employ creative ideas to make your direct mail pieces stand out. Here are a few suggestions:

- Oversized envelope or postcard
- Repositionable sticky note affixed to the outside of the envelope

- Handwritten address
- An actual postage stamp versus metered postage

Using any one of these techniques, or a combination, can help your direct mail "look interesting" and help to encourage prospects to open.

Focus on Bulk

Half of consumers say they tend to open mail when they feel some type of object inside or if the mail has an odd shape. Think creatively or include a low priced premium in your next direct marketing piece. This irregularity should help your direct mail stand out and get opened.

If you want to increase results of your next direct mail campaign, then be creative. Be relevant, focus on your list, direct mail timing, look and feel. The result will be more opens and conversions from your direct mail campaigns.