

# Direct Mail



**B**ecause any product of the creative process is highly subjective, the professionals at COCO+CO. suggest you take time to review the *strategic* elements of a successful direct mail campaign:

- 1) Direct mail offers your company a measured response using the mail to directly target “qualified” purchasers. It should be designed as a “call for action” to the reader.
- 2) Keep in mind direct mail’s advantages:
  - Selective: it is a rifle shot vs. the buckshot of mass media.
  - Accountable: you may instantly measure results of advertising spending.
  - Cost effective: a lower cost per sales response.
  - Flexible: you may use different pieces for different market segments or products.
- 3) Disadvantages include a higher cost per message (cost of postage, printing, list, envelope). Success is entirely dependent on having or obtaining a great mailing list.
- 4) Ask your COCO+CO. strategy planner to help you select the demographic classifications most suited to your business. Criteria include age of targets, income levels of targeted consumers and businesses, standard industrial classification (SIC) codes, location, automobile ownership, family size, gender, donors, credit card holders, members of trade organizations, etc.
- 5) The successful direct mail piece will set limits to avoid procrastination such as an expiration date, “limited supply” or “last time at this price.” Make the targets’ response easy (i.e., telephone, reusable mailing label, check boxes, web).
- 6) Consider offering premiums as an introductory tool (even free catalogs and brochures on hand). Free is the most powerful offer, but beware of browsers instead of buyers.
- 7) Use these ideas: list prices when possible, cite testimonials from satisfied customers and *ask for the order*.
- 8) Audience-centered copy that avoids “we,” “us” and “our” sits best with target audiences who care most about the benefits they will receive (i.e., “what’s in it for me.”).
- 9) “Creativity” that doesn’t sell the product or promote the company’s image isn’t really creative at all.
- 10) For best results, try testing a small portion of your mailing list and fine tune message as necessary. A 2 percent response is considered typical.

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