

Direct Mail Tips

Sending a compelling letter and offer to a prospect can make that person more inclined to see you or take your call. Also, with direct mail and email, you have the potential to reach many people at the same time. However, the chances are pretty high that your prospective customers get dozens of letters each week from an array of companies. While some professionals make it a point to look at everything that crosses their desk, most are just too inundated. If you are considering prospecting for clients using direct mail marketing here are some things to consider that can increase the effectiveness of your efforts.

1. Be professional. Don't try to fake the recipient into reading your letter. It will only disturb them and reflect poorly on your firm which is the last thing you want. If you are going to place headlines, graphics, or offers on your envelope, make sure it succinctly communicates your firm's value proposition as it relates to the prospect's potential needs.
2. Get a good list. This is one of the most important things you can do to increase the effectiveness of your direct mail efforts. Refine your list demographics to target the prospects that map as close as possible to those that will achieve maximum benefit from your products and services. Send to lists that have common problems, interests, and buying habits. For business-to-business firms that are selling to middle and large sized companies, your list should include multiple people within those companies to increase the chance that your message is heard.
3. Make an offer. Include offers that provide solutions to challenges your prospect might be facing. Consider making multiple offers that appeal to prospects at different stages in the buying process. Don't hide your offer inside of text. Make it stand out and repeat the offer throughout the letter. Most importantly, make the offer compelling to increase response levels.
4. Over-deliver. If a prospect has accepted your offer, get it to them quickly and provide them with something else that related that they would benefit from. For example, if your offer was for a Demo CD, you could give them a box of microwave popcorn to enjoy while they view it. Gestures like these communicate to customers that your firm can be counted on to deliver more than is asked for.
5. Get to the point. Research shows that, on average, people decide within about eight seconds whether or not to continue reading an unexpected piece of mail. Your message should be clear and succinct. Ask yourself if every sentence directly helps the reader to envision how your products and services will help them do their job more effectively and help their business become more profitable. If it doesn't, then take it out.
6. Create a targeted message. As factually and specifically as possible, your initial messaging should convey key benefits that are directly targeted to the issues and challenges specific to your prospect's business role or the industry he or she is in. Address your message to a person, not a company. In sum, your message needs should look like it was crafted uniquely for your prospect. A good resource on crafting letters to prospects is presented in the book "Selling to VITO" by Anthony Parinello.
7. Proof read your letter. First impressions last so make sure when your letter goes out that it conveys the professional image you intend it to. Have another skilled writer check the letter for clarity and errors.
8. Mail frequently and consistently. If your letter has valuable content, a newsletter for example, you are likely to achieve an increasingly higher inquiry and response rate from because your readers have learned that your mailings are beneficial to them. When your they are in the market for your products and services, your firm will be on the top of their list.