

Bonus Chapter 3

Direct Mail Marketing

Despite having an out of date, 'old school' reputation, the reality of direct mail marketing is anything but. In fact, if used correctly, it can be incredibly cost-effective, efficient and profitable... and I'm going to show YOU exactly how to make it work, right now.

Before we begin, I'd just like to take a moment to briefly explain the concept of direct mail for any of you who aren't that familiar with it as a business practice. Fundamentally, direct mail constitutes any advertising message that has been personally addressed and delivered directly by mail to a prospective customer. As a form of advertising, it's becoming increasingly popular amongst various businesses because it's a proven, targeted and measurable medium to market products and services to customers.

However, in recent years the reputation of direct mail has suffered as a result of it being perceived in similar terms to junk mail. These two descriptions of postal advertising are often used interchangeably – when in fact, the two of them are very different indeed – and it's important that you understand this.

Direct mail advertising is all about giving your list of prospects and paying customers exactly what they want. Here are some examples to explain what I mean:

Imagine you're a big movie fan - If you were to receive some direct mail in the post from Blockbuster (the movie rental store) telling you about a 2-for-1 offer on DVDs, you'd be interested wouldn't you? Of course you would. I'm a big movie fan myself and I'd love to receive an offer like that.

Or, let's say you enjoy going out for meals with your wife/husband etc and a voucher for your favorite restaurant slides through the door. You would have a read of that wouldn't you? And there's a good chance of you visiting that restaurant very soon – voucher in hand...

And that's the key point right there. If you send something compelling and relevant to the right target, they'll respond positively to it, and there's a very strong probability that they will follow up on the offer and make a purchase. That's the power of direct mail.

Be direct with your mail, and it won't turn into junk!

In contrast, if you send a piece of direct mail to an untargeted person who has no interest in what you have to offer, it quickly becomes 'junk mail' and the money you've spent on printing and posting has been completely wasted. That's why your list needs to be specifically targeted, to avoid your mail ending up in the trash!

The reality is that you could be sending out information on the greatest product in the world for your particular niche, but if it's mailed to the wrong

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target, they won't bother reading past the headline – and that's if they even decide to open it in the first place... A flyer on dog grooming for a cat lover, for example, or hair products for a bald man!

Remember, your mail has to be targeted towards those who are interested in your services or product. If it isn't, you'll be throwing away money that could be spent elsewhere.

The important thing to remember though is that any potential for junk mail can be eradicated with a targeted list. That's why your list is a crucial element of your direct mail program. Your list is effectively your audience. If you target your audience well enough, you can precisely match your product or service to the needs, interests and buying patterns of the audience most likely to buy.

According to many direct mail experts, the quality of your list accounts for as much as 40% of its success. So in other words, get it right and direct mail advertising is an absolute goldmine!

The Benefits of Direct Mail

Direct mail has numerous advantages over other forms of advertising. Let's take a look at some of them now...

Highly Flexible: Direct mail can take many forms. You can choose to send one page letters, catalogs, brochures or even postcards to name just a few. This means you can tailor your mail to suit your own business and any budget or time constraints that you might have.

Speed of Production: A common misconception is that direct mail can be very time consuming to produce. Yet the truth is, most forms of direct mail can be put together and mailed out extremely quickly. In fact, the time it takes from the conception of an idea to the customer actually receiving your mail can be as little as a few days.

The Personal Touch: Direct mail allows you to communicate with your customers on a one-to-one level which can be very powerful indeed. Whichever form of mail you choose, it can be personalized with the customer's name (using mail-merging techniques) and it can be targeted to their specific needs and interests. In essence, it allows you to talk directly to each individual customer.

Quick Response: Not only can direct mail be quick to produce, it can also generate a very fast response from customers. All you need to do is make sure your contact details are visible, while you can also include an order card and a return envelope if you like. This way the customer has an instant and convenient method of reply. You should also include your website address and encourage them to visit.

Cost-effective: Again, many people shy away from direct mail advertising as they believe it will cost them money. However, this is a fairly short-sighted approach as the potential rewards can make the initial cost almost irrelevant.

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Yes, you're paying out a small amount of money on envelopes and postage etc, but this money is being spent to ensure that your offer is literally being placed in the hands of a customer who actually wants it! So, as long as your list is targeted well enough, the money you spend on producing and sending out your direct mail will turn into a fantastic investment!

Tangible: Arguably the most important advantage of direct mail advertising is the fact that it allows you to literally place your product in the hands of your customers. Direct mail gives you a physical presence in your prospect's home or office; an incredibly powerful benefit of this medium that should never be underestimated.

Quantifiable: Another beauty of direct mail advertising is that it gives you an easy and foolproof way of working out its success rate. Essentially, there's no guesswork involved. What I mean by this is that if you send out 500 letters to a specifically targeted group of customers on your list, and 50 of them subsequently buy from you, you know exactly how successful your campaign has been. You can then go about improving it if need be.

Creative License: This is all depends on your budget, the time you're willing to spend and your IT skills, but direct mail certainly allows you a degree of creativity! As I stated previously, letters can be tailored towards individual customers and images can be included to make your letter more attractive and readable. This can be a good alternative to the many standardized and bland emails that people send out to their lists.

Competitive Edge: As opposed to your website, a piece of direct mail doesn't have to compete with any other advertising messages for custom. As you can produce it quickly, your direct mail can be kept secret from any competition that you might have - right up until the customer receives it - giving you the element of surprise and a competitive edge.

Creating Loyalty: Finally, direct mail allows you to foster loyalty amongst your prospects and customers; a crucial factor to any business with hopes of longevity. If you regularly send your list information, offers or products that they actually want, over time you can build up a positive relationship which can be strengthened with every direct mail campaign in the future.

To assist you when you come to writing your own piece of direct mail, I've managed to get hold of a letter written by a business partner of mine who's based in the UK. He began his own online marketing business almost 2 years ago now and regularly sends out direct mail to his lists; both sales letters and one-page offers.

Take a look at an example of the letter on the following page:

[Company Header]

[Address box]

Kevin, THIS IS IT! Would You Like To Learn The Very Same Techniques That I've Used To Bank \$322,357.53 In Just The Last 6 Months Alone?

Dear Kevin,

Sorry to write to you out of the blue, but what follows is some **very, very exciting news...** so let me get straight to it...

About 18 months ago I came up with a little system which I've been testing and tweaking ever since... **and I was wondering if you'd be willing to try it out for me... from your own home...**

Just to give you some info, this system has enabled me to:

Average **\$53,726.42 PER MONTH** for the last 6 months...
Produce a profit **EVERY MONTH...** since I started using it
And from the profits, I've been able to **go on holiday at least once a month**, buy a brand new Porsche Carrera 911 C4S... and completely turn my life around...

In other words, I think you can safely say I've proved it works. So, what's this got to do with you?

Well, I've decided to do something that **I've NEVER actually done before...** I've decided to teach this system to just **10 Private Students** and I'm even going to hand you a ready-made system that you can start using **immediately...** but you're going to have to act fast...

If you'd like to be one of these individuals then at some point **TODAY** you will need to take a look at the following website – where I've posted all the details:

[website address]

Take a look now and get back to me immediately... certainly by the morning or the day after (**NO LATER** as I will be taking down the site after this time).

Best wishes,

[Name]

P.S. Kevin, I'm not planning to do this again, what I've come up with is unique. And because I can only accommodate **10 Private Students**, this has to be strictly on a **first-come, first served basis...** I'll give you up until tomorrow to get back to me. If you have any problems accessing the site, please send an e-mail to **[email address]** with the word "mentoring" in the subject line.

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So then, what have you noticed from this example of direct mail?

Well first of all, the letter has been personalized as I stated earlier, which has a beneficial effect on the reader. Once they see their own name they will be far more inclined to read on as they know the letter has been sent **DIRECTLY** to them.

The letter is also cleverly written as it creates a strong sense of urgency - a hugely effective sales method used in all forms of advertising. The words **fast, immediately, today** and **no later** are used within the space of only 3 paragraphs while the fact that this offer is strictly on **a first-come, first-served basis** is highlighted towards the end as well, leaving the reader in no doubt as to what they need to do!

Furthermore, at only one page in length, the letter was no doubt extremely quick and easy to produce. Apparently it received a very positive response and the 10 places were filled up within one day.

So there you go, that's how you do it! I hope this third bonus chapter has been useful to you. I think you'll agree that direct mail marketing is an extremely powerful tool when used correctly. Remember, the mail **YOU** send out need never turn into junk. Find customers who want what you have to offer, build a list of hot buyers, target them... and you'll reap the rewards.

Happy mailing!