



Chris Dunn Consulting

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Direct Mail Works!

Let's compare it with email.

1. In B2B environments we get less mail than we used to but our email inboxes are overflowing
2. How many letters, cards or parcels did you or your business receive today? Did you open and look at it? Sure you did. What about your email? How much of this did you open? This is why you need to consider direct mail
3. For consumers the response rates for emails are typically 0.1 to 0.3% compared to 1% to 3% for physical mail. That's 10X better!
4. People like to receive physical mail – it is personal, tactile and interactive
5. It is not ephemeral like an email. You can bin it, but you can't delete it. And if you intend to keep it and act on it, unlike an email you don't have to print it out.
6. You can let your creativity run riot with mail. It does not need to go into an envelope or be of a standard size. Unlike email you can be sure that it will arrive as you sent it not as a computer operating system or browser renders it.
7. If it is correctly addressed physical mail will be delivered, whereas email can be blocked by spam filters or system administrators

But Isn't Direct Mail Too Expensive?

Yes, and no.

Yes, if you want to blanket mail large volumes of basic brochures or standard newsletters. Stick to email and PDF downloads from your website for this and of course make sure that these documents do deliver to the intended recipients.

No, if you have a targeted, personalised offer to make or something special that demands your client's immediate attention.

A targeted mailing by definition is not mass mailing. You can successfully and cheaply produce mailers for small campaigns of anything from 20 to 100 clients.

Potential Costs:

Self-design costs nothing but your time, your creativity and your mojo. Use sites such as Canva or enlist the help of low cost graphic design through Elance or Fiverr. Use your own ink jet or laser printer for standard letters or go to digital print company for 4 colour printing on flyers or leaflets. Costs per 1000 pieces can be as low as £100.

Second class mail 55p for standard letter size. Unusual formats cost more.

The Basics of a Mailing

Your mailing piece (postcard, letter, letter with enclosure, flyer etc.) needs to do all 4 of the following:

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1. Get Noticed
2. Get Opened
3. Get Read
4. Elicit a Response

It is up to you how you get noticed and opened. This depends on your target customer's preference and your approach could vary from weird, wacky and humorous to serious and sober. But in all events, make sure that the piece is correctly addressed and personalised.

The next 2 elements require some serious thought, but in all events you must:

1. Evoke interest
2. Be relevant
3. Answer straight away WIIFM
4. Create urgency

Marketing experts say that your prospect will decide within 3 seconds whether to read the letter. If your headline and opening sentence don't immediately grab attention your direct mail piece is heading straight for the bin!

Think AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action)

Action means a next step for the prospect to take – hopefully to call you, visit your website or perhaps even to place an order straight away.

What Should You Write and How Should Write It?

First and foremost be the real authentic you.

Aim to use simple, direct and appealing language and keep it short, snappy and to the point.

Follow these ten tips and you won't go far wrong:

1. Use a one-to-one conversational style
2. Personalize with the correct name and address
3. Choose an easy to read typeface
4. Make the offer in the first paragraph.
5. Use action words throughout your letter
6. Make one compelling offer only and repeat your message
7. Provide as many response options as possible e.g. phone, email, web, social media etc.
8. Create urgency (without being pushy!). Include an expiry date and an incentive for a quick response
9. Use an actionable "P.S." This works well for skimmers who read the opening paragraph and skip straight to the end
10. REMEMBER: The message is all about the customer and the benefits that you offer to him/her and not about you and your products and services

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What to Do After Sending Your Mailing

Surprisingly, many businesses do nothing. Don't fall into that trap! Even the best mailing piece with the most seductive offer is not on its own going to grab attention and demand instant action.

So you need to follow up to:

1. Ensure the mailer arrived and has been read
2. Restate the offer
3. Close out the sale/book the appointment

Ideally follow up by phone. If you can't do this, then follow up by email. The advantage of email here is that it is:

1. Quick
2. Easy
3. Low cost
4. Can reinforce the mailer by sharing imagery and the same call to action

Studies show that direct mail followed by email is 3 times as effective at converting compared to direct mail alone.

For more information, check out the Institute of Direct Mail website <https://www.theidm.com/>

Statistics on direct mail and multiple examples of lovely looking mailing pieces are contained in the presentations listed below:

<http://www.slideshare.net/FitSmallBusiness/how-to-use-direct-mail-to-market-your-local-business>

<http://www.slideshare.net/polarpaul/creative-direct-mail>

<http://www.slideshare.net/MovingTargets/targeted-direct-mail-stats-response-rate-effectiveness-of-direct-mail>

<http://www.slideshare.net/chinmayyy/direct-mail-powerpoint-presentation>

<http://www.slideshare.net/rxpadilla/direct-mail-stats-best-practices-2013>