

## A DIRECT HIT

You have just 2.5 seconds to catch a potential customer's attention. That's less time than it would take you to read this sentence out loud. Miss your customer and your direct mail piece finds its way to the circular file even faster.

But direct mail can deliver a powerful message and be an effective sales tool.

In fact, studies show the right mix of personalized information and colorful imagery can increase the effectiveness of a direct mailing by more than 500 percent.



REACH ONLY THE PEOPLE YOU WANT WITH DIRECT MAIL

## PERSONALIZED PRINTING

"Database" is a pretty impersonal word. But you can use the information in a good database to personalize your printed message to establish a one-on-one relationship with your potential customer.

How well direct mail works depends on how well you know your customer. Send a generic, black and white piece to each household in your market, and you'll see a response rate close to .46 percent.

Personalize the piece, by adding just a customer's name and you'll increase the response rate by 44 percent. Combine color with a name, and your response rate jumps 135 percent.

Want more responses? Add more customization. With a highly personalized color mailing, response can increase 500 percent.

If you have several target markets, versioned printing can help you get your message out without having to create new materials. If, for example, your prices vary regionally, or different sales professionals handle different parts of the country, versioned printing allows you to "drop" that information into otherwise generic or static documents.

With the advancements in digital color printing, getting a customized message out to your target market is easier—and more cost effective—than ever.

Direct mail designed to hit, not miss.



On:  
DIRECT MAIL



ONLINE . ON PRESS . ON TIME .

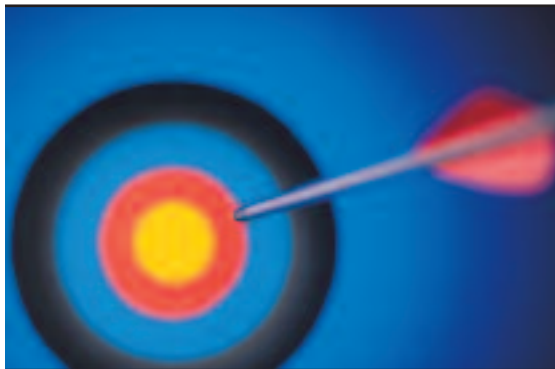
# On: Direct Mail

## DIRECT MAIL SUCCESS

The average person is exposed to more than 8,000 commercial messages daily through TV, e-mail, print and other media. How do you make sure your message gets through?

Start by making sure it's getting to your target market. While a television commercial might reach more people, a well-crafted direct mail campaign will reach the potential customers you select. And you control how the message is presented—with direct mail, there's no chance your message will be sandwiched between those of your competitors.

Preparing an effective direct mailer can sometimes be tricky, but the experts at Allegra Print & Imaging have the expertise to help you.



### THE LIST MATTERS

The difference between a bull's-eye and a near miss depends on the quality of your list.

### An effective campaign

Know your market—and your goals. Are you looking for new customers or repeat business? Is your product new to the market? Who are the other players? With direct mail, using variable headlines, full-color photos that relate directly to your potential customer and personalized text messages, you can create an effective campaign.

### Make sure your list is fresh

At least 65 percent of direct mail's effectiveness is in the list. If you have a customer database, start there. If you want to expand, talk to list brokers. Make sure their lists are updated at least twice a year and ask for specifics. If you need detail, say a list with buying habits as well as general demographics, expect to pay more. But you can anticipate a better response when you use a more expensive list.

### The right offer

There's nothing harder to say "no" to than a good deal. In direct mail campaigns that's even more true. In general, 25-30 percent of a direct mail piece's effectiveness depends on the offer. Make sure yours is a good one and of value to the one receiving it.

### Get ready

Customer service is among the most cost-effective ways to guarantee repeat business. Before you send out your direct mail, make sure your sales team and sales infrastructure are on board. Get your team ready by keeping them involved in the process. Circulate



### USE THE RIGHT TOOL

There is a variety of direct mail formats. Each one performs differently. Allegra Print & Imaging will help you find one that is best suited for your goals and needs.

the piece, ask for input and act on good ideas. Once the piece is mailed and responses start rolling in, you'll be able to convert inquiries into sales. And remember, you only get one opportunity.

### Customizing considerations

With digital color printing and variable data technology, customization is easier than ever before. Instead of talking at your customers, you can talk with them. It allows you to not only address them by name, but by points of interest. You can tailor your mailings to make custom offers, include targeted color photographs and, basically, expand your sales team. Customization can cause response rates to jump dramatically, help build long-term relationships and turn your customer database into a powerful sales tool instead of a simple address book.

## DESIGNING FOR DIGITAL PRINTING

### Choose the right format

Don't be fooled by the notion that one format is as good as another. Each direct mail format has strengths and weaknesses. It's important to consider your objectives and your audience before deciding.

### Design for the reader

Remember the 2.5 seconds you had to catch your customer's attention? Unless customers have good reasons to stay involved, you'll lose them. Using color can keep a reader's attention up to 82 percent longer. It also improves comprehension up to 80 percent and can sell ideas up to 88 percent better. A well-designed and organized piece helps readers into and through a document. Bold, strategically placed colored subheads highlight important points. And images, charts and bullet points can draw a reader's attention to the details you want to highlight. Want to make sure your direct mail piece is read? Keep it as interesting as possible and make the important information easy to find.

### Talk to the professionals at Allegra

Make sure you include our professional designers and consultants at an early stage. We can help you decide on the format and overall look of your piece, as well as clearing away some of the technical hurdles. We'll assist you with mailing requirements and suggest options that could help you reduce postage costs. Pooling the experience of our Allegra professionals will help you create a more successful direct mail piece.