

DIRECT MARKETING STRATEGIES

HOW NOT TO DO DIRECT MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

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You have spent time and money developing and implementing your direct marketing campaign in the expectation that your targets will be excited and take the action you want.

You wait and wait and nothing happens — no responses, no interest and no sales.

This can be quite typical with direct marketing campaigns and could be because you fell into 3 common traps that should be avoided.

Trap 1 - One Size Fits All

This trap often occurs when you use a large list of potential customers without taking the time to research which potential customers will actually have a need or desire for your product/service and the offer you are promoting. You can pick these campaigns pretty easily as they usually have a generic message and quickly start talking about their company's products or services.

To avoid this common mistake make sure you have a good understanding of your key target market, their interests, attitudes and buying behavior. By doing this you can tailor your campaign to meet their needs, arouse their interest, engage them and lead them to actually to take up the offer. By understanding your customers you are also in a position to select the type of direct marketing that will be the most appropriate, for example printed mail or email.

Trap 2 - No Call To Action

Have you ever received a letter with just a brochure enclosed and nothing to indicate what you should do with it? Or you may have seen a direct marketing campaign that has an offer hidden in the copy without clear specifics and the details such as timing or conditions hidden or listed in 6-point type at the bottom.

A direct marketing campaign needs to have a very clear call to action. It does not have to be in the biggest font, all in caps or highlighted. It just needs to be clearly noticeable and simple to understand. Having a clear call to action that is enticing to customers, will build and strengthen the relationship and help you achieve a return on your investment.

Trap 3 - Not Tracking a Campaign's Results

You can clearly see this trap if you ask someone about the results of their campaign and you receive an answer of "quite good I think". Not tracking direct marketing campaign results is often accompanied by not setting objectives nor having a customer database in place.

As with every marketing tactic you need to set objectives up front as to what you want to achieve with your customers as well as be able to calculate the return on your investment. One of the easiest ways to do this is to have a customer database so you can clearly track who has taken up the offers and the results achieved. By tracking your campaign results you are able to see what worked and what did not work so that you can refine your future campaigns and offers to achieve better results.

Direct marketing campaigns can be very effective for small businesses. If you are thinking about conducting a campaign, start by keeping it simple so you do not fall into one of these three traps.

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