

Creating a Direct Mail Campaign

Obtaining a targeted mailing list and developing an enticing message or proposition are the two keys aspects of effective direct mail campaigns. There are 5 steps to creating effective promotional material:

1. **Questions to Ask Yourself Before Starting**

What is the purpose of the mailing? Is it to create awareness? Or generate sales? Who are you communicating with? What is your pack going to contain? What's the look and feel that you'd like your pack to convey?

2. **The Proposition**

People receive mail every day. To stand out from the crowd you must have a unique or enticing proposition. Don't fill your mailing with mixed messages or various conflicting offers. Keep the message simple and focus on your unique proposition. Ask yourself why your customer needs your product or service and what is the one thing that stands out above all else about your product.

3. **Benefits not Features**

This is true in all advertising. Focus the wording on the benefits of your product or service to the potential customer rather than its features.

Feature	Benefit
A new formula for skin cream	Healthy looking skin
A technological breakthrough	Less hassle
A special offer on home insurance	Cheaper home insurance

4. **Encourage Action**

Tell the recipients what you want them to do. A strong call to action is required to ensure that a potential customer makes a purchase rather than just thinking that your product or offer is 'interesting'.

Response rates can be improved by providing a pre-paid reply envelope or a freephone number.

5. **Producing the Pack**

The type of promotional material in your pack depends on what you are trying to say.

Use postcards when:

- Announcing new products or services
- Invitations to events

Use letters when:

- Introducing and describing your business
- Providing latest updates and developments

Use brochures when:

- You have a wide product range
- Advertising special promotions
- Providing information about your company
- Likely to be repeat customers – customers can then frequently refer to the brochure

Often a combination of postcards, letters and brochures are used in a mail shot.

Regarding the design, avoid clutter and create a clear simple layout. Allow only one visual image or headline to dominate a page. Ensure that your company name and logo is highly visible. Recipients are not going to read blocks of text so stick to bullet points where possible. Finally, include a strong call to action.

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