



GUIDE

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Direct Mail Without Strategy is Just Killing Trees

In a world with many marketing channels, direct mail can play a vital role in reaching prospects and creating customers.

But like those other options, you just can't jump into mailing campaigns without knowing many (or all) of the most important details that will ensure that your resources – people, money, time – will not be wasted. Before doing anything else, you must focus on your strategy – what you are trying to do.

Your goals or Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) don't always have to be the same from one campaign to the next. And with our help, you can develop a strategy that makes the best use of all of your resources and tactics, and drives the results you want.

Develop a Plan

Every part of your plan should demonstrate a thorough understanding of how to reach your intended audience (existing customers as well as prospects), the product or service being promoted, and the specific message of the campaign. To start:

1. **Set your objectives:** What are the goals for your campaign? For example: customer acquisition; retention. And what KPIs will you look at to measure success? For example: Response rate; cost per piece; ROI.
2. **Prepare your data:** Along with the offer, your list is the most crucial factor in the success of your strategy. Whether you mail to a broad audience, target segments, or use VDP for customized, 1-to-1 marketing, your data should be de-duped, updated through USPS NCOA in the last 90 days, and certified for correct addressing by USPS CASS.
3. **Consult and work with your vendor on every detail:** Not every company out there can take care of everything you need in the production process, so make sure you share every part of your plan with your vendor, and tap their expertise.

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Put Your Plan into Action

After you have firmed up a campaign plan for your direct mail marketing strategy, it's time to make some big decisions that help execute it. To get the campaign designed, printed and mailed, you need to:

- **Think about which channel or combination of channels works best for your marketing message:** For example: direct mail; email; SMS; social
- **Consider how your channels can sync up as well as support each other:** For example, a direct mail campaign in response to a QR code scan, or an high-performing email campaign supported by a follow-up postcard
- **Create an offer:** It can either support or stand alone from other channels, depends on goals & where you want engagement & response
- **Choose the right format:** Postcards, folded self-mailers, and letters bring unique strengths (and different costs) to the design of your campaign.
- **Balance reach vs. cost factors:** Maximizing your reach or focusing on specific segments involves tradeoffs in your budget.
- **Schedule your production:** Back into the campaign's drop date to allow room for data, art, and production to coordinate. If the mail piece is part of an omnichannel campaign, work with your vendor to match USPS in-home delivery dates.



Optimize Your Plan to Improve Results/ROI and Relevancy

After your campaign has rolled out, you should start to see results. Even if it surpasses your best KPIs, consider all of the factors that went into your strategy. Use them as models and tweak them until you get them operating at optimum profitability. For example:

- **Invest in automation:** Instead of changes that rely on manual processes, use an automated CRM system to design, print, and mail your campaign. In addition, it operates across channels by sending direct mail based on event- or behavior-based triggers. At mailing.com, our combination of human checks, camera-based inspections, and software reviews helps us exceed industry standards for data, printing, and mailing quality control processes. This ensures accuracy and speed throughout the entire workflow.
- **Improve data:** Data is an ongoing challenge, so consider faster and more extensive response analysis, additional A/B testing, and pre-sorting your mail.
- **Segment or personalize further:** Narrowing your focus on specific segments, e.g., higher-income homeowners, or using VDP with a more enticing customized offer, may improve response.
- **Lower campaign costs:** Your response metrics may not be affected by changing format, mail class, audience segment, or other factors. But always A/B test it first.



How We Helped a Start-Up Home Loan Partner Quickly Drive 1000s of Qualified Leads

The Partner

Start-up loan company led by industry veterans.

The Goal

Use direct mail to drive qualified email and phone leads, resulting in loan originations.

The Solution

Expertise means a lot when it comes to developing a direct mail marketing strategy for all types of companies. Thanks to a lot of teamwork, starting with mailing strategies:

- The partner provided target demographic data and list criteria, as well as artwork, offers, and content that supported their brand.
- We developed targeted lists for each loan type and appropriate messaging, produced and tested 3 format types (and multiple versions within each type), and tracked mail delivery to develop attribution analysis and insights.

Results

Because of our collaborative efforts, together we achieved:

- **Extension of 120-day pilot program** due to positive results from 80,000 pieces mailed
- **1000s of qualified leads** delivered through partner's phone and website
- Winning test campaigns were sent 10X the test volume and drove **16X the results vs. the control**
- **14% conversion to loan originations** from online and offline responses
- **Online inquiries up 750%**



mailing.com is a real asset for us. I was blown away by the fantastic results from the initial campaigns. Our sales pipeline filled fast and stayed full, we got qualified leads, and are very happy with the amount of loans we originated. The team at mailing.com is so easy to work with. They're responsive, smart, and get things done!

Marshall P.
Mortgage Company Partner



Conclusion

To develop successful direct mail, you must follow the right steps and make the needed adjustments to your strategy. This saves time and money and ensures a high-quality direct mail campaign. Delivering and significantly improving results for a client's program is just part of a relationship that provides end-to-end support and solutions.



We Can Help You Too!

At mailing.com, we have the expertise to listen to your needs and to help you develop and implement the right strategy to quickly and efficiently meet your marketing goals.

Our team is only an email away and can't wait to hear from you!

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