

WHITEPAPER

Let's **(Actually)** Hit Your Direct Mail Goals

mailing.com
mail with confidence



Before You Begin

To use direct mail effectively, you must come up with a goal, and then a strategy or plan to achieve it. But you just can't jump into marketing campaigns without knowing many (or all) of the most important details that will ensure that your resources (people, money, time) aren't going to be wasted.

You need a partner that can help you develop, support, and execute a plan with the right resources at the right time that meets your goal (or goals).



1. Set Your Goal(s)

Defining success is not a cut-and-dry process. Sometimes there may be more than one right answer, depending on which goal is more important to you.

- **Is your campaign short-term** (e.g., acquisition; retention; renewal; cross-sell)? Or is it long-term (e.g., lead generation; branding)?
- **Which will help you achieve your success:** frequency (mailing more often) or reach (mailing less often but to a wider audience)?
- **Do you know your entire budget** (e.g., the costs of materials, design, production, postage, etc.)?
- **Are there deadlines that affect the goals you set** and the budget you need to accomplish them?

A cohesive strategy, budget, and schedule should each have enough flexibility built-in to allow changes while still being able to meet your goals.

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2. Focus on Audience

Unless you are mass marketing a product or service, it's smarter and more affordable to focus on specific groups of people who have something in common, like geography, demographics, behavior, and lifestyle. Or you can develop personas that combine data with informed speculation about preferences, concerns, and motivations to create ideal customers or donors to target based on your goals.

To get started on defining your audience:

- What first-party data do you have? Does it need to be enriched from other sources?
- Is your data current and duplicate-free? Postal information should be updated through USPS NCOA in the last 90 days, and certified for correct addressing by USPS CASS.
- Can or should you personalize your data for the campaign? With variable data printing (VDP) as part of your strategy, you improve your direct mail response by tailoring your offers, copy, and more.



3. Develop a Message

While the actual product or service you are selling is important, how you sell it is critical to the success of your campaign.

Craft your message by answering these questions:

- **What is the offer?** Be specific as possible in describing the benefits – not features – of the product or service.
- **How are you selling it?** Headlines, subheads, and copy should follow a basic AIDA (Attention – Interest – Desire – Action) model to engage a target audience.
- **Is your approach supported by content?** In addition to your sales copy, use content such as stories or facts and figures to bolster your case.
- **How strong and easy is your CTA?** Make sure that the action you want the prospect to take is spelled out clearly – and offer several reply options, such as QR code, phone, mail, etc.

4. Design the Creative

For your mail campaign to do its job, it should be visually interesting as well as easily read and understood.

Here are some basics to keep in mind when deciding on the right design:

- What format choices work best for your message? Simple messages that can be conveyed quickly work well on a postcard. Offers that require more explanation or supporting elements are better-suited for folded self-mailers or envelope (letter) mailers.
- Does your message follow a visual flow of images, copy, and white space that emphasizes the right points and guides the customer?
- What printing production options will help? Your choice of paper, inks, and embellishments can highlight visual or tactile details of your mailer to grab attention or enhance your message.
- What are the costs of each option? Know the costs of all of your format and printing options to balance the additional expenses with any lift they provide.

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ETHOS

Apply for life insurance from your couch

Thinking about life insurance? There's no better time to apply. You can knock out our online application in minutes without leaving your house.



Simple online application



No medical exams for most people



30-day money back guarantee

Support when you want it

With Ethos, you don't need to talk to any agents. But if you have questions, our team of licensed agents is ready to help anytime.

Apply in minutes at
ethoslife.com



★★★★★

The Ethos process couldn't be easier...

"The Ethos process couldn't be easier and my rates were very competitive. I would highly recommend Ethos Life."

Leslie
via Trustpilot

5. Run a Test

How do you know a direct mail campaign is going to be successful before you send it? You don't - unless you use a small, inexpensive test run to learn what works and what doesn't while staying within your budget. Even if you have a control package already, a test can reveal savings.

To run a test:

- Settle on a variable or variables between two versions, for example, format, offer, copy, or CTA. Be sure to know the costs for producing and mailing each version so you have a baseline to judge their effectiveness at meeting your goal or goals.
- Pick a testing strategy, such as A/B or Split Testing (one variable), Multivariate Testing (several variables), or Holdout Testing ("holds out" a group not sent the test version)

6. Track & Analyze Your Results

To know if and how your campaign is working, you need to attribute where the response came from, as well as look at the actual results that matter.

- Track response by phone, QR code, URL, source code, in-person scan, or mail
- Which version "won"? Review your Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for each version, such as response rate, cost per response, or ROI.
- What results can be improved on in later mailings? Consider what factors went into the success (or failure) of each version, and if additional testing is needed before rollout.





Get The Most Value Out Of Your Property
Your estimated offer is enclosed.

POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT # 2421



What homeowners are saying about BuildCasa:

“

Doing all of the work of splitting a lot, connecting it to electricity and water, and selling to someone is now something I don't have to worry about.

”

Antonio
Sacramento homeowner

“

I wanted to unlock the value of my property but was having a really rough time with it. BuildCasa is really fantastic.

”

Carol
Sacramento homeowner


“

I've been trying to split my lot for 2 years but haven't been able to find the professionals to do it. This saves me a ton of time and energy.

”

Amy
Redwood City homeowner

Visit www.buildcasa.com or call (916) 619-1442 to find out more.



Get up to **\$1,000,000**
cash for selling your extra lot space

Visit www.buildcasa.com for your Instant Offer estimate or call us at (916) 619-1442.



Get cash for your extra lot space

<First Last Name>
<12345 Any Street>
<Sacramento, CA 94111>

Dear <fname>,

We've identified your property at <Address> as one of the top 11% of Sacramento area single family homes eligible for our exclusive lot split program!

BuildCasa has seen significant traction with 18 Sacramento area homeowners choosing to partner with BuildCasa in the last 60 days to build additional housing on their extra lot space.

Today we are launching a brand new **Instant Offer** estimate tool. Simply enter your address and we will tell you what your extra lot space might be worth in 30 seconds. Visit us at www.buildcasa.com for your estimate.

Homeowners love working with BuildCasa because:

- You get up to **<\$xxx,xxx>** in exchange for your extra lot space
- You receive a \$5,000 cash advance when you sign the contract
- You don't have to lift a finger! BuildCasa handles everything from permitting to financing as we build housing on your extra lot space
- You get paid cash for your extra lot space without adding any debt, no new monthly payments, and with no work


To learn more and get started, visit our website at www.buildcasa.com or give us a call at (916) 619-1442.

Sincerely,

Paul Steidl
Co-Founder & AIA Registered Architect



You may be qualified for up to **<\$xxx,xxx> cash!**



How it Works:

- Sign up for a free consultation and get an estimate of what we'll pay for your extra lot space
- We buy a piece of your lot and give you a \$5,000 cash advance
- You receive up to **<\$xxx,xxx>** cash within 6 months
- We build new housing on the lot



Scan the code with your phone or call (916) 619-1442 to see how much your extra lot space qualifies for.

Visit www.buildcasa.com to find out more.

7. Repeat/Roll Out the Winner

Once you’ve decided on the best package for your campaign, it’s time to roll it out to your full target list. If you have deadlines to meet, you’ll need to plan carefully to print and mail your campaign with your in-home deadlines and postage costs in mind.

And as your results come in, your original dataset will be enhanced with new, updated, and expanded profiles and analytics on your prospects, customers, or donors. With reliable income from them, you can fund prospecting and additional testing - allowing your campaigns to evolve with your business or organization.

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How We Helped a Large Non-Profit Drive to Increase Fundraising Goal by 150%

The Partner

Large national startup non-profit organization.

The Goal

To raise \$150,000 and add 6,500 new members - all in under a month.

The Solution

- The partner provided an ideal donor profile (including demographics), content, and messaging, and also tracked responses
- We enhanced the partner's donor profile with targeted, quality list matching; we also recommended 2 creative options (with different costs) for testing, and then printed and mailed the winner using a 5-component mailer to the full list

Results

By developing a seamless production flow and coordinating our sales and scheduling teams daily with our partner, together our collaboration accomplished:

- Donation dollar amounts **exceeded plan by 150%**
- Number of new donors **exceeded plan by 225%**
- Response rate of **2.4%**
- Campaign tested and then rolled out fully in **less than 4 weeks**



The team at mailing.com made it easy to work together. They really understand non-profit direct mail and offered suggestions to make the campaign better and less costly!

Our project was seamless.

Making our deadline was a priority to everyone I came into contact with there.

Having all of the services we needed under one roof made it much easier for us."

Debbie

Director of Giving



Conclusion

For an effective direct mail campaign, a lot of moving parts and resources must work together as seamlessly as possible. It can be a tall order, but with fewer or no silos - or a partner with many services under one roof - a campaign can come together much more quickly.

At mailing.com, we put our decades of expertise to use to help you develop effective strategies that can be tested then quickly be scaled up into a full rollout that meets your deadlines. Contact us to show you how we can work together to test and mail our way to successful marketing campaigns.



We Can Help You Too!

At mailing.com we have the expertise to help you structure your data to save money and time, avoid expensive headaches, and enable you to scale quickly and adjust your campaigns on the fly. As a Full-Service Mail Provider, we use USPS Seamless Acceptance to automate and streamline mail entry verification, resulting in significant postage discounts. And our partnership with our in-house USPS team ensures the fastest processing and the lowest possible rates for your direct mail campaigns.

Reach out or call us - we'd love to hear from you!

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