



Making the Magic of Direct Mail Work for You

Different industries take advantage of direct mail campaigns in many ways. We will examine how retailers, service companies, manufacturers, professionals and not-for-profits use direct mail to increase revenues and communicate with their stakeholders.

Retailers

Retailers use direct mail in several ways to drive traffic into their stores and increase sales. They use it to give advance notice of sales to preferred customers. They also may use it to give notice to households in their neighborhood, letting everyone in the area know about an upcoming sale. Retailers also use direct mail to announce new product lines, monthly specials, seasonal hours or a location change. Direct mail additionally helps retailers raise awareness of their advertising and promotional efforts, such as web-based coupons.

Service Companies

Service companies, such as hair salons, auto centers and pet grooming services, oftentimes use direct mail newsletters to inform their customers of new developments, helpful hints and other information. These newsletters may contain special promotions and coupons. Direct mail can be instrumental in forming a strong referral network for service companies. Turn current customers into a powerful sales force by creating a “tell-a-friend” promotion or discount. If you are in the service sector, consider trading your mailing list with a company that has a similar customer base. For example, if you own a pet grooming business, you may want to trade customer mailing lists with a veterinarian.

Manufacturers

Manufacturers generally market not only to the end-user, but also to the distributors and dealers who move their products, the middlemen. These many tiers of customers make direct mail critical for manufacturers, as they change and target messages to different tiers. Manufacturers use direct mail to announce new products, price updates, or alert their customers to the availability of another product. For example, assume your company manufactures lawn equipment. Your customers may know your company for its outstanding lawnmowers, but they might not know you also manufacturer snow blowers. Expanding sales through existing customers is a solid marketing strategy and direct mail is the perfect vehicle for that effort. Manufacturers use direct mail to alert buyers of upgrades and accessories or remind them of warranty information. Direct mail helps you become a trusted advisor to your customer if you continue to remind customers of changes and tasks they may need to complete.

Professionals

The professional sector, such as lawyers and accountants, can use direct mail to inform their customers about staff changes, new services or special events related to services. This group also can benefit from sending newsletters that update customers and provide helpful tips. Since many professionals are called on only “as needed”, direct mail provides an opportunity to stay in touch and maintain a top-of-mind position with their clients.

