

# 7 Simple Steps to Effective Direct Mail Advertising

Marketing Your CE Business:

Easy marketing. Outstanding results.

modern™  
postcard

When you're already juggling the demands of running a business, trying to advertise it may seem like an overwhelming task. Let's talk about a few steps you can take to simplify the process, ensure the best possible results and make the effort well worth your valuable time.

## 1. PLAN FOR SUCCESS

Developing a marketing plan is a great way to set yourself up for success. Of course, a formal document mapping it all out point by point isn't necessary. Simply ask yourself the following key questions and jot down your answers so you can refer back to them along the way:

- What do I want to accomplish? Increase sales? Get more customers? Drive website traffic?
- What am I trying to sell? Think about what makes your store or products unique. Why choose you?
- Who will listen and respond to my message? Who's your typical customer? Income? Gender?
- When should I mail, and how often? When do you need a bump in sales? Industry trends?
- How will I track my responses? Redeemed coupons? Website sign-ups? Facebook fans?

## 2. ZERO-IN ON A TARGET

It's a fact: 40% of your direct mail campaign's success depends on your mailing list. You can mail to your current list – or expand it based the demographics and behavior of current customers. Don't have a list? No problem. You probably have a basic idea of who your ideal customer is – men or women, income level and more. A Modern list expert can help you find a new mailing list or expand your current one.



Those who responded to a 2008 DMNews/Pitney Bowes Direct Mail Survey revealed:

**85%** review their USPS mail daily.

**2/3** examine their mail more closely for coupons and offers than they did a year ago.

**94%** say they took action on promotional offers and coupons received via direct mail.

**40%** have tried a new business for the first time because of information received by direct mail.

**70%** renewed a relationship with a business because they received direct mail or a promo item.

### 3. PICK YOUR PROMO

Typically, you get better results mailing a multi-card campaign, even a monthly mailer with a tempting coupon offer. There's a reason why Bed, Bath & Beyond has been using a monthly promo mailer for so long – it works! For time sensitive offers (think 24-hour sales), in-store handouts, bag stuffers and other non-mail uses, a single card may work just fine.

How about pairing your mailer with an email? A multi-touch marketing approach is a great way to boost your response rates. Send an email before your mailer lands to drive interest and ensure recipients act on the piece once it arrives. You can also send an email after you mail to remind people about your offer, sale dates, event details and more. Creating urgency generates results!

Keep copy brief to communicate your message quickly. Bullet points are ideal.

A colorful image or design will help your postcard stand out in mailboxes.

Your logo should be prominently placed on the front and back of your card to identify you at a glance.



### 4. CAUSE A STIR

Once you know who you're talking to and what you're advertising, it's time to create a piece that not only grabs attention, but includes an offer that will get more customers (and sales) in your door.

#### Eye-Catching Mailers & Handouts

Your piece has just moments to make a great first impression. Successful design includes imagery that is relevant, colorful and will make someone want to give your card full attention. Great copy needs to communicate almost as quickly as your imagery. Keep headlines short, engaging and to the point. As for body copy...the shorter it is, the more likely it will be read. Bullet points are very effective.

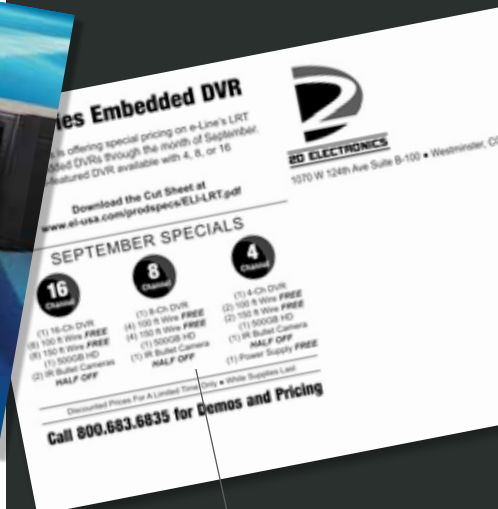
#### Including a "Can't Say No" Offer

Think of an offer or promotion that your customers would find so valuable that they're instantly motivated to respond. A quick litmus test? If you wouldn't get up off the couch for the offer, neither would your audience. It's smart to test a few offers until you strike gold. And don't forget that your piece must have a clear call to action. Your recipient may not always know what to do next.

Be sure to refer back to your marketing plan before moving ahead – you jotted down all your answers, right? Your piece should sell what you intended to sell, speak to your targeted customers and have a way to track the responses you receive.

## Why Direct Mail with Postcards?

- Consumers spend an average of 30 minutes reading their mail on any occasion.
- Postcards are more likely to be read than any other mail shape.



Use a high-value offer or coupon to instantly attract attention.

## 5. GETTING THE MAIL OUT

There are a number of mailing options available for delivering your postcards. The least expensive is Bulk Mail, which typically takes 10-14 days. First Class postage costs more, but your mail piece will arrive in 2-5 days — and if you have 500 pieces or more, you can presort for quicker, cheaper service. This is where it really pays to plan ahead. Give yourself a big enough time cushion to go with Bulk, and you'll keep more cash in your own pocket.

## 6. CREATE MOMENTUM

Once your piece has been mailed or handed out, it's time to see how well your offer pulls, maybe make a few adjustments, and keep your business bustling with customers by creating an ongoing program.

### Track Your Campaign's Success

By knowing how well your mailer or handout works, you'll learn how to improve your next promotion for even better results. Here are just a few examples of how you can keep track:

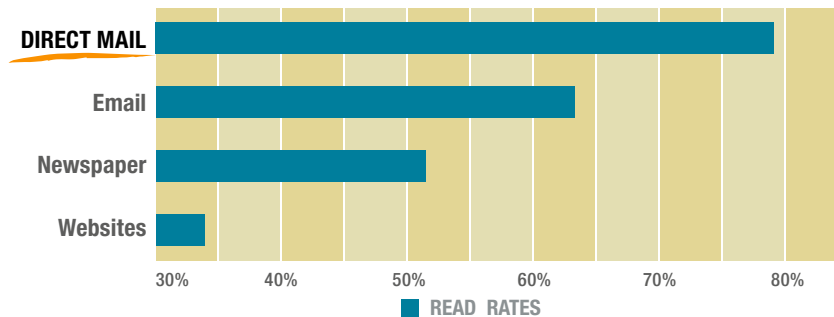
- Include a coupon and count how many are redeemed at your store
- Add a business reply mailer to get your count and even gather info about customers
- Create and drive traffic to a unique web page, for example [yoursite.com/mailoffer](http://yoursite.com/mailoffer)
- Keep a basic, running total of how many new "likes" you get on Facebook

The key to tracking success is to compare your advertising costs versus the revenue generated. Direct mailers and promotions that generate positive revenue are always worth repeating.

## 7. REPEAT OFTEN

Follow-up mailers and promotions will keep you top of mind. Consider your typical sales cycle, market trends, your available advertising budget and your customers' purchase histories to determine the best time to roll out another promo. Be sure to experiment with your coupons and offers, as well as creative execution. Track the differences until you find your sweet spot.

### Preferred Method for Receiving Promotional Materials:



### ONE LAST THING

Give Modern Postcard a call. Our experienced and friendly reps have helped countless CE businesses get the best bang for their buck. We will set you up with mailers, brochures, flyers, coupons, gift certificates, and even a custom piece. We'll work with your budget and timeline to achieve your goals.

## Why Does Direct Mail Help Grow Your Business?

### It's Personal

Speak directly to each individual recipient.

### It's Versatile

From sales to newsletters, tons of options.

### It's High-Impact

Colorful cards stand out in mailboxes.

### It's Cost-Effective

Earn greater returns for your investment.

Source: 2008 DMNews/Pitney Bowes Direct Mail Survey