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7 Ideas for Successful Business Direct Mail

You know that little file you keep tucked away with direct mail ideas, campaign checklists, and articles of inspiration? Here are seven more good ideas to include that can help improve your campaign effectiveness and increase response.

1. Be sure to include a cover letter whenever you are sending printed literature to prospects or customers. Use the cover letter to acknowledge the request, give a few bullets of feature/benefit copy and specifically ask the reader to take the next action.
2. Always include "where to buy" information in your direct mail packages (e-mail too) if you sell through field sales people, independent representatives, resellers or distributors. This can range from lists or maps, to merging the appropriate information right into the cover letter. Be sure to include the sales contact's name, title, company, address, phone, fax, and e-mail and website addresses.
3. If you are mailing multi-product brochures or catalogs to inquirers who asked about a specific product, mention the appropriate page numbers in the cover letter, or use a Post-It Note or paper clip to mark the pages.
4. If your company's business-to-business sales are influenced by more than one contact per prospect company, consider including a question on all reply forms asking for the names of others in their company who would like to receive information on your products or services. Then add these people to your mailing list or database for future mailings.
5. If you mail a free newsletter or catalog to prospects or customers, include a built-in reply card or coupon that can be used by pass-along readers to request their own subscription.
6. Re-qualify your newsletter or catalog subscription list by periodically including a reply card or form requesting that readers confirm their interest in continuing to receive the newsletter. Be sure to ask readers to update their title, address, phone, fax and e-mail address. Also include a few qualifying questions about their product interest, application, buying role, timeframe, etc.
7. Consider asking the people on your mailing list which way they would prefer to receive future information and updates: Mail, fax or e-mail? If you are prepared to deliver information by e-mail or fax, you can shorten the delivery time, and sometimes save a bundle on printing and postage.