



List Prospecting Trends

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Prospecting List trends may not be high on your agenda, but it is on ours. Here are some thoughts on tactics being used by others to get the most out of their prospecting lists.

Everyone is trying to save money when it comes to list prospecting. As with any purchase, you want to do your research. Consider the base list price, the type of list and typical response rate, and watch out for hidden costs.

While price often is a defining factor for many buyers, quality should play into your decision. And here is where your research pays off. Just like with car shopping, you can buy the least expensive list, but you will probably get the least desired results. Don't buy on price alone. You need to consider the type of list, the features included in the price and the response you're likely to receive to your campaign.

The type of list matters just as much as where the list comes from. I know that compiled lists are usually the last selected. They are cheaper, but the response is also, usually lower. While compiled lists may have not been high responders, the segmentation technology is improving, and using custom models may make these lists more cost efficient.

Another trend to consider: list exchanges. While you may not incur the cost of renting names in an exchange, keep in mind that these arrangements often are made with mailers that have a close affinity with your offer or customer demographics, so you may be trading for names that might eventually have come your way. Also, if you are exchanging names with a company that might otherwise have rented your names, you may well have foregone list rental income.

When it comes to price and you have some volume to play with—haggle. There is more negotiating than before, and nearly everything is up for grabs. Some areas to negotiate:

- **Net name arrangements:** if you don't have to then don't pay for more than you actually mail. You'll have to prove you already had those names in your database, but it's worth the effort. In that same arena, many list owners are offering an off-the-top discount for duplicates. Buyers take a guess at how many names they already have and negotiate a lower price. Also, if your list or the list purchasing are part of a co-op database, don't add co-op names into the merge/purge, and ask to have your names suppressed as well. All this is possible as long as you have volume on your side. As a data broker, AML works with you and the data owner to achieve the best outcome.



- **Selections:** Many owners are capping prices. A preset number of selections are decided on for a set price. For example, a six month name with a \$50 plus spending level, female, and apparel purchases that used to add 30 percent to 40 percent to your costs now comes at an all inclusive price. Technology has done this for mailers, the lower processing costs can be passed onto the mailer.
- **Custom Modelling:** When using co-op databases, transactional modelling is included. But consider using custom models, such as postcode models for a quick boost, to potential response or for better offer targeting. Analyse your best performing postcodes and send only to those for a little lift in response rates.

When it comes to trends, none is more attractive than the Internet. But high responding e-mail and web lists have been hard to get. To improve online list prospecting, get creative. As an example a postcard mailing that drives consumers to a catalogue website to register for a free gift can drastically increase web traffic, then lead those to sales opportunities. Sending a postcard is a great way to cut printing costs and increase the number of e-mail and web shoppers.

Two emerging trends in e-mail prospecting are co-registration and e-mail exchange. Co-registration is when a company agrees to let you offer a sign up for your lists on its website. This prospecting method currently is working for "very highly branded", mass oriented companies - those with a very high recognition brand because the click through is higher if you have broad appeal.

Keeping abreast of these trends can prove difficult, but as you would expect it is our business to do so. My advice is to stay in touch by using a list broker that takes the time to understand your business and responds to your customer acquisition strategy with passion and creativity...