

# USE EMAIL AND MAIL TO CREATE A POWERFUL 'ONE- TWO' PUNCH!

Courtesy of Marketing Sherpa

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Email and postal mail can work together to make a much more powerful message for your campaign...when done correctly. But which should you send first? The email or the direct mail piece? It's almost the chicken-and-egg conundrum. The answer is it depends.

- For most consumer brands, the direct mail piece should go out first to introduce the campaign. People have grown increasingly sensitive about email, and the DM piece can be just the ice-breaker you need.
- For some brands, it's best to email first, then send the postal piece....say for example, with a lead generation campaign for an investment services firm.

If you are sending a package to review, the email first approach helps get them interested and to look for it in the mail.

If you send a follow up email after the postal mail piece, wait at least three days after the postal piece is scheduled to arrive in-home. It's better to be late with the email than too early...your copy won't produce the zing you intended (much less make sense) if the recipient hasn't had a chance to look at the mail piece, not to mention the fact that email has a short lifespan as it is.

This is especially true for recipients in the B-to-B crowd, who are often travelling and are too busy to check their in-boxes every day.

### **Measuring Impact**

The way to measure the effectiveness of email and DM separately in combo campaigns depends on which elements drop first. In the end it stands to reason that the follow up piece has a greater chance of impacting the sales process.

### **Segmentation & Transactional Messages**

Tip #1 – Smaller, highly targeted segments react most positively to DM/Email combos. Financial/Investment, banking and insurance segments as well as high-end catalogue customers produce top results. In addition, non-for-profits have seen success driving people to website with combo campaigns, which is especially worth considering with the increasing number of online donations.

Tip#2 – If you're getting email names via a co-op model, it is better to send an email welcome plus a simple DM postcard.

Tip#3 – Do small run tests with DM following your transactional email to see if you can increase those response rates even more. As great as transactional results we've been seeing, it has to be worth testing a transactional-DM-Email campaign triplet.

Tip#4 – When sending an email before the postal piece, send one of two follow up emails before mailing the direct mail piece: one for those who opened the first email and one with a different message for those who didn't.

### **Creative**

Tip#1 – It's especially smart to keep your colours, logos, photos and other images as similar as possible across all channels. Lifestyle imagery needs to be especially consistent. Include an image of the cover of the mail piece in the email to remind the recipient of what they've already seen but might still be hiding in a stack of mail.

Tip#2 – Don't overlap copy too much between email and postal mail. It is recommended that two or three sentences be the same in both pieces. If the email is going first, it should have very little copy and serve as the teaser for the DM piece. If the email is going second, the DM piece carries the bulk of the message and the mail should solidify those points and have a very strong call-to-action as well as a deadline to get people to act.

Tip#3 – of course, kick-butt design, copy, lists and timing are huge in terms of what result you'll get and are collectively more important than the size of the piece itself.

### **Key Lessons Learned**

Lesson#1 – For all the grumbling about bad email addresses, it's important to remember that not all physical addresses in your file are good. This is why it's advisable to space email that goes out after the direct mail piece with enough time to re-suppress the non-deliverable DM addresses

It's negative for your brand to send emails with copy and imagery intended for people who have received the DM, but who in fact have not. In fact, you may want to create a backup email campaign solely for those DM non-deliverables.

Lesson#2 – Be clear on what you use each element (DM & Email) for and establish reasonable goals. If it's to generate qualified leads, don't expect it to turn a profit in the first three to six months. It takes time to get that ball rolling