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**Direct Response Advertising**

**By Timothy G. Little**

Direct Response Advertising by Timothy G. Little

"A Powerful Direct Response Marketing Guide that Can Literally Double or Triple the Number of New Clients Your Bring Into Your Business Online or Offline"

Contact Information

Timothy Little--For details on how to launch a direct response Web site or mail marketing campaign contact me by E-mail [timlit7@nethawk.com](mailto:timlit7@nethawk.com). For free consultation e-mail the quote form at [e-SiteSolutions.com](http://e-SiteSolutions.com) or call me by phone at (989) 463-5951

Advertising

Direct Response marketing is accountable. It is advertising you can justify and track. Not only is direct response marketing measurable but it can easily be adapted to fit your advertising budget.

The heart of direct response advertising is in the planning, organizing and pricing of the marketing campaign. Small business entrepreneurs must match mailing list selection to prospect profiles and design a campaign that targets the customer. Most importantly, providing follow up service with back-end analysis, fulfillment of orders and inquiries this allows a small business to test and measure campaigns quickly and inexpensively.

A small business financial planner can then focus on the most profitable segments of a campaign. Direct response marketing is efficient its small target groups made up of the most interested prospects for a product or service.

Direct mail and direct marketing are sometimes used interchangeably. Direct marketing can be used effectively in many different media's and is not limited to direct mail advertising. Direct marketing goes far beyond sending self contained mailers. This reality is truer online since, accumulating opt-in permission based names for e-mail promotions can be done at a fraction of the cost of bulk mail marketing campaigns. I can help you during the critical planning stages e-mail me at [timlit7@nethawk.com](mailto:timlit7@nethawk.com) for more information.

## Direct Response Advertising

Direct response advertising can be used in variations to support marketing and promotional activities for driving traffic to your Web site or inquiries for a product or service

A study recently published in the Marketing section of the Wall Street Journal (December 2002.) Indicates that media spending will shift away from traditional media advertising and switch towards Internet marketing and direct mail since they appear to be more promising. "E-mail marketing is more measurable and is seen as a good value for the money as people get better customer targeting". The growth of direct response marketing online and off has grown tremendously over the last few years. The benefits and profit potential online has been recognized worldwide and will be the number one advertising vehicle both online and off for the following reasons.

\*Patrick Barwise – London Business School management and marketing.

Benefits drive direct marketing. If you don't already think of your marketing in terms of benefits, now is a good time to start. Direct marketing is like no other form of advertising since you have control over your message and you control everything color, design, the list, and your budget and payment options.

The flexibility of direct response marketing helps you to broaden your thinking. Precise targeting allows you to search for specific products. The more precise your message is the less money and time you spend on people who are not interested or qualified to use your product. Direct response marketing is an equalizer for a small business. Finally you are able to compete with larger competitors with targeted messages and react quickly to changes in the market because of your small size.

Direct Marketing is immediate and personal. What is more immediate and personal than a letter? New opt-in email technologies allow you to reach thousands of prospects in minutes with a personalized message including name and personal interests.

Direct marketing is a more testable form of advertising. Every mailing campaign you run is an opportunity for you to test something and gain information that can help you improve your marketing. You always have the opportunity to test different lists, offers and packages. You need to have a good tracking program in place to do this effectively.

Part 2: The money is in the list

You can use direct response marketing to build a database. Whenever a prospect buys from you simply add their name and purchase information to your database. The quickest way to build a database is to offer a free electronic brochure embedded on your Web site for example (9 ways to retire 10 years early or free quotes and 30 days of free life insurance.)

The reason for your database is to re-sell to your prospects again and again and test cross selling techniques for free. This brochure can be plugged in to your web site for download or you can personally make an appointment with your prospect and hand them a brochure in person.

There is no doubt that these techniques will help you to achieve success in your marketing efforts. It is important that you plot the destination of your marketing campaigns with a marketing or business plan.

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Direct marketing results are almost immediate and these results will not help you unless you plan your business objectives. Many companies falter and lose sight of overall goals without a marketing plan to guide them.

Improved Computer capabilities and more recently the internet has made both direct marketing and direct mail more efficient and more effective with database marketing. The way to make direct mail more efficient especially with the rising costs of postal rates and print media is to target prospects with database collections.

The database is a collection of information on customers and perspective customers including their names, addresses, titles and companies. Lists selections can be further segmented by geography or zip-codes, gender, income and commission levels.

Prospects are grouped together with common characteristics to increase marketing effectiveness. The database is used to fit customers with products or services and to aim a precisely written message to a special group of people.

Successful sales professionals know that the more they know about their customers and prospects the better they will be able to sell to them. The same is true in direct marketing and the list is the key resource.

Close list selection and analysis is the first step to ensuring a successful direct response program both online and off. The money is in the list and in this sense the internet has not changed this fact. Today, it is much less expensive to collect and test different offers with the speed of the Internet. This is the same way publishers have sold magazine subscriptions and books since the beginning of the century. The only difference today is that the Internet has made it much faster and cheaper to compile permission based opt-in lists online.

Even a great product at a reduced price would be useless if it is presented to the wrong prospects. You must target your prospect to generate traffic for your product by Web site or mail.

Most lists fall into two categories compiled lists or direct response lists. Compiled lists are phone directories annual membership rosters, and manufacturing directories. Response lists are just as they imply they have responded and purchased a targeted product or service recently, because of this fact they are most likely to purchase a similar item again. Response lists are common for magazine subscriptions or lists of prospects that have purchased life insurance or indexed annuities recently.

Standard Rates and Data Services (SRDS) are directories of response lists. They will include quantities and descriptions of each list for sale.

### Part 3: Direct Marketing Strategy

The offer is often referred to as the deal. This is what people get for there money. Whether you're planning a direct marketing strategy, evaluating a campaign or writing an ad much of the work revolves around three important elements. The offer the list and the creative and these elements work together

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or separately to make your direct marketing promotion work.

The offer is the product or service being sold and includes any warranties, guarantees, features, and price and credit terms. The offer could also be the actions someone needs to take to place an order like a shopping cart or form on a Web site or reply card in a bulk mailing.

Offers separate general advertising from direct response. General advertising often excludes the critical information that should always be included in direct response advertising. Direct response puts all the necessary information together in an offer and tells the reader exactly how to respond. People expect offers in direct response advertising. You must give the prospective customer a reason to respond like limited offer or special bonus, since the purchase is impulsive in nature.

Failing to make the offer clear or forgetting to make an offer at all is a common mistake among direct response marketing beginners. The way to get a response to an offer is to make a deal that prospects can't refuse.

In direct marketing, offers are categorized by the method of payment. Offers with delayed billing and trial periods are soft offers. Asking for a payment up front with a special bonus for paying now by credit card is a hard offer. The payment terms like accepting credit cards online makes a big difference in the response to the offer. Splitting up payments can sometimes make a difference on higher priced items.

Sometimes in direct marketing the elements included in a product can make a big difference in response. The price of an offer should be tested at certain price points. Testing hard offer verses soft offer sometimes can make a big difference in response rates. Always strive to improve your offer by testing different elements of an offer.

### Part 4: Direct Marketing Creative

Your actual copy and graphic design is important in direct response but less than a well defined strategy using your offer and a targeted list.

Poor graphic design can hurt your response and professional image. Lavish or unusual artistic techniques may work well for magazines and other types of advertising but would actually distract or lower response rates in direct mail. It would be wise to keep your graphic design to a minimum unless you employ a graphic designer for design or professional photographer to shoot your photography. Direct response advertising is a combination of words, pictures and graphics. The words used almost always must move and persuade.

Write a sales letter for entry-level products or service's and feature it on your home page. Write a sales letter convincing prospects to send an e-mail requesting a sales representative to contact them. Offer free reports, e-zine to build the list. Personalizing with first name last name, gender zip-code using mail/merge software will increase response and will separate you from the clutter of emails prospects get.

Using a compelling headline that draws your prospect into your letter and promotion can triple

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marketing response. The headline should be driven by product benefits or solving a problem. Headline offers would be a good item to test in a letter and can pay for it self many times over since this would become your control letter. Newspapers and tabloids use well crafted headlines to sell there publications at point of purchase display's.

Only a few Web sites use direct response marketing in there copy and the Web sites that have tested sales copy have been successful. Marlon Sanders and Cory Rudl are good examples of internet direct response marketing pioneers. Both have made fortunes selling and testing there books and e-books on the internet using old fashioned marketing techniques. Web sites that sell products and services do better if graphics and flashy programming designs are excluded since they take longer to load which will greatly lower the response unless closely tested.

The focus is writing compelling copy that describes the many benefits and features of products or services. Products that are digital in nature like e-books and MP3 music and software do especially well since the visitor will get immediate satisfaction by checking out with credit card and downloading within a couple of minutes. If you are selling e-commerce web mall items clean digital photography with

limited graphics and strong copy featuring benefits like free delivery, guaranteed satisfaction or free downloads will help response levels.

Direct response soft offer trial periods are being used frequently by Microsoft Network and AOL to market there internet services. Like 60 days free with credit card verification. When the competition is fierce and pockets are deep soft offers can be very effective as long as your billing package has been tested and has proved to be effective. Payment variations (credit card, check, installment by phone or emailed by CGI form) may work well for products and services on the internet. This technique used in direct mail would have the opposite effect and may lower response. Testing this feature would give you the best answer.

Sometimes billing prospects for services can triple the response rate. The payment offer can be a crucial element in a direct response campaign and should be evaluated closely, since the pay up rate could possibly break a small business.

Please be sure to contact me for a free quote and guaranteed satisfaction concerning your Direct Response Marketing online or offline promotion at: [Timlit7@nethawk.com](mailto:Timlit7@nethawk.com)

Timothy Little—For details on how to launch your direct response Web site or mail marketing campaign. E-mail the quote form at my website for a free consultation. At: [e-SiteSolutions.com](http://e-SiteSolutions.com) or email address: [timlit7@nethawk.com](mailto:timlit7@nethawk.com). Phone number is (989) 463-5951

Tim Little has over 15 years of direct response advertising experience both in magazine publishing and more recently as a Marketing Database expert with major insurance companies.

### **Do You Know The Common Direct Marketing Measurements**

**By Daegan Smith**

## Direct Response Advertising

### Do You Know The Common Direct Marketing Measurements by Daegan Smith

John Wanamaker, a 19th century entrepreneur, once famously made the statement, "I know that half of my advertising is wasted, I just don't know which half." Fortunately for today's marketers, there are scientific ways to determine which half is wasted, and which half is not, through the use of common direct marketing measurements.

Advertising is, and has always been, part art and part science. With direct marketing, the science part takes center stage as there are common direct marketing measurements that can be utilized to verify the results of the advertising.

With the increased popularity of direct marketing, the success of advertising can be measured through a variety of common direct marketing methods such as cost per acquisition, cost per piece, and response rate.

Before continuing in describing these common direct marketing measurements in detail, it is beneficial to review one of the direct marketing tools needed to determine the success of the mailing. The most important direct marketing tool is the response mechanism. This is how you can gauge the success, or lack of success, of a direct mail campaign. This is the mechanism by which the prospect will use to respond – it may be a postcard to request more information, an 800 number to call, or a website address to place an order. You can then utilize this response to determine the success of the direct mailing.

The first of the most common direct marketing measurements is the cost per acquisition. The cost per acquisition can be determined by taking the total cost of the mailing and dividing it by the number of responses. For example, let's say the total cost of a mailing is \$2,000 and 20 people respond. The cost per acquisition is \$100. This is an important tool to find out if the cost to obtain a new customer is in line with the profits that you will receive.

The second of the most common direct marketing measurements is the cost per piece. To find the cost per piece, you would take the total cost of the mailing and divide it by the total number of pieces sent. For example, if the total cost of the mailing was \$4,500 and you sent 2000 direct mail pieces, the cost per piece would be \$2.25. This is an important figure to keep in mind, because by lowering the cost per piece (as long as the number of responses stays the same), you can lower the cost per acquisition.

The third of the most common direct marketing measurements is the response rate. The response rate can be calculated by taking the number of people that responded and dividing it by the number of people that were sent the direct mail package. For example, if 2000 people were mailed a direct mail package and 20 people responded, the response rate would be 1%. This is an important tool that you can utilize to forecast the success of future mailings.

By using all three of these common direct marketing measurements, you can finally determine which half of your marketing is working, and which half is not.

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