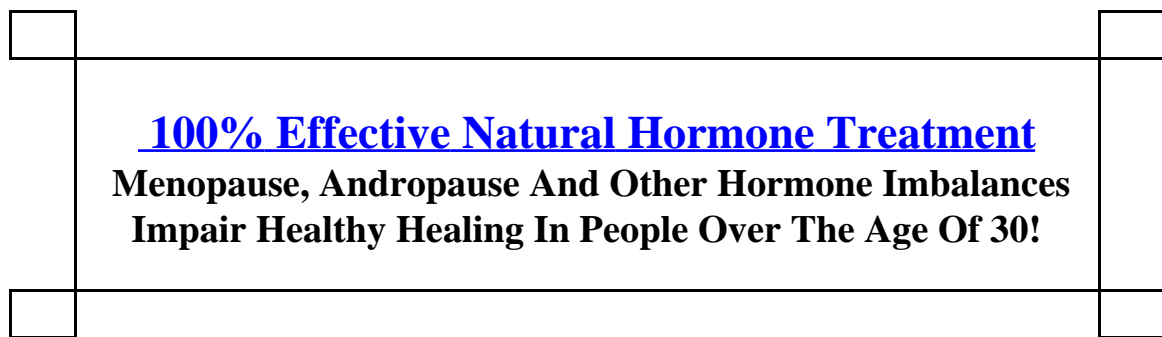


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## Postcard Marketing Relieves Anthrax Scare

By Anne Marie Baugh

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The latest Anthrax scare might have you thinking twice about using postal mail to promote your business.

A Washington Post-ABC News survey showed that "65% of the American public was at least 'concerned' that letters containing anthrax bacteria had been sent through the mail."

That's bad news if you just mailed a promotion.

All of these circumstances might make you want to consider one of my favorite advertising strategies ... the simple and cheap direct mail postcard.

You can use postcards to generate leads, close sales, convince customers to buy more and encourage prospects to give you a try.

I asked my friend and client, Markus Allen for his top 20 postcard promotional ideas. He has an online, step-by-step program to help you launch a monthly, multiple-exposure postcard marketing campaign with very little expense, and that's always a plus.

Check out his free information at:

<http://www.markusallen.org/ezpostcards>

Here's his list of postcard marketing ideas that almost any business can put into immediate action:

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- \* Copy and paste a picture of your Web site on a postcard. The mere mention can bring a rush of visitors to your site.
- \* Mail to a list of people who've recently moved into your community. Offer a great deal to get them to try your product or service.
- \* If your average customer usually spends \$1,000 with you, offer a discount for purchases over \$1,500.
- \* Remind customers it's time to come and see you. Dentists

often mail "It's time for your next cleaning" postcards, while auto shops remind you, "It's been 6 months since your last oil change."

- \* Tell customers about new products and services. For example, many software firms mail postcards to promote program upgrades.
- \* Announce a price increase. Let customers buy as much as they want, at the current prices.
- \* Hold holiday promotions. For example: "Bring Mom to lunch for Mother's Day, for only \$14.95."
- \* Offer a lifetime membership program to generate quick cash flow.
- \* Announce a private sale. One retailer, with a 21-cent postcard, invited her 12 best clients to a one-day sale. She generated over \$20,000 in new business.
- \* Collect customer info – name, address, and birthday. A few weeks before each person's birthday, send a postcard offering a free birthday dinner. Most customers who come for the free dinner will bring friends or relatives (who will pay full price for their own meals).
- \* Promote clearance or used-equipment sales.
- \* Invite prospects to order your product by faxing back the postcard.
- \* Mail postcards to announce a contest.

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- \* Send The World's Smallest Newsletter on a postcard. (A great example of this postcard is in Allen's Instant Postcard Marketing ToolBox.)
- \* Give customers your new address when you move.
- \* Promote your Web site or fax-on-demand system.
- \* Announce new staff. Example: "George Model has joined The Clip Joint. Call him today to make your appointment."
- \* Mail help-wanted postcards to local residents when you need to increase your staff ... everyone likes to work close to home.
- \* Send a postcard about an upcoming trade show ... one lucky winner receives a valuable prize.

Once you're ready to send a direct mail postcard, here's some great news. Professionally created postcards are now easier than ever to create on the Internet.

AmazingMail makes it super easy to send direct mail postcards. Just visit their Web site, pick a template (or submit your own design), and your custom-printed, full-color postcard is in the mail (First Class) in just a few days. And the best part is, there's no minimum. Send just one postcard or 500,000 postcards, for less than doing all the work yourself.

Visit this Web page and try it out. at no charge:  
<http://www.amazingmail.com> rial.html

If you're looking to grow your business fast at a low cost, now's the time to use the post office's best-kept secret. Postcards will relieve any anxiety about opening a strange envelope and can be read quickly by today's busy consumer.

### **Postcard Marketing - Low Cost Visibility**

**By Claire Cunningham**

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You need to be visible to attract customers, right? But how do you get that visibility when you're short on cash? Here's an idea that's worked for many businesses. It's postcard marketing, and it's very affordable.

You can design your own postcards or hire a designer. Print the cards on 67# card stock to meet USPS requirements. Two or four cards will fit on an 8 ½" x 11" sheet so you'll have to use a paper cutter. Postage is just \$.23 a card.

Here are some ways to use postcards:

- 1) REFERRALS – Send postcards regularly to your best contacts asking for referrals.
- 2) ANNOUNCE EVENTS - Send postcards to let folks know about events like classes, seminars, sales, open houses, etc.
- 3) PROSPECTING - Send a series of postcard mailings to identified prospects to "soften them up" before you phone them.
- 4) BUILD WEBSITE TRAFFIC - Use postcard mailings to tell people your site is there and when you make significant additions.
- 5) GROW YOUR NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBER LIST - Postcard mailings can publicize your newsletter to new audiences.
- 6) MAKE AN OFFER – Do you have a booklet to give away? Are you offering a special discount? Postcard mailings can get out the word.
- 7) SAY THANKS - Use postcards to say thank you for business, referrals, or information.

Of course, for best results you need a good list. Make sure your mailings are going to the right people. Also, you'll get a better response if you offer something of value.

Finally, repeat, repeat, repeat! As with any marketing, repetition is critical. A single mailing may get a disappointing result. Don't be surprised or discouraged. Keep at it with a consistent look, message and audience, and over time your message will sink in.

A response rate of 1–3% is the average, but you may be able to generate significant sales from those responses. Referral mailings can yield business that's three or more times the cost of the mailing.

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