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The 7 Fatal Direct Marketing Mistakes & How To Avoid Them...

By Tim Goggin, List Werks, Inc.

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---Introduction---

Fairfax Cone (one of the founders of Foote, Cone & Belding), in his book "With All Its Faults", said that when most people sit down to write an ad "they forget that advertising is something one does only when he can't go see his prospects and make his proposition face to face. The maker of an advertisement is simply developing the best substitute he can for personal solicitation and he should come as close to this as he can in both words and feeling."

While this is certainly true --- that there are similarities between a sales call and a successful ad --- there are also very important differences.

---The 7 Fatal Mistakes---

One of the most important differences is that most salesmen call on customers who are, in their opinion, likely to buy. On the other hand, they try to avoid those "unlikely to buy".

In other words, successful salesmen qualify their prospects. Successful salesmen don't like to waste their time calling on people who have no interest in what they are selling. They like to call on people who are likely buyers; people who can be persuaded.

Translated to direct marketing, this means:

1) Lists. Direct Marketing Success starts with a good list. In fact, 60% to 80% of your success in Direct Marketing depends on list selection. Wrong list, wrong result.

If you were a tractor salesman, you wouldn't want Manhattan as your territory. You're not going to sell many tractors in Manhattan. And, if you were a direct marketing tractor salesman, you wouldn't want to

The 7 Fatal Direct Marketing Mistakes & How To Avoid Them...

be targeting Manhattan either.

The better you can define who is hungriest for what you offer, the easier — and more likely — the sale. On the other hand, the less the need, the more difficult — or, even impossible the sale. And, that's why Poor List Selection is the First Fatal Mistake. Get this wrong and nothing will save your effort.

Once a salesman has determined that someone is a true prospect and once they've made their initial contact and confirmed that this is indeed a prospect they make multiple contacts. Study after study has shown that most sales people give up too soon. Successful salespeople call on an average of 7 times before they close the sale. In Direct Marketing this means

2) Multiple Contacts. Just as a salesman knows that, in most cases, he has to call several times before he can make a sale, so a direct marketing effort cannot be a one-shot wonder. There are

exceptions, to be sure. But, most sales situations require multiple contacts.

This is especially true in Business-to-Business Direct Marketing where you have professional buyers. They've seen it all. They've heard it all. And, what they want to know is if they can depend on you to do more than just take an order. They know orders require follow-thru and they want to see if they can depend on you.

Moreover, it is very hard to make a lasting impression in one visit. You need repeat calls to get thru to people.

The parallel to this in Direct Marketing is multiple mailings to the same list. It is usually much better to mail 7 times to 1,000 really good prospects than to mail 1 time to 7,000 prospects. This, of course, says again how important it is to make sure you get a good list of prospects. If the list is right, the results are all but guaranteed.

The bottom line is that not mailing multiple times, can be the Second Fatal Mistake of Direct Marketing.

Once a salesman gets an appointment with a customer and once the introductions are made, a salesman has to tell them why he's there. And, what the customer wants to know is: what's in it for me. If you don't get that out and get it out fast, any successful salesman knows you're out the door — fast! In Direct Marketing the equivalent is:

3) Offer. Unless you have a product or service that provides a unique solution to an obvious problem you'll need a strong offer.

That offer has to promise to solve a problem that is causing your prospects pain. In this case, it is true: no pain no gain.

One way to think about this is to imagine you had a sandwich truck. When would you get more customers: before lunch, or after? Obviously, before. After lunch the hunger pain is a memory.

The 7 Fatal Direct Marketing Mistakes & How To Avoid Them...

It's the same with your prospects. You want to reach them where they hurt and show how you can help ease that pain. If your offer doesn't touch their pain, you won't sell them.

The Third Fatal Mistake of Direct Marketing, therefore, is not making a strong offer that's hard for the customer to resist.

And, frequently, the place you must make your offer in Direct Marketing is in your Headline...

4) Headline. In retail it is said the secret to success is location, location, location. In direct response it's headline, headline, headline. A headline (or in e-mail the subject line) is the ad for your ad.

Your headline has to interrupt your prospects. When your ad message arrives they are busy thinking about sex, or money, or how they are going to keep their job, or whatever! In any case, it is something they are really interested in at the moment.

And, in a pleasant way your headline has to say "excuse me, could I have a minute of your time?" And, it has to get a "yes" or you're not going to get your sale.

This is why we offer our customers a free copy of the book that some of the most famous and creative people in advertising have credited with helping them invent breakthrough, off-the-chart results time and time again.

It's the book that David Ogilvy said "changed the course of my life"! In fact, he thought so much of this book that he went as far as saying "Nobody should be allowed to have anything to do with advertising until he has read this book at least seven times."

It is also why we've added a section to our website that will let you acquire some of the greatest direct marketing books of all time. Most of them are out of print. But, you can get them here.

Perhaps the most unusual of these books is "The First Hundred Million". This book was written by E. Julius Haldeman. In the first half of the last century, Haldeman sold a series of little blue books. And the only "salesman" he had for each book was its title.

What makes this book unique is that when a book didn't sell at least 10,000 units a year, Haldeman would change the title. And he would keep changing it till the book sold enough units to keep it in stock or he would give up on it.

What this gives you is a unique insight to what it takes, in a headline, to motivate someone to buy. It's a unique book and that is why we offer it to you.

The bottom line, however, is that if you don't stop traffic with your headline, no one will read or listen to it. That's Fatal Mistake Four.

I once knew a Real Estate salesman who was having no end of difficulty selling prospects on some terrific opportunities he'd discovered for them. Everything was right about these opportunities. Yet, he

The 7 Fatal Direct Marketing Mistakes & How To Avoid Them...

couldn't get anyone to sign on the dotted line...till he bought himself a Mercedes.

Once he started driving prospects around in a Mercedes, everything changed. Now, subconsciously, people believed him. They thought: well, if he can afford a Mercedes, he must be successful. If he's successful, it must be in Real Estate. And, if he's successful in Real Estate, it's possible he can make me successful in Real Estate.

This is called congruence. It means that people, when they check you out, come to conclusion that it is safe to believe you can solve their problem. That brings us to the Fifth Fatal Mistake in Direct Marketing:

5) Believability. If people have a need for what you are offering, but don't buy, the most likely reason they didn't is that they don't believe you.

Guarantees help. Long guarantees help even more.

So do endorsements and testimonials.

Copy can help by giving enough information to make your offer credible.

Anticipating and answering objections and concerns of your prospects help, too. They will always have some objections. If you don't deal with them, you'll lose the sale and commit the Fifth Fatal Mistake of

Direct Marketing. The bottom line is that as a prospect must believe a salesman before ordering, so they must believe you.

One of the important differences between a salesman calling on a prospect and a Direct Marketing effort is that because you are not there, with your prospect, you cannot watch his or her reaction to you as you unfold your offer. This, in turn, means you have to "take your best shot". You have to put your best and biggest benefit up front. In Direct Marketing, this means:

6) Creative. Perhaps the most successful sales letter of all time is the letter that The Wall Street Journal has been mailing for something like 24 years. It's been estimated that this letter has sold \$2,000,000,000 worth of subscriptions. Obviously, it is doing something right.

And, what it is doing right is reaching people with the right promise. Samuel Johnson said the essence of advertising was "promise, big promise". If you read this letter carefully you'll see what that promise is and why it is so difficult to say "no" to it.

If you don't make a good promise, you won't get thru to your customer. Thus, not being creative in your Direct Marketing is Fatal Mistake Six.

Finally, both a salesman and your direct marketing effort must "ask for the order!" It seems like an obvious point. But, both salesmen and Direct Marketing efforts frequently forget to ask for the order. And, that's the Seventh Fatal Mistake!

7) Not Asking For The Order. This is a crucial element and must be in every single direct marketing piece. Make sure to give prospects a simple, easy way to order. Whether that be a website URL or an 800 #, this should be repeated often in the course of your letter.

---Conclusion---

Hopefully, you've found these thoughts useful. And, hopefully, they will help you craft even more successful direct marketing packages. Every element of this white paper was written with the experience of List Werks' direct marketing specialists.

If you'd like to find out more about our background or to see if List Werks' creative team would be right for an upcoming project, call us at (800) 851-9400.

MLM Blunders

By Adnan Jamal

It's really strange! Too many people start an MLM business with excitement, enthusiasm, anticipation and thrill, only for the reason that they want to be a successful home businessman. There are many people, who right now are not as successful as they would like to be. If your performance in this field is error free and you have adopted a path that has least possibilities of failure so you can do this business in a proper way as well as make lots of money. There are so many mistakes, people make in their network marketing business. We want to explain you some important mistakes people make in their Network Marketing businesses. If you avoid those mistakes in your MLM business, then you can observe that there is a drastic increase in your profit. We are now discussing main blunders people make during their MLM business.

First thing is that, make a trusting relationship with your new prospect. A relationship in which he/she trusts on you more than himself. It is nearly impossible that a person do not trust you and risk his hard-earned money with you as his sponsor. So keep in mind this thing that your new prospect must have great faith in you.

Now, let me explain to you what a cold list is. It's a list comprised of names shown no interest in your offer. They do not pay attention on your attractive offers and they also don't care about the position of your company in the market. If you mail your opportunities and offers to the cold list then it must be fruitful for you and your Network Marketing business. This technique is much fruitful when you are mailing to the person who ask for more information about your opportunity.

Avoid laziness in your business as much as possible. Laziness is disastrous for your Network Marketing business. In order to earn money you have to be hardworking and meticulous. Many of us talk so much about working to make money but never really apply the concept in their real life.

The main thing in Network Marketing business is to learn about every aspect of your business. Because this is network marketing. It's not a joke. It's a real business like other businesses and in a real business you must have to be aware of every aspect of that business.

The 7 Fatal Direct Marketing Mistakes & How To Avoid Them...

This is a fact that not all human beings are equal. This is not necessary that you don't make a single mistake throughout your MLM or network marketing business, but you can try to avoid those mistakes as much as possible. The mistakes we made normally in our network marketing business as discussed above are easy to avoid and if we successfully avoid them from our network marketing business, then we surely make us a successful network marketing businessman.

For further reading please contact

I am an IT postgraduate student. I love to write articles on business related topics.

MLM Blunders

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