

5 Secrets to Winning Direct Marketing

How One Overlooked Media is Making a Big Impact



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Running effective direct marketing programs today requires a seemingly impossible balancing act: Standing out from the rest of the pack—without spending more on advertising than competitors. Direct mail, newspaper inserts, and many other traditional programs continue to cost more and deliver less. For all their promise, online channels haven't filled the gap for marketers seeking sharp audience focus. This paper looks at how one overlooked media helps address these challenges, and is paying big dividends for organizations in a range of industries.

Challenges of Direct Marketing Today

Running successful direct marketing programs has never been easy, but the challenges laid out for most marketing executives in today's economic climate can be pretty daunting. Within many marketing departments, budgets remain flat or continue to be shaved. Of course, at the same time, the sales targets that marketing needs to support continue to grow.

Further, the media available to direct marketers all pose their own limitations and drawbacks:

- **Direct mail.** Direct mail can pose significant challenges for marketers today. Standing out in the typical homeowner's crowded mail box either takes luck, or a significant investment in mailer production. Further, with postal rates up each of the past three years, it gets harder and harder to make the ROI numbers work.
- **Newspapers.** The number of newspapers nationwide has been shrinking since the '80s, but the past couple of years have been especially hard on the industry. For direct marketers looking to reach a large percentage of a given geographic area, newspapers no longer represent a viable alternative in many markets.
- **Online.** While email, search engine marketing, and social media programs are generating healthy results in many industries, they don't necessarily fill the void left by physical direct marketing channels. Especially, for those organizations that need to take a focused approach to demographic targeting, many online channels still fall short.

In recent years, many forward-thinking organizations have looked for alternatives to these established vehicles—and found a marketing vehicle that delivers significant reach, response, and ROI. Their secret? Employing door hanger marketing as part of their direct marketing mix. In the following pages, we'll uncover some of the secrets that you may not know about these programs, and examine how they can help your business deliver winning direct marketing programs.

Secret #1: Door Hangers Deliver Proven Results, ROI

For many national business-to-consumer marketing organizations, door hanger programs have been proven to deliver exceptional response rates and bottom-line results. Why have these programs proven so successful? Here are a few keys:

- **Avoid the mailbox clutter.** As opposed to direct mailers that can get lost amid the daily mass of mailers, flyers, and catalogs; door hangers are essentially guaranteed to get into the hands of prospects—and get read.
- **High visibility.** Direct marketers can be assured that their advertising piece is the only promotional vehicle that gets delivered to a prospect at a given time—and that the piece *will* be seen by the recipient.
- **Flexible call to action.** Door hangers can feature an array of promotions and calls to action—including phone numbers, coupons and other promotions to generate foot traffic, links to online surveys, and more—essentially whatever outcome is most advantageous. Consequently, direct marketers have the flexibility to develop deliverables tailored to their specific tracking needs and marketing objectives.
- **Not limited by postal rules.** Even the best design doesn't make much of an impact when it's folded and stuffed in a white #10 envelope. Door hangers offer the benefit of making a direct impact, unconstrained by the requirements and limitations of direct mail.
- **Program and new media integration.** Door hanger programs can be part of an integrated campaign to build prospect lists through special promotions or giveaways, they can be integrated with online programs to deliver targeted product and service information, and they can be used to add significant lift to other media efforts that are underway in the market at the same time.

Direct Marketing Profile: National Cable Company

The Challenge

A national cable television provider was facing stiff competition from both well-established competitors and recent market entrants. Expanding market share required targeted, cost-effective marketing to ensure prospective buyers were aware of promotions and services available. Given the rising costs and diminishing returns they were seeing in their direct mail programs, the marketing team sought out alternative vehicles.

The Solution

Working with its agency of record and a specialized vendor, the company employed a door hanger marketing program. Leveraging the vendor's specialized targeting capabilities, the firm was able to focus on specific households that play most to the company's competitive strengths, ensuring the best possible prospects were targeted. The firm selected households based on such criteria as existing internet services and propensity to subscribe for bundled voice, television, and internet services.

The Benefit

The result? The initial program wave met with great response, generating thousands of phone calls, and enabling the firm to meet its quarterly sales objectives in all targeted regions.

Secret #2: Door Hangers are Less Expensive than Direct Mail

Door hanger programs offer a range of benefits that make it not only more effective, but more cost effective than direct mail. Here are a few reasons:

- **Scale.** Compared to the huge infrastructure, staffing, and resources required by the U.S. postal service, the distribution of single door hangers to targeted neighborhoods can be more streamlined and less expensive.
- **Specialization.** As opposed to a postal service tasked with delivering tremendous volumes and types of printed pieces, door hanger vendors can leverage sophisticated and specialized staff and systems in order to quickly and cost effectively distribute door hangers to targeted recipients.
- **Production.** Door hanger vendors can leverage focused, streamlined production processes for the development of these deliverables, and pass the savings in production costs onto customers.

In this way, when compared to direct mail, door hanger vendors can offset increasing postage costs to deliver savings on each piece delivered.

Direct Marketing Profile: National Pizza Restaurant Chain

The Challenge

A national pizza chain sought to boost revenues of existing stores, as well as generate initial business for newly established locales. To do so, they needed direct marketing vehicles that would enable them to stand apart from the clutter in resident's mail boxes, while targeting their desired residential demographic, which was focused on neighborhoods with a high percentage of families.

The Solution

The company's marketing staff turned to a series of marketing programs that utilized door hangers to disseminate high value coupon offerings.

The Benefit

Within weeks, the company realized increased traffic at targeted locations, furthering their revenue goals and setting the stage for long-term success at a number of new locales.

Secret #3: Door Hanger Programs Deliver Sophisticated Distribution Control, Visibility

Today, many door hanger vendors equip direct marketers with sophisticated capabilities for targeting specific prospect groups. These can include proprietary, sophisticated mapping capabilities that enable targeting by a range of factors:

- **Geography**—including targeting by zip code, by zip+4, and by block group.
- **Demographics**—such as household income, age, and presence of children,
- **Buying habits**—including propensity to choose specific products and services, whether banking, investment, insurance, broadband, cable TV, wireless, retail, and more.

In addition, marketers want to be sure that they're getting the services they pay for. Consequently, many vendors now offer high tech tracking and auditing capabilities that give customers tangible views into deliverability, including leveraging GPS to map neighborhood coverage, comprehensive reporting that features photographic documentation of deliveries, and other auditing mechanisms.

Direct Marketing Profile: Regional Storage Rental Business

The Challenge

After establishing several facilities, the business team at a regional storage rental business was seeing a high rate of adoption from customers that resided in highly concentrated geographic regions. As it sought to increase facility revenues, the firm was challenged with reaching prospects cost effectively in these specific localities. Free standing inserts in local newspapers lacked the focus and impact they required.

The Solution

The organization turned to a door hanger agency to do a series of targeted, focused promotions of 50,000 to 100,000 pieces, delivered to those specific geographic locations that were identified as most promising.

The Benefit

These door hanger programs proved to be less costly than prior direct mail campaigns, while delivering the best success rates of any marketing vehicle they previously employed. Consequently, the business was able to boost facility revenues, while maximizing the effectiveness of its marketing investments.

Secret #4: Door Hangers Deliver Broad Reach

Today, door hanger marketing programs offer both very narrow segmentation and targeting capabilities, while at the same time giving marketers an opportunity to undertake broad, nationwide marketing programs. Consequently, national business-to-consumer marketing groups can have the best of both worlds: An ability to reach prospects in all markets, while also tailoring offers and promotions to the audience makeup and marketing objectives of specific regions.

For example, a wireless communications vendor can support a large campaign via a nation-wide door hanger program, while at the same time tailoring coverage plans and phone offerings to specific regions. With this combination of reach and focus, door hanger programs can be an ideal complement to nationwide campaigns that feature advertising, direct marketing, and more.

Secret #5: Door Hangers Now Feature Sophisticated Production Values

If your only prior exposure to door hangers was the sight of a photocopied piece from a local dry cleaner or maid service, you're in for a surprise.

Leading door hanger vendors now offer sophisticated production capabilities that meet the standards of some of the largest, most demanding brands in the nation. High-end door hangers now offer these characteristics:

- **Quality production.** Featuring high quality, four-color printing with a glossy finish, door hangers can provide a polished, high-impact image for advertisers.
- **Large format.** Many vendors also offer a large, 5 ¼" by 17" format that ensures optimal impact for recipients.



Conclusion

While no one direct marketing media will be the be-all and end-all in a direct marketer's arsenal, door hanger programs can offer an ideal way to complement an existing marketing campaign that needs a lift, or, replace under-performing direct marketing vehicles. These programs offer a proven combination of value and impact that make them an invaluable addition to many organizations' direct marketing efforts. The bottom line? If you haven't already added door hanger programs into your direct marketing mix, you can significantly strengthen your results by doing so.

About Guaranteed Direct

Established in 2003, Guaranteed Direct Marketing has consistently offered a focused and specialized marketing tactic which is proven to drive new consumer acquisitions. With a lower CPM than other direct media, such as direct mail, door hangers also offer the added benefit of an increased response rate because of their high visibility. They are like a mini- billboard, right on the front door of your prospects!

To learn more, we encourage you to request a media kit by calling 866-285-6861 or visiting www.guaranteeddirect.com