

InkLinks

DESIGN • PRINT • MAIL

Under One Roof!

Because we are printers who mail and mailers who print, we provide our customers with the utmost in convenience and efficiency.

This one-stop shopping brings better control to your mailing activities — often at significantly lower costs.

Many printers who are only printers are not fully educated about the new postal guidelines. They may inadvertently print something that costs you more to mail than it should.

Mailers who are only mailers often inherit problems from printers and customers who bring them jobs to be mailed. When something is designed or folded incorrectly, automated mail processing slows down—when automation slows down, postage costs go up. It's that simple.

Printing and mailing under one roof — our roof — means faster turnaround to get you into the mail sooner.

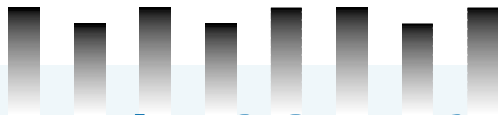
“Under one roof” saves you money. It increases control over your



project. And it means fewer hassles.

Let the convenience of our printing and mailing services work for you. Call The Print House at 248-473-1414 and bring us into your planning stage early.

As expert printers and mailers, we know what it takes to deliver the best cost-effectively — from start to finish.



BARCODES

How much do you need to know about barcodes?

Nothing!

Because we know all about barcodes and postal automation, we'll keep your mailing efficiency up and postage costs down.

The key is to bring us into your direct mail planning process early. The best part is that the ideas we recommend can often bring another special added bonus: *Better response.*

Large Envelopes or Small?

Naturally, you can't have big things sticking out of a too-tight, too-small envelope.

But ouch! These days, larger envelopes and odd sizes can mean heftier postage costs.

Nevertheless, many direct-mail experts agree that larger envelopes add to the impact and overall perceived importance of a mailing piece. They say you should think about that

oversized envelope as a billboard — as a dynamic way to attract attention.

Even though today's postage rates favor the #10s and standard sizes, there are times when the impact of the 9x12s and unconventional sizes can work for you.

Rule of thumb: Don't be afraid to invest in uncommon and unusual packaging and sizing when a sufficiently high payoff looms on the horizon.



InkLinks
is designed, printed and mailed by

The Print House Inc.

Quality Printing & Mailing Services

- **Barcoding**
- **Copywriting**
- **Folding**
- **Graphic Design**
- **Inkjet Addressing**
- **Inserting**
- **Labeling**
- **Laser Printing**
- **Mailing Lists**
- **Postal Metering**
- **Presorting**
- **Sorting**
- **Address Correction**
- **Tabbing**
- **And More!**

Crystal Ball Predicts Direct Mail Response

Imagine a crystal ball that predicts your direct-mail response rate. Talk about real job security for a change!

Unfortunately, when it comes to direct mail, there's no such thing as a guaranteed response rate. And the crystal balls we've seen aren't that dependable.

Predicting any kind of a response rate is difficult, if not impossible. The number of variables that come into play is incredible:

Price

Uniqueness of the product or service

Your competitor's price

*What the competition is doing
and how they're marketing*

The list you select

Your creative approach

The seasonality/timing of your product or offer

The image you project

The offer itself

The weather

So, what do you do? You need some indication. Your best answer is to look at a break-even point to validate the likelihood that you can sell what you need to sell.

Here's a simple model. If an item retails for \$100 and costs you

\$50 to buy or build, that leaves \$50 to cover promotion, production, mailing, and so on.

Next, assume that your direct-mail program, including list, printing, production, and mailing services costs \$400 per 1,000 pieces — in the mail.

Divide \$400 by the \$50 from the promotion side of your retail pricing.

The answer is eight — eight units per 1,000 mail pieces.

These eight units represent the number of sales you need to break even per 1,000 pieces mailed.

Based on what you know about your company, your industry and your product, does that closing ratio seem realistic and attainable? Can you really sell eight units out of every thousand you mail?

If you lean in the direction of "Yes" as your answer, call us at 248-473-1414. It means you are definitely heading in the right direction for an initial test mailing.



Scratch off the bonus prize. Stick the stamp here. Insert the token in the pocket. Peel off the star. Circle the number. Check the box.

Direct mail offers more opportunities to involve your prospects actively than any other advertising medium.

When the radio is on, your prospects are probably doing something else. Whatever they're doing, most likely, they're not fully focused on you. And with their cell phones, in cars moving at 60 miles an hour, there's very little provision for gaining their undivided attention.

With television, prospects can walk right

Involve Your Reader, See More Results!

by the telephone on the way to the refrigerator. That offers a good possibility for interaction with a slice of pie. But it may not help your cash flow.

With newspapers, every advertiser depends on the same kind of interaction — **reading**.

Reading, listening, and watching are passive. But scratching, sticking,

The more involved they become in your message, the more likely they are to take the time to understand your entire selling proposition.

inserting, lifting, circling, and marking are active—extremely active.

The goal of this activity isn't just to give your prospects something to do. It's to

help them focus on you and your message—to look right at you. And it's to keep them from being distracted by something else.

The more involved they become in your message, the more likely they are to take the time to understand your entire selling proposition.

By asking them questions and giving them a place to sign their names, your prospects very quickly become dynamically involved.

The devices that involve the recipients — tokens, stamps, questionnaires, circles, and quizzes — delivered through the mail attract your prospects to talk back to you.

If you don't have the budget for tokens, stamps, or stickers, something as simple as "check the red box" can compel a positive interaction. It's a step worth trying. So check the , circle the item. And call us at 248-473-1414 for games that your prospects can play — and that you can win.

FREE!
FREE!
FREE!



Is There Room For One More Free Offer?

There's no single word in direct mail and advertising that triggers greater attention than the word **free**!

FREE HAS POWER!

Free can remove barriers that would otherwise keep prospects from even a casual glance at your product or offer.

Free opens the door to a favorable mindset on the part of your readers. It tells them that "there's nothing to lose for reading, listening, and learning."

Free invites your prospect to look at your product, service, or offer without having to make a commitment. Whether or not the free offer includes a subsequent condition to buy, your proposition will be seen, considered, and reviewed in a non-threatening and favorable light.

Free means an opportunity for you to reach prospects who, by virtue of the fact that they respond to your free offer, actually qualify themselves. For the most part, people don't want something they really can't or won't use — particularly when they know there is a catch somewhere in the free offer.

So, what does free cost you?

It may cost you nothing. That's because every time you give away something for free, you get something in return. You get an opportunity to present your entire marketing story. When you do, that moves you much closer toward your goal to sell or resell products or services, to build business, and to expand your customer base. You might say that free doesn't really cost you a thing. It actually pays for itself.

So the big questions are: Is there room for one more free offer? Or has it been overdone?

The good news is, there's still plenty of room. Free responds to and addresses a basic motivation we all have — it's called *greed*.

Greed thrives on getting something for nothing. And even something of little real value may contain high perceived value for your customers or prospects simply because it appears to come to them free of charge.

Ask Professor Print

Dear Professor Print,

How long should it take for a printing job to be completed once I give my final approval of the proofs?

In a Hurry in Howell

Dear Hurry:

Slow down! Printing your print job isn't the same as you printing your files on a laser printer. There's a lot more involved.

First, since your job will be printed on a press, special printing plates for the job must be produced. These may be produced in a camera, or sent by computer via a direct-to-plate process. For larger or more complex jobs, there may be intermediate stages: for example, film negatives may have to be produced for the more durable metal plates. If the job is 4-color process, a matchprint proof will first be made from the negatives to make sure the colors look as they should. This step alone takes one full day!

Once the plates are ready, the job can be printed. Simple jobs can be completed fairly quickly; jobs with large quantities, many colors or lots of pages may take more than a day just for the printing itself.

Most jobs will need additional work once they come off the press. Cutting, folding, and stapling are frequently required. In addition to the time these operations themselves take, it is sometimes necessary to wait as much as a day for ink to dry adequately before they can even be done.

On top of everything else, your job must be fit into the shop's production schedule. The purpose of this schedule is to use the available machinery and personnel as efficiently as possible, taking into account all the different kinds of jobs and their deadlines. This means your job probably won't be printed the very same day you approved it, since the schedule for that day will have already been set.

With all these factors to take into account, you can expect most jobs to be ready three or four days after you give the go-ahead. It's a good idea to allow this much time or more when you plan a print job to avoid a panic situation down the line.

If you have a question about printing or mailing call us at 248-473-1414. Or fax your question to 248-473-5981. We'll make sure you get a straight answer.

Free crosses almost all demographic, sociographic, economic, and psychographic boundaries, too. It works as well at the country club or yacht club as it does in the thrift store. (Sometimes better.)

FREE-speak is the universal language of direct mail, and at The Print House we parley fluently. So give us a call today at 248-473-1414. We'll show you how you can use free to talk your way into customers' hearts — and pocketbooks.

The Print House Inc.

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Visit our informative website at www.theprinthouse.com

“Talk” to Your Customers!

When it comes to writing direct mail copy that sells and motivates, you don't need to be too formal. Because direct mail is personal, it calls for basically the same conversational tone and style you would use if you were sitting and talking to someone face to face, or talking on the telephone.

A good way to look at what's right for direct mail is simply to look at your speech patterns. What types of sentences do you use when you talk to a friend or business associate?

Sentence fragments? Sometimes.

Contractions? Always.

Short sentences? They work.

Mostly, being conversational means being logical and informal in sentence structure — never forcing anything.

Even your word choices are influenced when you think in terms of “talking words” rather than “writing words.” Multi-syllabic and unusual words, no matter how expressive and eloquent in their own right, may push your prospect away from understanding as well as from positive action.

There are exceptions to the conversation rule. Most of these come about because of the product or service, or because of your intended audience. Selling a new pharmaceutical to physicians, for instance, probably needs a more formal approach than “Your patients will feel better fast.”

Many other technical or scientific direct mail applications call for their own vocabulary, and style. But even in these situations, lightening up may increase overall readability.

And while you're working on your conversational style, remember to move as far away from

that passive voice as you can. That means stay in the present tense.

If you write to your clients as though you were speaking to a friend, you're likely to get a much friendlier reception.



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