

GET BETTER RESULTS FROM YOUR MAIL

Professional tips on how your postage meter can help you get your mailings opened and read.

You probably receive dozens of mailings each week, at both your home and your office. If it's interesting, you'll read it. If it's a great offer, you'll respond.

As someone who uses mail to promote your business, however, you know that even the most compelling offer won't generate a sale if the envelope is never opened.

At Pitney Bowes, we are pleased to provide you with these helpful tips that can help you get better results from your mailings. You'll find that Pitney Bowes wants to help you run your business more effectively. And, with your new Pitney Bowes postage meter, you have a new tool that can help you send powerful messages to your customers and prospects.

IT STARTS WITH YOUR ENVELOPE

When it comes to direct mail, the envelope is your first opportunity to boost response. It's like a sign outside of a store. It needs to get someone's attention. Tease them. And above all else, convince them to open it!

Does your mail create the right impression? As a Pitney Bowes customer, you already know the value of a crisp, professional meter indicia. It sends the message that you are well-established, successful and up to date. It tells your customers and prospects that you care about quality, and that you'll be there to serve them in the years ahead.

Using a postage meter for all of your mail is obviously good advice. But as leaders in the mailing industry, we would also like to share these proven secrets and tips that can make your mailings even more effective:

- **Use quality envelopes.** When you look at the cost of a mailing, the expense related to which paper you use is very small. This is not an area to skimp. Choose an envelope stock that is bright, not dull. It should be heavy and opaque, so that you can't read what's inside. If your envelope looks cheap, a recipient may not be inclined to open it.



- **Include a return address.** With all the talk about "mail security," you want individuals to feel comfortable opening up your mail. Your company name (or even your logo) should be clearly visible as part of the return address. Knowing that the mailing is coming from an established business helps build immediate trust with the recipient.
- **Avoid labels.** Using pre-printed labels sends the message that this is "direct mail." If possible, you should laser each envelope with the recipients' name and address. This conveys the point that this letter is being sent specifically to them. If you must use labels, try to get clear labels, or labels that blend in well to your envelope.
- **Meter standard mail.** Using your postage meter for regular First-Class mail seems obvious. But sometimes, when businesses are sending larger mailings, they try pre-printed indicia. A pre-printed indicia tells the recipient that this is "bulk mail." If you are presorting mail, or using Standard Mail rates, you can use your postage meter to print exact postage – and still present a "first-class" image.



To set a postage amount on your meter, simple key in the postage amount and press enter. For example, if the rate is \$0.268, press the decimal key first, then the number.
For example: **. 2 6 8 Enter.**

- **Use upper and lower case.** Did you ever get a mailing where your name and address were printed in big block letters? It's not very inviting. Take the extra time to make sure you're addresses are set up with initial capitals. "Jane Doe" is a lot more pleasing than "JANE DOE."
- **Consider the message.** Now that you have a quality envelope, a professional-looking meter mark and a clean, legible address – it's time to think about what else you can say on your envelope that will help boost response.

There are three basic approaches to consider: an offer, a teaser and no message at all.

An offer message. Why should someone open your envelope? Because it will enable them to get something! If you're thinking about printing an offer message on the outside of your envelope, make sure it's something they'll want. A few words that work well are "exclusive", "gift" and "save." For example:

Exclusive Gift Enclosed
Money-Saving Coupon Enclosed
Gift Certificate Enclosed

A teaser message. A teaser does just that – it doesn't provide the full story, but tells enough to get someone interested. Think of it this way: if you bumped into a potential prospect on the street, what would you say to them in a few words that would convince them to listen to your pitch for a few minutes? Depending on what you are offering, a teaser can take many different forms. But be careful – a bad teaser line can send the message that this is "junk mail." Many good copywriters have made a living just by writing good teaser lines... if you're not sure about what to write, you might be better off just having a plain envelope.

No message. When in doubt, a crisp laser-printed envelope with a return address and a meter mark can work extremely well. If it looks professional, most people will be curious to see what's inside.



- **Use meter ads.** You can use the preset advertisements on your Pitney Bowes postage meter to promote your company and

look even more professional. This could help you get a better response. And printing your message on the envelope doesn't cost a penny extra.



To use one of the seven ad slogans available, press the **Ads** key on your Personal Post™ postage meter. It will display the ad currently selected. To select another, continue pressing the Ads key until you see the ad you want. Then press **Enter**. You may also purchase ads custom designed for your business – just visit www.pitneyworks.com.

BEYOND THE ENVELOPE

Direct mail has been used to generate leads and sales for decades and decades. Because it is easy to track responses, many businesses have been able to test different formats, to see what works best. Over the years, a number of tips have proven to be successful time and time again. If you follow these guidelines, your likelihood of success will increase.

L I S T S , L I S T S , L I S T S

In the United States alone, there are over ten million businesses and over one hundred million households. If you sent your mailer to everyone, not only would it be extremely expensive, you would likely get a very, very poor response. Targeting your list to include only people who are likely to want your product and service – and not sending to individuals who are unlikely to buy – is the single most important facet of good direct marketing.

1 SET YOUR CRITERIA. What makes someone a good prospect? What makes them unlikely to respond? Write these down on paper. These are called criteria. When you are getting ready to do a mailing, you will want to include as many good prospects as you can, and exclude those who do not match your criteria. If you're not sure where to start, think about your best customers – what do they have in common?

2 GET AN APPROPRIATE LIST. Often, existing customers make the best prospects. When you sell a quality product or service, you should look to spend a portion (if not the majority) of your marketing effort in getting existing customers to buy more. If you are looking to reach out to new prospects, you may need to buy or rent a mailing list. Sometimes, you can order a whole file of names that come on a CD-ROM. But to make sure your list is current, you may want to work with a list broker, or use an on-line service.



Pitney Bowes provides you with access to the most current mailing lists available. Just visit www.pitneyworks.com and find out how you can target business and consumer lists as precisely as you like, for as little as ten cents a name.

THE LETTER

If at all possible, your direct mailer should include a letter or note to the recipient. This is your place to explain your offer, and motivate prospects to act.

- **Sell benefits, not features.** How is this product or service going to improve my life?
- **Get to the point.** Start off with a strong lead, and get the offer up front.
- **Keep it personal.** If possible, personalize the letter with the recipient's name. In all cases, use the word "you" whenever appropriate.
- **Keep it simple.** The reader may not know as much about this industry as you do. Keep the sentences short, and make sure even an eighth-grader can understand your story.
- **Sell, don't tell.** No one cares about you, they care about them. Demonstrate how your product or service is going to help them, and why they need it today.
- **Use a P.S.** Why do so many direct mail letters you receive include a PS? Because they work! Use this space to recap the benefits, the offer – and provide a deadline. While at the end of a letter, this is often the first place a reader will look.
- **Make a no risk offer.** How can you take away some of the barriers? Think about how you can reduce the risk. Things like free trials, no-risk obligations and money-back guarantees all make it easier for a prospect to respond.
- **Communicate the "Call to Action."** After selling the benefits, tell the reader exactly what you want them to do. Call now. Order today. Find out more. Try it right away. Don't be shy – once you have their attention, you need to ask for the business!

Act now!

Call today!

Get this!

Find out!

- **Make it easy to respond.** Provide as many ways for someone to respond as you can handle. A phone number (toll-free, even better!), a pre-paid response envelope, a fax number, a website, an address. The more avenues you provide, the greater your chance for an order.
- **Give it a test drive.** Before you mail, have someone else take a look at your letter – preferably someone who doesn't work for your company. Make sure they understand it, know what the offer is, the benefits it provides – and what they need to do in order to respond.

THE CAMPAIGN

Now that you have an eye-opening envelope, a great list and a killer message – there are a few ways to leverage your mailing to get even better results.

1 MAIL MULTIPLE TIMES. If you think sending the same mailer to the same person more than once is a waste of money, just look in your mailbox. It's likely that you'll see the same letter from the same company several times over the course of the year. Sophisticated mailers have been able to figure out that repetition often pays big dividends!

2 TEST AND MEASURE. The beauty of direct mail is that it is easier to track results than most other forms of advertising – you know exactly who received the mailing. If you're unsure about what might work best, test them both! When you look at responses, see which one performed better, and then use that approach the next time you mail.

Mailing is an integral part of most business operations. Not only is it a smart way to send important documents, such as invoices, it's a great way to promote your business. As a member of the Pitney Bowes family, we hope you'll be able to take advantage of some of the tips, ideas and practices outlined above.

Your postage meter provides you with many of the tools to save money, present a professional image and promote your business. For more information on Pitney Bowes products – including tools to help you promote your business – we invite you to visit our website at www.pitneyworks.com.

THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING PITNEY BOWES FOR YOUR MAILING AND SHIPPING NEEDS.