

THE MESSENGER

A DIRECT MARKETING BLOG FROM AMI DIRECT.

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Are You a Marketing Snob?

When you get home at night, do you open your mailbox and groan when you find advertisements and unsolicited marketing, or do you look at them with a marketer's eye? Just as you can learn from analyzing the direct mail pieces that you get at work, you can learn a thing or two from analyzing the direct mail that you get at home.

Although specific strategies for consumer, business, and non-profit campaigns differ, the vehicles that deliver them don't. Tonight when you get home, consider the following as you sort through your mail:

List selection. Have you ever received a piece of direct mail from an organization that you've never done business with and wondered how you ended up on its mailing list? The answer isn't always obvious. Sometimes, in our quest to prospect, we step to the far reaches of our client demographics. Sometimes it works, but in most cases it doesn't. The more you know about your market, the narrower—and the more successful—your list selections will be.

"Handwritten" addressing. Most of the time you know that a machine, not a human, addressed your envelope. Still...you're curious enough about who sent it to open it. A sneaky strategy? Maybe. A successful strategy? If you opened the envelope, you bet it was. "Handwritten" addresses, live stamps, and first-class postage give mail a personal feel that usually results in higher open rates.

Freebies. You get them from time to time. Preprinted return address labels. Sample greeting cards. Sample newsletter issues. Have you ever given money to an organization that sent you an unsolicited gift? Could your organization benefit from sending out a relevant freebie to a targeted list?

"Dear Resident" letters. As a marketer, you know that personalization dominates today's marketing environment. To increase your response rate, you personalize your envelopes, your letter content, even the URLs that you direct potential buyers, members, and donors to. Can a "catch all" campaign still survive? Absolutely. Despite their appearances, such mailings still employ targeted offers and targeted lists, which ensure greater success.

No matter where you are—work, home, even the grocery store—you can always learn from the advertising around you. You just need to keep your eyes, and your mind, open to it.