

### 3 Dimensional Marketing, New Tool for Success

**Dimensional mail can be highly effective in increasing response rates and sales. It costs more per unit to produce and mail, but when executed properly with response tracking and follow up, you will have a successful campaign.**

3D (dimensional mail) is anything that has more than two dimensions of height and width. It's not a letter or a flat-sized mailer. Often, dimensional mail is a clear or paper tube, box, foil or pillow pack, DVD, CD-ROM, Video or Jiffy Pack. Dimensional mail can even assume the role of a pop-up mailer, or a pop-up box.

There are a few disadvantages to 3D marketing pieces, but when executed properly the advantages far outweigh the drawbacks:

- Higher cost per unit, response and sale
- More costly to design and print
- Might be mistaken for a bomb or prank
- Box may be damaged in transit
- Might be perceived as a bribe if item inside is highly valuable
- Most effective in Business-to-Business markets

#### Benefits

**Dimensional mail gets noticed.** Nothing stands out more in the pile of daily mail than a tube, box or package. It cuts through all the competitive clutter that everyone else is mailing.

**People are busy** – especially business executives and decision-makers. Most people have an internal “switch” to turn off promotional mail. You can fight this *inertia* by mailing them a 3D piece they can't resist opening or reading.



**Getting past the “gatekeeper”** in today's business climate is even harder than before. Many secretaries, mailrooms or assistants sift through their bosses' or level C executives' mail and discard promotional advertisements. A package or 3D mailer is almost impossible for them to discard due to its unique nature. They don't see it every day, so they don't throw it away.

As with other types of direct mail such as letters, premium offers and cards, you can use personalization throughout. In 2005, *immedia* produced a promotional campaign for

clients promoting our color printing service immPrint. We mailed out traditional card mailers in a campaign format and used a red tube for the final mailer. Not only did the red tube stand out, but also we personalized the half-note letter inside, personalized the crayons with their name, and we personalized the coloring book inside the tube by gender and their name.

Finally, your open and response rates will be higher. Statistics will be outlined later when I cover response rates.

## Areas of Focus

When designing a 3D campaign or a campaign that includes a 3D piece, it's important to keep several things in mind.

- **How to get it opened.** Use item(s) and mailers that connect psychologically or physically with your company, message, or the recipient. For example, if you are a trucking/shipping company, use a die cast truck with your logo on it. If you are promoting a golf tournament or a golf outing, you could use various items associated with golfing such as towels, tees or golf balls. We used crayons and a coloring book because it related to our color printing services.



- **How to get it read.** I cannot say it enough – personalize...personalize...personalize. Use their name, hobbies, interests, favorite colors, important dates or their psychographics throughout the pieces.
- **How to get response.** Is your call to action(s) easy to use? Have you provided multiple ways to respond? Not everyone likes to phone in to respond. Not everyone has a computer or access to one. Limiting methods of response to one or even two mediums is limiting your overall response potential. Look at the demographics, geography and buying style of your audience. Then, pick multiple response vehicles that suit them. Don't require 18-25 year-olds to send a bounce back card through the mail and not give them other options. Options such as email, text messaging or a website will increase lift with this group that is technically savvy and electronically connected.

Conversely, a mailing going to a rural area must not limit the response method to the Internet. According to Pew Internet & American Life Project—2006, 38 percent of rural America is not connected to the Internet at all. Their study goes on to show that 30 percent of *all* Americans are not connected to the Internet. These statistics force me to recall a marketing campaign by a well-known home improvement store that offers a chance to win a \$5,000 gift card by going to their website and entering the promotion code from your sales receipt. What about the 30 percent who are not connected to the Internet? Is the store missing out on these potential consumers?

- **Qualify your list and get it into the right hands.** You don't want to send costly 3D pieces to the non-decision makers in a company. Cold lists that haven't been used or updated recently will result in lost mail and missed opportunities.
- Finally, when planning your 3D mailing campaign or piece, **think about follow-up and tracking your results.** Since it costs more to produce, design and mail these pieces, you must know if they are effective, who is responding and why. When doing follow-up such as more mailers, email or phone calls, do so within two to three days while still fresh in their minds.

## Examples of Campaigns

As a marketing professional, I love examples because it helps me to brainstorm and get more creative with our marketing strategies.

- One of the best examples I read about was by a company called Soell. It was a promotional mailer sent by the city of Memphis to meeting and convention planners. It consisted of a hand-addressed box wrapped in wrinkled brown paper on which was handwritten, "We found your wallet in Memphis." Inside, was a real wallet and the message, "Next time, why not come with it?" In the wallet were credit card look-a-likes for accommodations and dining, with lists of hotels and restaurants on the back. A letter in the box explained why Memphis was the most cost-effective city in which to hold a meeting. "The piece actually got fan mail from meeting planners," says Soell.
- In an effort to increase subscription renewals, a gourmet magazine sent a recipe book in a box prior to the renewal forms going out.
- Other companies have mailed luggage tags with business cards for the contact inside the tag.
- Soap distribution and manufacturing companies send out samples to store buyers.
- Pharmaceutical companies provide free samples to doctors for distribution to patients.
- A well-known shipping company sent shredded money to non-customers with a message saying that money apparently meant nothing to them – to show the savings by switching shippers.

## General Response Rates

There are many methods to measure response rates in marketing campaigns. When I look at a promotional campaign whose sole purpose is to promote a product or service and create market awareness (not to generate response or purchase), I use the following method to calculate response:

Response Rate % = Number of Orders ÷ Promotion Quantity

Educational campaigns are those used to convey knowledge, skills, or instructions about a particular subject in a particular industry. These campaigns are not designed to close a deal, make a sale, or facilitate a hard “call to action.” The formula we used to calculate this response rate was:

Response Rate % = Number of Calls, Contacts, Questions ÷ Mail-Promotion Quantity

According to Entrepreneur.com research and studies, dimensional mail yields an average response rate of 5.49 percent.

The Direct Marketing Association ranks dimensional mail as the second highest in response rates for direct orders. In their statistical member feedback survey, the average response rate was 2.3 percent and the highest response rates were 8.3 percent. Dimensional mail also ranks highest for in-store traffic generation of all other marketing channels. Other channels in marketing include newspapers, magazines, television, radio, yellow pages, Internet, and business papers. Direct mail (other than catalogs) is the number one direct marketing channel used by marketers.

According to CommuniPak.com, their customers have experienced a 10-25 percent response rate for 3D Mail.

## Case Study 1: Continental Resources

Source: Alan Sharpe-www.sharpecopy.com

Target market: Information Technology Executives

Objective: Sales representative books a meeting with the IT executive to make the sales pitch for their software

They sent this remote control dinosaur in the colorful box without the control to the executives. They also promised to bring the remote control to the executive when they booked a meeting with a sales representative.



Continental Resources had a 30 percent response rate for sales meetings setup.

## Case Study 2: immedia Digital Printing Services Educational Campaign

**Target market:** Current clients who were using black-and-white laser printing services, but didn't know about or use color-printing services.

**Objective:** Create market awareness for printing options; educate clients on one-to-one marketing capabilities, and variable graphic capabilities.

**Quantified list amount:** 82 records

**Four-piece campaign:**

- 1 - 5.5" x 8.5" personalized card mailer with recipient's name on the front of card
- 2 - Educational letter in #10 green envelope with a coupon offer of 50% off the setup or buy on setup get the second free (see figure.)
- 3 - Box with crumpled personalized letter from 2<sup>nd</sup> mailer; new letter referencing the first being thrown away and 2<sup>nd</sup> letter with additional educational information
- 4 - Red 2x6" tube with personalized informational half-sheet, personalized crayons and personalized gender-coded coloring book

**Feedback and interest response rate:** 24 percent

**Direct order response rate:** 7 percent



## Case Study 3: immedia immPrint & immPOD Service Campaign

**Target market:** Current clients not using any black-and-white or color copy or printing services

**Campaign objectives:** Primary – educational and market awareness; secondary – generate orders

**Quantified list count:** 980 (suppressed records from first campaign, case study 1)

**Offer one:** Buy one; get one FREE, on the setup fee (response rate was 2:1 over offer two)



Offer two: 50 percent off the setup fee

Four-piece campaign:

- 1 - Personalized Card Mailer with recipient's name on front of card
- 2 - Educational letter in #10 green envelope
- 3 - Two-inch box with educational letter and print samples: 3M Post-It Notes, CD ROM labels, various photos in multiple sizes, personalized post card size sheets.
- 4 - Red 2x6" tube; same contents as first campaign.

Response rate included any action taken by the prospect such as direct order, call or email showing interest, or request for additional information – 30 percent response.

## **Features for Success**

As with any marketing, you must think “campaign,” not one shot. Focus and quantify your list to laser accuracy since dimensional mailers cost more per unit. Testing, tracking and follow-up are essential to knowing what happened, why and what to do for the next campaign.

Tie in any promotional item with what you are selling and make it valuable, not cheap. Use sturdy standard-sized boxes and tubes to reduce costs and damage.

Analyze the overall costs and determine a break-even point before you begin. This point is your sales force minimum goal for orders or contact. Make it scalable to your budget and organization's infrastructure. Don't send out more than you can handle for incoming calls and follow-up marketing. Qualify your lists, track everything, and follow up with mailers, telephone, email, or in-person exchanges.

Dimensional mail is fun to plan, design and deploy. The response rates are noticeably better than conventional direct mail, and when coupled with other marketing channels will increase response.

If you need ideas, or just want to discuss dimensional marketing in ways that fit your organization, Deb and Donn Irwin and I are experienced in the process, and are ready to help you plan your next campaign. Give us a call or send me an email at [tda@goimmedia.com](mailto:tda@goimmedia.com).

Tyler Anderson  
Director of Marketing Operations