

Golden Rules of Direct Mail – The Big List!

by Automatic-Mail.com

Here's the golden rule of direct mail: Mail unto others as you would have them mail unto you. That's a little broad. So let's take a look at it piece by piece. Here are seven elements that combine to make up the one big "Golden Rule."

Rule #1: Mail only what is relevant to people who care

In other words, don't mail a solicitation for membership to the new golf course unless you know you're mailing to golfers. While golfers would enjoy receiving such a mailing and might jump at the chance to play or join, not only would non-golfers most likely not be interested in receiving it, they most likely wouldn't be taking positive action — such as reaching for their checkbooks.

We know that targeted direct mail is extremely effective. But misdirected mail or mail that is inappropriately targeted is wasteful and expensive.

Rule #2: Eliminate the risk of buying

You know that when you receive a solicitation for any offer, you appreciate knowing that you can buy with complete confidence. If you're not completely happy with your purchase — or any aspect of the purchase — you have recourse. That recourse could be to receive all of your money back if you're not completely satisfied. It could be to receive an extended service contract at no additional charge.

Just as you like to know that you can buy confidently your prospects and clients want to know the same thing. So we say, "Bring risk reversal into your direct mail solicitations. Make it prominent throughout your offer and your copy. Talk about it. Brag about it."

Rule #3: Offer all appropriate response options

Some people like to know they can pick up the phone any time day or night and call to place an order. Others like to sit in their easy chair with laptop in lap and place an order online.

What's your favorite way to take the next step or respond? If you appreciate returning a postage-paid business reply card, so be it. If you prefer to be one of those two-in-the-morning buyers, so be it as well. The point is that just as you prefer to have it your way, so do your prospects and clients. So give them options. Through testing, you'll determine the three or four most preferred response options of your market. And then you'll be doing unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Rule #4: Be honest. Maintain high integrity

You know how you feel when you think you're being scammed or taken advantage of. You know how you feel when a marketing message borders on "too good to be true."

We've all watched television commercials that show an amazing cleaning product, for example – one that we've tried on a lesser stain. We know it doesn't work. Credibility goes down the drain right along with the cleaning product.

Rule #5: Use personalization carefully and wisely

Personalization is so easy to use these days that many direct mail and marketing campaigns use a tremendous amount of it. Research shows that personalization helps increase response. However, a name spelled wrong is sometimes all it takes for an otherwise on-target campaign to wind up in the circular file.

When someone sends you a solicitation with your name spelled incorrectly or containing information that is too personal or incorrect, you know the feeling. That feeling is magnified even more when that solicitation comes from someone who should know better — such as a company that you've purchased from in the past.

Rule #6: Don't Assume; Educate

It's dangerous to assume that your clients, customers, and prospects know what you think they know. In reality your readers may know more than you about what you're selling; they may know less. You just never know for sure. It always helps to educate clients, customers, and prospects in such a way that neither talks down to them nor insults them.

A few carefully chosen paragraphs summarizing features and benefits, a link to a special website with facts and figures, and so on can provide a quick overview of your product or service. It's what you would want someone to do for you — particularly if you were new to a certain technology, product, or service solution.

Rule #7: Offend no one

It's hard to know what might offend a client, customer, or prospect. Photos of young women at the beach in nearly nonexistent bikinis could be offensive to women from the Middle East who are relatively new to our culture. A group photo that lacks a minority person could be offensive to a member of a racial minority simply because it is missing from the photo.

The same holds true in copy. While it seems impossible to "offend no one," we need to be alert to that each and every person on your list is different. They come to the moment in time when they open your envelope having a variety of life experiences. The solution is to think carefully about the words and images you use. Get a consensus about your words and images from a cross section of people.

Wrapping Up

When you follow the golden rule of direct mail, life gets better. You attract loyal clients for life who keep buying and who refer you to their friends and colleagues.

This provides you with the greatest impact and the most leverage — guaranteed.

About Automatic Mail Service, Inc.

Your 360° Direct Marketing Success

We drive sales! Since 1971, Automatic Mail has served its customers with A+ service:

- Ensuring your success
- Freeing you to focus on your business
- Making your marketing efforts more effective and your direct dollars go further

Automatic Automated Marketing integrates your direct print marketing and lead generation with your Website, email marketing, and a master customer data management system. Increases response, ROI, your bottom line.

Keeping up with your clients' needs is overwhelming. Managing your sales pipeline is a challenge.

Automatic Automated Marketing delivers sophisticated, easy-to-use marketing integration tools.

- Improve ROI of direct mail
- Track who is doing what with your print mail, emails, Website.
- Accurately target print, broadcast, online messages.
- Nurture leads and deliver the information they want.
- Cross-sell & up-sell more effectively.
- Manage your clients and your prospects easily, successfully.

Automatic Automated Marketing delivers sales ready leads plus the tools to manage them throughout the entire customer lifecycle.

Feedback

If you have any feedback or any questions, please email or call Automatic. No matter is too small.

Email info@automatic-mail.com

Call 1-800-474-9109