



Improving Your Response Rate with the 60-30-10 Rule

Often people will ask me, “What is the secret formula to a successful direct marketing campaign?” In my opinion you have to start with the 60-30-10 rule. It is one of direct marketing’s most fundamental principles and it is a great place to start when attempting to increase the response rate of your campaign.

- o 60% of your success is based on your database
- o 30% of your success is based on your offer and message
- o 10% of your success is based on your creative and your marketing vehicle

Let’s break it down.

60% of Your Success: Your Database

Your database, or mailing list, is unquestionably the most important element of any direct marketing campaign. You have to be talking to the right people. You need to be laser focused on the prospects most likely to respond. Your database needs to be massively optimized so you are reaching only the best prospects with surgical precision.

What kind of response do you think you will get if you have fantastic creative with an incredible 50% off offer on a lawn mower but you are mailing to apartment renters? Virtually nil.

Get relentlessly focused on the data. Mail less pieces but to the crème of the crop database. Your marketing strategy is all in the data.

30% of Your Success: Your Offer & Message

Your mail piece has to present a jaw-dropping, compelling offer to get your prospect to respond. Remember that people are busy and getting bombarded by thousands of marketing messages every day. Your offer must be relevant (see database above) and it has to create an uncontrollable urge to respond.

Remember that your prospect will not read your mail piece, they will scan it. And they will do it in approximately 0.5 seconds as they sort their mail. Make sure your message and offer jump out in a scan test. Make sure there is a strong and obvious call to action that tells the prospect precisely what you want them to do.

10% of Your Success: Your Creative

Some people instantly jump to the creative to increase response rates without considering the data or offer. They say, “Make it red.” “Use a picture of a teenager.” “It must be a postcard and not a letter.” Sure the creative can help get the mail piece noticed, but will it help get the prospect to pick up the phone and call you? Certainly there is plenty you can do to optimize the creative (more on this in another article), but focus on the data and offer first.