

## Rules of Thumb for Marketing to your Past Customers

Keeping in touch can dramatically increase business, when done properly.

It's a fact that your customers are your best leads. This means that the most likely people to purchase your products and/or services are the ones who have paid for them before. It's also a fact that it costs far less money to keep a customer than it does to go out and get a new one. These are the two reasons that using direct mail to keep in touch with your customer database is a must. There are a few principles to follow when marketing to contacts in your company database that can maximize your bottom line.

### **Rule #1 - Collect all of their information.**

It sounds like a no-brainer but you would be surprised. The more information that you have on your customers, the more likely it is that you will be able to get in touch with them to let them know about specials or to remind them it's time for their next service. Also, don't neglect to ask for your customers' email addresses, most everyone has one and most will give it up pretty easily.

### **Rule #2 - Don't treat your customers like prospects.**

Make sure when you collect the information in your database you differentiate between people who have placed an order in the past and people who have not. Customers want to feel like you are paying attention to them and when they have already sent their children to your camp and are still getting your "10% discount for First Time Registrations" postcards they tend to feel unappreciated. Bottom line, if they don't qualify for an offer you are sending out, don't send it to them.

### **Rule #3 - Don't let your designs get stagnant.**

When you are mailing to databases of people that you have never spoken to before, it is OK to send them the same postcard multiple times. It helps to increase recognition and will eventually increase your response rate. Dealing with customers and prospects that you have already spoken to (meaning they already know most or all of the details of your business) you need to mix things up a bit. Your mailings should be attention getting and informative. If you have started offering a new service recently, a piece designed to let your database know about it would be a smart move. The main point is to keep your company in the front of their mind and to keep them reading your promotion.

Being great at what you do is not always enough to keep the customers that you have earned. With all of the competition out there today you need to be constantly reminding your customers that you are the best at what you do. Direct mail is the best way to give them that reminder.

Always remember to keep mailings that you send to your database informative, attractive and most of all current. Personalize everything that you can and make sure that what you are sending to a past client actually pertains to them or their company. Anything less and your customer may start to drift, and the only people that are going to be happy when that happens are your competitors.