

By the end of this report, you will have a step-by-step solution to **GUARANTEE** with Absolute certainty, that you'll generate an extra \$10,000 in new business in the next 12 months by bridging the gap between **ONLINE AND OFFLINE Marketing**.

Before we cross that bridge, I want to break through a common misconception about the internet. It's not about technology cutting-out the middleman. The internet is about making connections ... Connections to places, information, and people. The more connections you make, the more tools you have in your bag that relieve your time from mundane minimum wage tasks, the more money you'll earn Period.

In this report you will discover the most advanced ideas and techniques of on-AND-offline marketing used by the top people in cleaning industry, starting with....

The 6 Most Common and Costly Mistakes that 98% of All Business Owners Make with their Websites...

Costly Mistake #1: Missing out all together and Not having a website

Imagine back a few years... Do you think when truck mount cleaning systems were introduced to our industry it gave those cleaning companies who could afford them a distinct advantage over the portables? *You bet they did.*

Well, what are the smaller tools we now take for granted... fax machines? Or cell phones?... I know it's hard to imagine running your company without these tools nowadays, but it wasn't that long ago that they were a luxury that only the most successful cleaners could enjoy.

Today...just as your **truck mounted vehicle** – Cell phones, fax machines, computers **AND NOW WEBSITES** are utilities, **ABSOLUTE MUST HAVES** for any business.

Listen, before going any further, you **NEED** to understand:

A Properly developed website can be an incredibly profitable tool in your business! You ABSOLUTELY WITHOUT QUESTION NEED to have one! Nowadays, your customers demand it! If you don't have a website you run the risk of potential prospects (and client base) thinking you're "behind the times"

Upwards of 98% of websites are a complete waste of time and money. Your website should be profitable. However, if it isn't developed, maintained and promoted correctly it can be a frustrating and very costly.

Technology is already revolutionizing the service delivery industry. It won't be long until the top 10% of all companies will capture 90% of the business.

TODAY! Right at this moment, it is self-assessment time. Where will your business be in 2 years? Will you be in the top 10 to 20%? Or, will you become the proverbial "*deer in the headlights*" mowed-over by your competitors?

Because, I can promise you, if you are not effectively leveraging yourself with technology **RIGHT NOW**, you, along with 90% of other businesses run the very real risk of scraping the bottom of the barrel for the 10% of "*leftover*" business.

Understand, the Internet is used primarily by middle and upper-class families with children – a prime demographic for the cleaning industry. This means that the vast majority of your target market is ALREADY “on the Net”.

If you have not yet made the internet a central part of your business, you’re already playing catch-up! You NEED a website to cost effectively communicate with your client base and broadcast your sales message to prospective customers who are online right now searching for the right company to help them with their needs.

Hopefully, by now, I have convinced you of the importance of having a top notch (effective) website as a centerpiece for your business. I’m sure you want to know how to get into this top 10% and make the internet pay-off big for you. To answer this question, it is important to understand....

Costly Mistake #2: The Look-At-Me.... “Image” Style Websites

Most businesses believe that marketing means promoting themselves. They believe that by saying they are “**Number #1**” or a “**XYZ certified**” cleaner, people will find this compelling and want to work with them. The truth is ... *Nothing could be farther from reality*

Year after year, businesses from all over the globe spend millions of dollars on colorful, beautiful and expensive brochures and advertisements. These polished pieces are filled with clever lines that promise “quality”, “integrity” and “service”.

This type of advertising is called “image” or “institutional” advertising. Image ads usually talk about how great the business paying for the ad is. This type of advertising provides no benefits to prospects, and gives them little or no reason to favor your business over others.

Open any local newspaper or phone book and you’ll usually find an entire section of cleaning company advertising making the same empty and meaningless promises.

- “I’m **XYZ certified**” (would you do business with someone simply because they told you they were a multi-million dollar company?)
- “We Are The Biggest!”
- “I Have All The Credentials and Awards!”
- “I have an **XYZ cleaning** system”
- “I Provide Great Service”

What do these Headlines do to Provide Pleasure.... or Solve Problems?

If you stop and think about it... people pay money for two basic types of services:

- 1. Pleasure providing services**
- 2. Problem solving services**

Restaurants, movies, sports events, and other forms of recreation are examples of pleasure providing services.

The first and most important step in marketing is to create a problem-solving service that makes people’s lives better, easier, and tempts and compels them to want to preview your services. Why would people hire you above all other choices in the marketplace? If you have a razor sharp answer to that question, you’ll get business – more than you can comfortably handle.

Think about all the advertisements you are inundated with on a daily basis. Do you process all these advertisements? Or have you unconsciously (or consciously) devised a strategy to shield yourself from all this advertising?

Of course you have. I call it the “Advertising Protection Armor”. The fact of the matter is... You can’t make anyone read or do what they’re **NOT** interested in.

It’s that simple. Despite all the nonsense that the many *old-school Sales Gurus* Preach... you know... “closing techniques: *Always be closing*” or “Objection handling: They say that ... you say this”

People don’t want to be sold. But, they do want to be helped.

Successful marketers understand that they must concentrate on a prospect’s needs and wants. This kind of advertising is called Emotional Direct Response Marketing (or more commonly just Direct Response). With effective direct response marketing, you offer people what they are dying to know, and then they contact you to get it. Done properly, you can have prospects lined up at the door waiting to do business with you.

Compare the following Direct Response style headlines with the previous ones:

- We’ll give you the most thorough cleaning ever... or its free!
- FREE Carpet Audit
- 4 Common Mistakes Home Seller’s Make With Their Carpets.

Put yourself in the shoes of someone looking to have their carpets cleaned. Are these headlines likely to be more effective in getting you to pick up the phone and call versus the ones that boast how great the company is and what type of truck mounted cleaning system they use – of course they are.

Direct response marketing, is designed to evoke an immediate response, action, visit, call or purchasing decision from the viewer or reader. Direct response advertising directs people to take action. It compels readers, viewers, or listeners to contact you before they hire a carpet cleaner to clean their carpets.

Emotional direct response marketing is ideally suited for use on the internet.

Why is this? People love to use the Internet because it offers a non-threatening and hassle-free way to gather news, facts and advice. They know they can visit your website without the pressure of talking to a sales representative or being sold. They know they won’t have to talk to anyone if they don’t want to. They can spend as much time as they want looking at information without feeling threatened.

Clearly, this is a double-edged sword. People know they can visit your site without the hassle of being contacted, but you want to talk to the real prospects. The SOLUTION- use direct response marketing techniques on your website.

The last thing people want to do is “raise their hand” so that a salesperson can contact them. In order to overcome the reluctance of being sold, you must give them compelling reasons to contact you. With a direct response website, people will be compelled to leave their contact information behind in return for the free information they want and need.

Costly Mistake #3: The Wrong Content

We've all seen websites with scores of pages, chat rooms, area info, school reports, etc. on their site attempting to encapsulate "the local" experience and pass it along to their visitors. These "libraries", while often very useful to potential clients, are so overwhelming that they actually remove any incentive to contact you.

Think for a moment... After someone has visited and reviewed your website, what would you most like them to do?

Obviously, a cleaning company would like every site visitor to leave a message that says, "loved your website... Please come clean my carpet..." While this is possible and may happen on occasion, the reality is ...it doesn't happen that fast.

You must guide your prospects through a process... Peak their interest, provide useful information that has value, build trust, and compel action

Training New Customers to Trust You is Just Like Training a Puppy!

That may sound a little ridiculous at first but the more you learn about marketing and human behavior you'll be amazed to discover that skillful marketing involves most of the same steps as successful dog training does!

Whether you're training a dog or seeking to motivate prospects to respond to your advertising and do business with you, the essential ingredients are the same.

- You've got to get their attention!
- You've got to arouse their curiosity, appetites, or emotions.
- You've got to have tempting treats and rewards to offer.
- You can't move too quickly.... or you'll scare them.
- You've got to build trust step-by-step.
- You've got to always leave them hungry for more!

Patient Little Steps are Crucial...

The first step in developing your website is to have a focused, achievable and quantifiable primary goal. What should your primary goal be? Here's what I recommend:

Get the **MAXIMUM** number of qualified prospects to identify themselves when they visit your website.

With this in mind, we can now develop content for your site to achieve this goal. First, we must find a way to get qualified prospects to identify themselves. This can be done simply by providing FREE information and /or services. For example, **a free report on how to choose a carpet cleaner.** But this information is provided only AFTER they have identified and qualified themselves.

Contrast this with the "library" type of sites. In an attempt to provide a site "*rich in content*", most businesses mistakenly place the entire text of the report on their website without asking the prospect to identify themselves with a name and email address. Think about it. Why would a prospect contact the business when they can simply read the report on the website? When they're done, they will leave the site and move on – and more than likely, *never come back*.

Another common content mistake occurs when you see a collection of links to other websites “of interest”. In most cases these links simply suck away your hard earned traffic to other sites, never to be heard from again. Usually, having the WRONG content can be traced back to...

Costly Mistake #4: Choosing The WRONG Website Developer

The vast majority of website developers are computer programmers or graphic artists, NOT marketing experts. They spend far too much time and money developing a “cool-look” for your site, and have **NO UNDERSTANDING of developing compelling benefits for your website visitors to contact you.**

Sites done by programmers are poorly designed and lack focus. If you’ve been online, you can spot these sites because normally you’ll get an instant headache. They are jam packed with links and jargon that ordinary people simply don’t understand... or have any clue where to begin.

Websites done by designers are great eye candy. Some of the top companies in the world have sites that are just plain “fun” to look at. One site I once visited for an international jeans manufacturer was so “cool Looking” (It had an empty pair of jeans walking across my screen, seemingly having a conversation with another pair); that I was certain hundreds of man hours must have gone into its creation. And guess what, I never went back. Why? – Because there was no reason for me to.

And if people, a) can’t figure out how to buy your product or contact you. Or, b) have no compelling reason to come back... You may as well have your neighbors thirteen year-old kid design your site and save yourself the five to twenty thousand dollars that the programmer and designer was going to milk you for.

If you get nothing else from this report, heed this:

WARNING: Unless your website developer really understands Direct Response Marketing and selling carpet cleaning, don’t rely on him to write YOUR Message or develop your site!

You might be thinking that getting on the Internet is a very daunting and expensive task. Well, up until now you’d be right. If you call almost any website development company to build you a custom site, you will get quoted prices that range **anywhere from \$2,000-\$22,000+ - just to build a site alone!** And ... if you want a site that is worth anything you need to have back-office functionality built-in to communicate with your clients - with this you could easily tack on an additional \$500-\$5,000 – Zowey!

On the other hand, while many businesses pay too much money for a website that earns them next to nothing, others cheap out. They hire a friend who builds websites “on the side”. Why is this bad? Well, for starters, is your friend an expert in selling your services? What does your friend know about marketing? Or selling on the Internet? And guess who is going to continually be providing content for your site – YOU ARE!

Another option is “Template” sites that are pitched all over the place. These sites are little more than an online business card with very few options for customization. They don’t use any form of direct response marketing, and as a result, they won’t generate you much business, if any! You usually pay both up-front and monthly fees and are often locked in for two or more years.

And don't forget about the importance of good copywriting. Regardless of which of the above routes you choose, you might still have to hire an independent direct response copywriter. This would cost you big bucks and you would still be expected to provide all the guidelines for the content. Ofcourse, you could leave it up to them, but what do they know about running a successful carpet cleaning business?

Costly Mistake #5: Failing to Effectively Promote Your Website

Don't fall for the common fallacies about the Web that all you need is a really great site and people will flock to it by the thousands. Yeah, right. It just doesn't work that way. Yes, there are millions of people on the Web but not one of them will visit your site unless they can find it and have a reason to visit it.

Once your site is up and running, you'll still have to promote it to create traffic. After all, as one of my marketing mentors Gary Halberd once said:

"the greatest message in the world is useless...if it is shouted upon deaf ears"

Like it or not, making a site that people want to look at is not about how much your designer knows about design, or how much your tech person knows about "bells and whistles". It's how much you know about marketing. I know this shouldn't be true BUT it is. You can fight it and spend all your money on a site with no results, or abandon the internet all together, **OR** you can **CHANGE!** And enthusiastically embrace it and gain lots of new business over the Internet. (If and when you make this giant, mental paradigm shift, you instantly gain an enormous competitive edge over everybody else in your area. You'll eat 'em' alive!

The process of promoting and refining your website to maximize the response rate is a never-ending battle littered with expensive pot-holes. But with the right partner the process can become pleasurable.

Is your website developer or internet Service Provider given you a profitable **PROVEN** Internet marketing plan? How about **any** marketing plan? Do they regularly update you with insider secrets, tips, and strategies?

I think that by now, you agree that if you can combine Direct Response Marketing and continual refinement through the most empowering communication medium of our time, you've got the ultimate sales tool.

How big of a difference can Direct Response Marketing make?

Let's say your site gets just 100 visitors each month (this is easily achievable with a minimum of promotion). If your site doesn't use direct response methods, you'll be very lucky to get one prospect a month to identify themselves.

Compare this with a site that uses the best direct response techniques – Multiple compelling benefits, attention grabbing headlines, carefully worded copy, and strong guarantees, With this type of site, the response rate can easily reach 15% to 20% (conservatively, let's say five additional prospects per month). Do the math. If you can convert just five of these extra prospects at an average billing of \$350, you've increased your annual revenue by over \$10,000. Any increase in this response rate will go right on your bottom line! (And when you factor in the Lifetime Value of your customers, we are now adding tens of thousands of dollars in revenue to your business)

Introducing the Ultimate Internet Solution for Carpet Care Companies...

The OnTop Carpet Cleaning Website!

The On Top Carpet Cleaning Website is the Ultimate Tool – a Complete Internet System to help you connect to more prospects, save you time, make you more money and overall ... it quite simply just makes your life easier

Here is a detailed menu of exactly what you get...

“All-Inclusive” - The OnTop Website is a complete turnkey Internet Marketing Solution – you get all the tools you need to start getting results in your marketplace quickly and easily. You’ll get everything you need to guide you through all the steps that will make your website an automated money making machine. Included

1. **Personalized Email account:** (e.g. you@yourdomain.com) Not only is an email account included with your site, you’ll get one tied to your domain name making it much easier to remember and much more professional (no more jsmith1042@hotmail.com). (you are responsible for registering your domain name)
2. **Up to 20 extra e-mail accounts** unique to your domain. (example: team@yourdomain.com or assistant@yourdomain.com) Not only is this easier to remember, it is more professional than (johndoe619@hotmail.com)
3. **Complete website hosting with speed and reliability:** You won’t need to find a separate Internet Service Provider to host your site. We take care of ALL the technical aspects of your site (warning, to avoid technical lingo, skip to the next point): FTP, SMTP/POP3, disk space, transfer rate, site performance, backup options, domain name registration, administration, testing, server maintenance, upgrades and much more, including Email forwarding and Auto-Responders.
4. **YOUR SITE WILL NEVER BE OUT OF DATE!** Website maintenance and upgrades: We’ll continually update and refine your site’s technology to maximize its effectiveness. Never again will you face time-consuming and costly updates to your site to keep it up to date. We are continually studying and testing the latest developments in Internet marketing and site development to keep you one step ahead of your competitors.
5. **Affiliate Pages for Your Business Partners:** Create pages within your site for your key affiliates or partners (mortgage brokers, home inspectors, lawyers, landscapers, etc.). Easily promote your partners and develop profitable back-end alliances without directing traffic away from your site. You could even charge your affiliates an advertising fee (or a commission on sales) for these pages and reduce or ELIMINATE THE COST of your new site.
6. **Free technical Support and Marketing Assistance:** via email – we’ll always be available to answer your questions.

- a. **“Step-by-Step”** – We don’t just build you a site and turn you loose. We consider ourselves to be your “partner” in success – as you’ll soon learn we’re putting ourselves on the hook to help you earn more income off the Internet.
7. You’ll get FREE OnTop customer service, a complete video training program on your new site which gives you complete control over editing and managing your site. You will also have total control over building your Social Media and Search Engine Optimization.
 - a. **“Generate New Prospects”** – The OnTop Website is a complete set of direct response marketing tools designed to compel viewers to respond to your sales message. It includes a comprehensive library of the latest proven direct response marketing techniques, which provides dozens and dozens of registration incentives that turn anonymous web surfers into hot prospects for you!
8. Automatic report responders: Whenever someone visits your site and requests a Report, your site will automatically direct them to a “hidden” member’s area. This means no more time spent mailing out the Reports.
9. FREE Over-the-Net Appointment form
10. You can opt to be submitted to the top local search engines
11. Testimonials Page: Nothing is more believable or will sell your services better than the words of your happy customers. We’ll even show you how to collect testimonials from your best customers.
12. We offer 5 different high-end designs, each with 4 different color options
13. **“Control Center”** – Behind the scenes of your OnTop website is a powerful Easy-To-Use Management Console that allows you to:
 - a. Add content, link to anywhere...
 - b. Create pages
 - c. Add pictures, videos, documents, contracts, invoices
 - d. Add lead generating forms, calendars, Appointments, etc.
 - e. Control your site yourself anytime 24 hours a day – no more relying on someone else to make simple (but costly) updates.
14. Management Console
 - a. You, or one of your assistants, can very simply modify your personal information or “tweak” your site at any time using our website editor.
15. FREE Domain Parking:
 - a. If you register additional domain names, you can “park” these domains against your website. For example, many company have several domain names pointing to their website.
16. The OnTop Carpet Cleaner Websites comes with 30 pages. You choose the content and add or edit it through the Website Control Panel.
17. Social Media Marketing:
 - a. In our top 3 packages we set up a social network for you (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Blogs, etc. If you are not already doing something with social you are already missing out on a lot of new business. Social Media can drive traffic to your website. Setting up social network can cost from \$500+ and we include them free in our top 3 packages.

18. Search Engine Optimization:

Getting your website to come up in the top of the search engines can be very costly. How do our competitors charge for Search Engine Optimization?

A Survey of Over 500 SEO revealed the following pricing:

- Turns out, it's most common to charge \$100 to \$150 per hour.
- Also popular is project-based pricing, where the average price is between \$2,500 to \$5,000, in the US.

Our top package includes monthly search engine optimization for a fraction of the cost. How can we do that? Because our teams are focused on the Carpet Cleaning Industry so we have years of proven methods that we know will drive our customers to the top of the search engines. Additionally, since we own the entire website and marketing platform, we can automate processes that most SEO companies are forced to do by hand. This greatly reduces our cost which we pass on to our customers.

19. Social Media Marketing:

We have built a revolutionary Social Media Marketing Platform that reduces 3 hours of SEO and Social Media work and reduces it into 3 minutes.

When you post an article or video using our platform, it will automatically do the following:

- A page is built on your website and the article or video is added to the page including keywords and meta descriptions.
- A posting is done to all of the Social Media websites that we have set up for you – with one-way links back to the page on the website.
- The article or video posting is added to the article or video tab for indexing in the search engines.

*****The OnTop Carpet Cleaning Website Is A Breeze To Use*****

It doesn't matter if you're new to computers, or even new to the carpet cleaning business! The OnTop Website has been carefully designed to guide you through each step from setting up your new professional website to communication with all the new clients you're going to get.

Having a professional high-end lead generating website does not need to be an expensive or complicated process. Although OnTop was built to give Cleaning Companies impressive online capabilities, it is a simple to learn and allows you to be up and running in minutes, automatically. Yet, it provides enough depth and scalability that even more advanced users will find engaging.

The OnTop Website far exceeds the power, flexibility, and usability of anything else available, having been specifically designed to meet your special needs as a carpet cleaner professional—while being flexible enough to grow with your business!

You'll LOVE what the The OnTop Website will do for your business...

Guaranteed!

There is Absolutely NO RISK!

You CANNOT possibly lose or waste a penny with our **Amazing TRIPLE GUARANTEE!**

You must make MORE money with your website... and you must be thrilled with everything, and it won't cost you anything if you're not immediately ecstatic.

GUARANTEE #1: 30-Day PAY NOTHING Test Drive

take 30 days from the day your site is activated to review it, try it, prove its value – and you decide. If you're not happy, for any reason, simply contact us at any point during the 30 days, cancel your site, and we'll refund your money. No questions. No hassle.

GUARANTEE #2: You're Never Locked In – Cancel Anytime

If you are ever unsatisfied with your website, you may cancel the service at any time. That's right. If at any time, you feel this is not for you, just let us know. You are NEVER "locked-in" to any long-term commitment.

GUARANTEE #3: Unequaled 12-Month \$10,000 Warranty – Available at the Full Throttle Package Only

Stay with us for an entire year from the day your site is ready and maintain your account in good standing. Register your warranty and get 12 months of the ultimate cleaning industry website. Use all the benefits. Post 1 article or video a day. If you can honestly say you have not generated at least \$10,000 in new business you know you would not have made without us, and you have made an honest effort to use and promote your website as we suggest, simply cancel your site during the 13th month, and we will write you a check equal to 50% of all the monthly subscription fees you've paid during the year. We will be your 50/50 partner, so we're on the hook to make you at least \$10,000.

Check around. Will any other website provider guarantee the success of your website and \$10,000 to boot? Will they stand behind not only their product, but the results you'll experience from it? We will, and WE DO

Bottom line, we're taking all the risk. You have nothing to lose and \$10,000+ to gain!

Costly Mistake #6: Failing to Act When Opportunity Knocks

"Nothing is more commonplace than unsuccessful people with talent"

Calvin Coolidge

Many People get left behind in business because they don't seize an opportunity when it presents itself to them. Complacency Kills. You now hold in your hands the opportunity of a lifetime – the chance to completely revolutionize the way you run your business – to exponentially multiply your sales, and work less while doing it! How much is that worth to you, your family, and your life? And the best part is that this opportunity is totally guaranteed!

All you have to do is say "MAYBE"....

Act now! Not only will you get the Ultimate Website for Cleaners – **The OnTop Website Full Throttle, Triple Guaranteed to make you at least an extra \$10,000 in revenue over the next year**, you'll also save big!

No Setup fee	you save:	\$3,600.00
SEO savings	You save:	\$5,000.00

	Total Savings:	\$8,000.00

Your total SAVINGS is \$8,000.00 if you act now

If you are not on the Internet, you're already behind! *What excuse do you make when asked for your email or website address – and you haven't got one?* Can you afford to appear "behind the times" to your customers, vendors and associates? Or is it important to you to be perceived as successful, savvy and in tune with the trends in today's market?

If you already have a website, chances are that it is little more than an electronic brochure and you're missing out on a goldmine. When was the last time your website provider gave you a marketing strategy that instantly multiplied your income with little or no effort on your part? And guaranteed its result?

You have read this far for good reasons. Don't back out now! Now is your chance to easily, affordably and instantaneously leapfrog your competition and dramatically increase your sales. With our Iron-Clad, risk-free, TRIPLE GUARANTEE, we've eliminated 100% of the financial risk. The only "catch" – You have to act RIGHT NOW!

The OnTop Website normally cost thousands of dollars, PLUS the appropriate level hosting fee... and at that price it is worth every penny and then some.

However, I'm excited to tell you that you can claim your OnTop Website **RISK FREE** with **Guaranteed Success** for only \$355 per month for our top-of-the-line **FULL THROTTLE WEBSITE – GUARANTEED to line your pockets with an extra \$10,000 in the next 12 months**. I'm sure I don't need to tell you that this is a serious bargain for the price. Go to www.ontopcarpetcleaner.com for more information and to get started. Today!!!

OFFLINE MARKETING

Eight reasons why direct mail still works

Eight points that show why this old-school strategy still works

Multichannel marketers today tend to get caught up in the frenzy of the next greatest trend. What about Web 3.0? What's the hot social networking application? How do we make our e-mails more effective?

Sexy online strategies are and should be a big part of direct marketing. But that doesn't mean you should ignore some of the old-school tactics, like direct mail.

That's right, direct mail.

Sure, it may be true that mail pieces are much more expensive than e-mails, thanks to rising postal and paper costs. And many marketers and consumers alike often perceive direct mail to be old-fashioned and downscale.

But when used wisely and analyzed carefully, direct mail outperforms many tactics, particularly with prospects and certainly with many customer segments.

Newer technologies may excite and preoccupy the marketing team, but direct mail works.

Still not convinced direct mail should be a part of your overall contact strategy?

Here are eight points that illustrate how and why direct mail remains alive and well in the 21st century.

1. Intrusive

Unlike your Website, direct mail is an “active” format. Customers may find their way to your site, but a catalog or a direct mail piece in their mailbox is an intrusive tap on the shoulder that online-only activities don't allow.

While e-mail shares the intrusive nature of direct mail, **e-mails can get overlooked in a crowded inbox.** Plus, consumers are conditioned not to open e-mails from unknown senders for fear of viruses or other technical catastrophes. And direct mail won't get caught in a spam filter.

When done properly, a good direct mail piece will stand out even in a crowded mailbox, grab customers' attention and incite them to act. That's the intrusive nature of direct mail that no other marketing tactic can emulate.

2. Tactile

There's something to be said for appealing to the senses. Direct mail delivers a tactile sensation that online activity can't.

You can feel a mail piece in your hands. You can hear an envelope or tab tear open.

You can see the images and key messages on the printed page. You might even be able to smell it! Websites and e-mail cannot compare to this experience.

The physical nature of direct mail forces customers to take note. And if we do our jobs effectively, the piece will pique their interest and encourage them to spend more time with it.

In bricks-and-mortar retail, **the ability to touch and experience the product increases the likelihood of a sale.** It's the same with direct: Even though it's not the actual product in the recipient's hands, a mail piece still activates the tactile senses.

3. Targeted

At its best, direct mail is targeted to the customers most likely to respond. Whether you are speaking to prospects or customers, the best way to reach a specific audience is through direct mail.

But many marketers do not take full advantage of print's ability to target — not only with lists, but with customized messages. With simple black plate ink changes, you can tailor your direct mail creative to different lists — best customers, lapsed customers, even prospects. You can target customers based on specific activities and microsegment prospects.

The more targeted the message and the list, the better the response. In fact,

If you're not customizing AND PERSONALIZING your print products, you may be wasting your efforts and creating “junk mail” that won't get noticed.

4. Varied

While the cost of some direct mail, particularly catalogs, continues to rise because of postal increases, direct mail offers a wealth of other format options. Depending on the segment and on what you are asking the recipient to do, a postcard, self-mailer or NEWSLETTER can get results much like a catalog — sometimes even greater.

But few mailers think out of the box with format and function. **Direct mail doesn't have to be solely about getting a sale.**

- For instance, how are you thanking customers?

- How are you “in front of them” once a month without them feeling like you are selling to them?
- Are you prospecting a NEW customer or retaining an EXISTING?

Explore the direct mail formats available to you.

- Personalized Monthly Newsletters!
- Personalized “Hand Written” Yellow Letters in Envelopes
- Ugly little “Hand Written” Yellow Postcards. So UGLY, you can’t miss it.
- 3 Time Letters.

(You know, it takes up to 7 touches before a customer will respond?)

- Sending ONE Postcard as a “Thank You” or “Hello”

Work with your creative team and printer to see how you can find an innovative yet effective format. The more distinctive the format, the more it will stand out in the mail.

5. Measurable

One of the key reasons direct mail remains a viable channel is that you can test hypotheses and measure results. While metrics are getting better for online efforts, direct mail still reigns supreme on testing, measurement and analytics.

Even for companies that have difficulty tracking source codes, the use of matchbacks can still help you gauge a mailing’s success and analyze overall results. But with the multiple online hits and touches added to the mix, how you measure must change. The question becomes, which of those online efforts are adding incremental sales to your direct efforts? You can’t measure your mail efforts in a void!

6. Personalized

There’s no question that online technology has made amazing advances in personalization that print can’t touch. But there is something magical about seeing your name in print.

And when a name is cleverly incorporated into a mail piece, the result can be increased sales. Personalization techniques can include working the recipient’s name into a headline, or calling attention to products he or she has previously purchased.

There was a time when personalization was so expensive that it could cripple your

ROI. **But today's technology has made print personalization easier and more affordable.**

Check with your printer to see what new options are available. Think of personalization not just in terms of “your name here,” but also in terms of relevant and variable data.

At a macro level you can “personalize” a cover of a catalog or an offer on an envelope, based on how a particular customer segment responds.

Even better, integrating the online and offline world can really boost overall response.

Consider those marketers who include a personal URL (PURL) printed within the piece.

Not only can it increase response, it can also facilitate tracking!

7. Integrated

Direct mail should not be the only piece of your contact strategy. You should build your mail plan with direct mail as a component, a cog in a larger machine.

Use e-mail to pre-announce mailings or to remind customers of an expiring offer.

Push traffic to your Website for convenient ordering. Tie in social media, using your catalog to promote the online presence.

Get creative with integration by producing an offer requiring a tweet response or that asks recipients to sign up for an offer online — anything that pushes a response, not just a purchase. Don't think of it as a “circulation” strategy but as a “contact” strategy.

Several channels working together is powerful, and there are remarkable advantages. One channel should never replace the other — all should work together to form a unified campaign.

8. Effective

Direct mail works — period. A recent ExactTarget study conducted by Ball State University revealed that while e-mail plays a vital role in marketing communications, **direct mail is still a dominant, prominent purchase driver** for different types of customers.

In some cases, 70% to 90% of survey respondents made a purchase based on receiving direct mail — for all age groups.

Direct mail may seem old timey, quaint or even irrelevant. But it's still an effective way to tap customers on the shoulder and push them into an activity. And while it may eventually be replaced by some newfangled technological innovation, rest assured it's not going away anytime soon.

But as the cost to produce and deliver mail increases, you can't continue mailing as usual expecting the same results. That's not going to work any more: **You have to mail highly efficient, targeted and relevant messages that offer customers a true value.**

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