

# W1

**Wednesday  
Morning  
Fax**  
*from*  
**The  
Castle  
Press**

## **11** direct-mail pointers from Ed Burnett

### **1. Code customers and prospects separately**

A mailing to your customers probably will outpull a promotion to cold prospects by as much as 10 to 1. Yet many advertisers combine the two audiences under a single code. Such a mailing's combined response may be 1.1%—which conceals valuable-to-know facts.

### **2. Test new packages against an existing control**

Include your control package in every new package test, even if you feel positive that a new effort will beat a former winner. It is a better-than-even bet that the old mailer will win.

### **3. Mail inquiry responses independently**

Many advertisers pool inquiries and respond to them at the time of their next scheduled mailing efforts—perhaps months later. This wastes an asset that declines rapidly in value. Respond to inquiries quickly and often.

### **4. Never sit on "hot" names**

Many mailings to costly "hot-name" lists bomb simply because the advertiser takes too long to mail them.

### **5. Do not merge "friend-of-a-friend" names with ordinary prospect lists**

Mailed in their own flight, "friend-friend" names can double response—almost to the rate of your customer file. Mailed with a prospect file, they will generate ordinary responses.

**"Business as usual...results in business as usual, which for most is just a bare living and is not good enough."**

—Ed Burnett

### **6. Don't price by the seat of your pants**

Advertisers often guess wrong about what the market will bear.

### **7. Drop marginal lists pronto**

When tempted to remain to a marginally responsive list, do so only if you can somehow improve the original list.

### **8. Avoid needless merge-purge**

If your duplicate clean-up can save you only 1%-2%, the cost of catching the dupes probably will exceed your saving on postage.

### **9. Make sure business files include SIC codes**

Use of SIC codes can slash the cost of prospecting and list rental.

### **10. Do not overrate first-time orders**

Second and subsequent orders create a customer. The first order only creates a sale.

### **11. Never use multiple signatures on a letter**

Direct mail is most convincing, Burnett advises, when it creates the impression that it is a one-to-one communication with the reader.

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