

W18

**Wednesday
Morning
Fax
from
The
Castle
Press**

Jim Rosenfield's 11-point direct-mail success checklist

Here are pointers on how to save printing dollars without hurting the eye-appeal and response rates of your mailing packages:

- 1.** If you use an addressing window on your outer envelope, place it on the left.
In English-speaking countries, readers' eyes track from left to right.
- 2.** Place your headline above the addressing window.
It stands a better chance of being read there, since most people go from the top of the envelope down to the name-and-address area.
- 3.** Do not use a period at the end of your headline.
It's a stopper, exactly when you want your reader to continue. Another punctuation mark (for instance, ..., ?, or !) is fine, if the sense of your headline calls for one.
- 4.** Tailor your envelope copy to your market situation.
Explicit copy works best with highly competitive or low-involvement markets, such as credit card or telecommunications offers. Teaser copy can do the job in less-competitive or high-involvement areas, such as health and cosmetic products and subscriptions to investment newsletters.
- 5.** Back-of-envelope copy should never introduce a new idea. It should echo and condense your front headline.

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."

—Aristotle

- 6.** In your letter, place benefit copy above the name-and-address or salutation area.
Don't box this text, which stops people. Instead, use bullet points.
- 7.** Limit letter paragraphs to five lines at most.
- 8.** Indent all paragraphs.
- 9.** Use a serif typeface in lines no more than 85 characters in width, in black type on white paper.
- 10.** Insert a telephone icon next to your 800 number every time you mention it. And if you must use a mnemonic phone number (for instance, 1-800-FLOWERS), which irritates many people and depresses response from them, follow it immediately with the corresponding all-numeral number in the same type size and weight.
- 11.** In laser letters, personalize at least the name-and-address area, the salutation, and the P.S. In two-page or longer letters, break each page in the midst of a sentence and end the page with an "over, please" or similar direction—which will double the time people spend reading your letter.

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