

# W5

Wednesday  
Morning  
Fax  
*from*  
The  
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Press

## Testing #1 — Mailing Lists

■ Your mailing list can generate more than 40% of your total responses to a mailing, according to the Direct Marketing Association. The best offer in the world—if not aimed at the right people—will fail.

To find the best type of list to rent, look at the characteristics of the customers who make up your own in-house mailing file—and build outside lists accordingly.

There are more than 50,000 lists out there, available from a wide variety of sources. The main types are compiled lists, response lists, paid subscription lists, and controlled lists. Choosing the right one potentially can make or break your campaign:

■ Compiled lists are assembled from a variety of directories, credit files, and other sources. They are generated for marketing purposes, updated regularly, and give broad coverage of the market, including basic demographics.

Many compiled lists are updated two or three times a month—important, because direct mailers can improve their response rates significantly by using recently updated lists.

■ Response lists are generated from company sales records. They may include information about what product was purchased, how and when it was bought, its price, transaction frequency—all valuable marketing information.

However, response lists are often less complete and may not indicate the

“Those who think they have not time for bodily exercise will sooner or later have to find time for illness.”

—Edward Robert Bulwer-Lytton

purchaser's name and title. In addition, response lists may not be updated as frequently as other types of lists.

■ Paid-subscription lists offer the advantage of showing recipients who have subscribed to specific publications, thereby demonstrating their interest in a given industry or product area.

Paid subscription lists tend to present fewer change-of-address problems than other lists and provide a relatively targeted audience. On the other hand, they may not provide complete demographics.

■ Controlled-circulation lists derive from free magazine subscriptions that publishers offer to qualified subscribers who agree to provide detailed demographic information about their companies and purchasing authority and practices.

As a rule, controlled-circulation lists are highly niche-oriented. They offer rich demographic information and are highly selectable. However, they usually are limited in size, thus may cover only a small part of your entire target market.

Next Wednesday—what to test after your list, and how.

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