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The average U.S. consumer receives 2,904 commercial messages daily – but pays attention to just 52 of them. The odds against anyone’s noticing any given advertisement are 56:1.

—Leo Burnett USA Report

**Wednesday
Morning**

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from

**The
Castle
Press**

5 proven ways to get your message through advertising clutter

“If 56 people are yelling at you from across the room, you’re most likely to listen and respond to the one you know best,” Frequency Marketing creative director Tom Raspas wrote recently in DM News. He offers these five pointers on cutting through today’s advertising static:

■ **Earn long-term relationships**

With typical direct-marketing response rates hovering between 1% and 2%, Raspas advises, you are unlikely to make a dent in your sales prospects’ minds with one – or two or three – ads. He suggests that advertisers communicate with potential customers eight to nine times a year.

■ **Do not swing for the fences**

Instinctively, most creative types are suckers for outrageous approaches. Bad idea, Raspas says. “Good creative, yes. Cutting-edge creative, no,” he prescribes. The look, tone, and manner of your direct-response advertising should bear the closest possible relationship to your brand-image advertising.

“Think of the brand advertising as an umbrella you should stand under,” Raspas urges. “Feel free to go to the edge of that umbrella with your creative approach – but stay under it.”

If you venture boldly into new territory, he says, you’ll deliver a diluted message that is not making use of the brand equity and marketing investment you already have in play.

■ **Respect the numbers**

“It’s amazing what a good analytics person can do when it comes to culling your data, identifying your best customers, determining their lifetime value, and identifying customers at risk for defecting.” If you have such people on staff, listen to them.

■ **Make your message relevant to your customers**

Use your response and sales data to identify customer hot buttons, Raspas says. He cites the Arizona Diamondbacks baseball team, which sent out a mailing to promote season-ticket renewals. Its envelope used digital printing to show each recipient’s actual ballpark seat section and number.

“The ‘wow’ factor of seeing a mail piece personalized not just by name but by ‘my’ seat and location generated an impressive response,” Raspas reports.

■ **Start individual dialogues**

Don’t stop with numbers alone, Raspas recommends. Start two-way conversations with customers by asking them about their wants and needs. The end result: advertising that encourages response because it is personally relevant to the recipient.

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