

ALWAYS DELIVER

A DYNAMITE MESSAGE



There are misconceptions that have followed the promotional postcard into the 21st century. Two of the most common are:

1. Postcards can't deliver much of a message, they're too small
2. Postcards are just a way to rebel against the digital media

First, a postcard can say a lot. It doesn't need a big space to deliver big ideas and generate big results. The one-size-fits-most postcard of the last century has been replaced with cards that can be of almost any size. — designed to fit the target audience, message and marketplace.

WRITE TO FIT, THAT'S THE CHALLENGE

Writing sales copy to fit the limited space of even the largest postcard is a challenge. Write tight, is an old editor's edict. Below are a few tips to help in the process:

- **DON'T LOOK LIKE AN AD** — A postcard is a unique, personal communication vehicle going to a target group of individuals, it should have its own look and feel. Response rates have proven to increase when postcards take on a personal appearance and don't look like "just another ad."
- **MAKE THEM INTERESTING** — Create an appearance that differentiates from "junk mail." Content should intrigue, educate and encourage reader reaction not just close a sale.
- **DIRECT READERS TO TAKE ACTION** — Always deliver a call to action. Direct readers to a website or mobile app and give them an incentive to "do it now."
- **DELIVER YOUR MESSAGE ON BOTH SIDES** — the postcard has two sides, use all the space.
- **CLEAR, RELEVANT HEADLINES** — A no-nonsense headline that makes the message immediately clear is required. Don't make readers work to figure it out. They won't take the time.
- **SUBHEADS ARE VITAL, TOO** — Readership studies show that in an age of 140 character messaging people will read the headline, subheads and captions. These elements make a difference. Resist the urge to be clever!



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CONTENT IS KING!

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A powerful postcard contains three key elements:

- An attention-grabbing visual
- A memorable message
- Straight to the point delivery

When it comes to the message, one thing cannot be overemphasized: Benefits! Benefits! Benefits!

Selling lawn mowers? Multiple speeds, adjustable blades and other features are important, but "it will cut your mowing time in half!" is the benefit that grabs attention.

**** TIP FROM A PRO —** Don't be subtle. Brag about the benefits you are highlighting. Use bold, colorful type and talk about what the product WILL DO rather than what it can do. Develop content copy that leaves room for few or no additional questions. Remove the thought of risk by mentioning guarantees, suggest each reader come see and experience the product/service – and then include a direct contact to set up the trial. And above all, make them an offer.

AN OFFER MEANS BUSINESS

The offer on a postcard generates interest, enthusiasm and action. It may be a special price, special sale dates, limited time offers, limited access, etc. The word "special" notes that it isn't just for everyone every day. Taking advantage of today's technology, your offers can vary within the same postcard campaign. You can offer one special price, action or service to prospects in an effort to generate new business, and then make a different offer to existing customers as you look to build business from them.



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One might be a special sale price or promotional dates and the other a loyalty program or existing customer extended hours, etc.

Here are suggestions for various topics to consider when putting together your offer for new prospects:

- **PROMOTE HIGH VALUE** — highlight a product or service that's considered a high-value item in your trade area and offer it to new customers as part of your campaign.
- **EMPHASIZE LOW COST** — To get someone you've never worked with to give your brand a try you may have to make them feel as if they're getting a "real steal." Always consider using the magic word: FREE. Any profit you may forego by creating a FREE element can be made up in additional sales and long-term relationships.
 - o More and more people expect FREE things. Facebook is FREE, WiFi in many places, is FREE. The concept of getting things without paying makes marketing more difficult.

Similar topics should be considered when marketing to existing customers plus more specific details. The offer for existing customers must have all of these:

- High value
- Excellent value for the cost – "Bang for your buck!"
- Believability – people understand the concept of something being too good to be true
- A specific reward – all buyers need to know "what's in it for me?"

**** TIP FROM A PRO** — When using an offer to improve response, always consider wording it so that people who take advantage immediately (buy now) are rewarded. Include in copy such things as "limited time only," or "order today." Make coupons and special offers date-specific.

As the building blocks fall into place – mailing lists are found or created, the elements of design and content are coming together – the final critical step is to create a roadmap for success. The old saying, "those who fail to plan, plan to fail," must have referred to marketers. Do you need test mailings? When should you mail? How many and how often? All vital questions.

