

BUSINESS

forum

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The Business List

6 Secrets of Direct-Mail Marketing

Destination

AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center

The AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center in Austin, Texas is a member of the International Association of Conference Centers, so you can feel confident in their ability to handle any kind of meeting situation.

Located in the heart of the city of Austin on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin, the AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center is poised to handle business travelers from around the world. The center boasts more than 40,000 square feet of meeting space and a wide range of rooms, from traditional or tiered classrooms with high-tech capabilities to a multimedia amphitheater and divisible ballroom. In addition to this, there is excellent wireless connectivity throughout the entire facility, courtesy of AT&T.

You can feel good about staying at the AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center. The center cares deeply about sustainability, and has taken steps to be environmentally conscious even during the construction of the facility. According to their website, more than 75 percent of the materials used in construction were recycled. There are also a myriad of energy-saving and

waste-reducing programs featured around the center, including compact fluorescent lighting throughout the facility, the use of Green Seal biodegradable cleaning products wherever possible, and incorporation of local building materials in order to reduce transportation-related fuel use and pollution.

Along with all this, the AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center offers 297 comfortable, beautifully appointed guest rooms with such standard features as pillow-top mattresses with diverts, desks with ergonomic chairs, in-room coffee makers and tea service, and a complimentary in-room safe.

A wide range of Austin attractions is just a short distance from the center, including the State Capitol and a variety of museums.

For more information or to make reservations, please visit their website at <http://www.metatexas.com/>.

One of the best kept marketing secrets in the world of business is the immense ability of direct-mail marketing to boost the sales of most businesses.

Frankly, a lot of advertising agencies don't push direct mail because it is difficult to do—but once understood and mastered, it can provide a steady, regular source of new prospects and customers.

Here are six reasons your company should consider using direct-mail marketing:

- 1. **It reinforces your inventory.** Direct-mail marketing creates front-of-mind awareness about your business with hundreds, maybe even thousands, of buyers who don't even know you exist.
- 2. **It is low-cost advertising.** Direct-mail marketing allows you to target the audience you want to reach. You don't have to pay to advertise to people who aren't even prospects.
- 3. **It overcomes sales resistance.** Monthly direct mail creates name recognition, a familiarity which helps many customers feel comfortable buying from you.
- 4. **It creates customer loyalty.** By keeping in touch, you'll see your customers' loyalty deepen and watch your overall sales volume grow.
- 5. **It gives you a competitive advantage.** Most managers understand the benefits of direct mail, yet only one in 80 uses it. You'll enjoy a tremendous competitive advantage when using direct mail.
- 6. **It supports your sales staff.** Direct mail "paves the way" before outside prospects are contacted and "follows up" after the prospect is contacted.

Did You Know?



Alice Wright, Owner

- Walter Payton was the first football player featured on a Wheaties box.
- The collecting of beer mats (coasters) is called tegology.
- Nearly 20% of all vehicles stolen have keys in them.
- William McKinley was the first president to ride in an automobile and the first to campaign by phone.
- The only domestic animal not mentioned in the Bible is the cat.
- The average lifespan of a medieval peasant was 25 years.
- Nintendo was originally a playing-card manufacturer.
- If Manhattan in New York City had the same population density as Alaska, there would only be 15 people living there.
- The "animal" responsible for the most human deaths worldwide is the mosquito.
- A file cabinet inspired Frank Baum to name his mythical creation the land of Oz. (The drawers were labeled A-N and O-Z.)
- In Albania, nodding your head means "no." Shaking it means "yes."
- The Japanese confiscated chess books during World War II, thinking they were military codes.



3 Keys to Better Employee Engagement

What motivates employees to become truly engaged in their jobs? Here are three keys, according to a survey of studies by The Conference Board:

- **Trust and Integrity:** Supervisors gain trust with employees by communicating expectations clearly and by helping their staff understand how the things they do impact the company's goals and growth.
- **Career Growth:** Employees thrive when they find their jobs mentally stimulating. They're also more engaged when they feel there are opportunities for future growth and development within the company.
- **Company Pride/Co-workers:** People love to feel pride in what they do. They want to be part of something greater than themselves—something that is bettering society at large, not just their own bottom line.

Strictly Business

Business Quotes

"If you want to know what God thinks of money, just look at the people he gave it to."
—Dorothy Parker

"The executive exists to make sensible exceptions to general rules."
—Eling E. Morison

"If we keep doing what we're doing, we're going to keep getting what we're getting."
—Stephen R. Covey

"Individual commitment to a group effort—that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work."
—Vince Lombardi

"Some regard private enterprise as if it were a predatory tiger to be shot. Others look upon it as a cow that they can milk. Only a handful see it for what it really is—the strong horse that pulls the whole cart."
—Winston Churchill

"Hire character. Train skill."
—Peter Schutz

March On In!

Don't let yourself get swept away by stress! Whatever the weather, we're here to help. You'll come in like a lion, but go out like a lamb.



Web Savvy



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www.LightroomSecrets.com
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The Positive Effects of Conscious Gratitude

Saying "thank you" does more than just prove you have good manners. Thankfulness can improve your physical and emotional health, your social relationships, and your general well-being.

Multiple studies have shown a positive correlation between thankfulness, cardiovascular health, and immune-system functions. UC Davis professor Robert Emmons says grateful people tend to take better care of themselves than others. In general, they make healthier lifestyle choices in diet and physical fitness, and get more regular physical exams.

These same benefits can trickle down to the recipients of thanks, as well, boosting their self-esteem and sense of value and self-worth.

In That Year

1988

- The Hubble Space Telescope goes into operation to explore deep space. It is still in full use today, mapping our universe.
- The new drug nicknamed "crack" appears and is increasingly found in U.S. cities.
- Panamanian leader, General Manuel Antonio Noriega, is charged with drug smuggling and money laundering.
- One gallon of gas costs 91 cents.
- Ted Turner starts Turner Network Television (TNT) and buys MGM's film library.
- The Sekan Tunnel, which connects Honshu and Hokkaido, Japan, is built. It is the longest undersea tunnel in the world.
- The antidepressant Prozac is introduced to the market.
- The first transatlantic fiber-optic cable is laid. It is able to carry 40,000 telephone calls simultaneously.

Marketing Workout: Building a Strong Brand Name

Here are some important things to keep in mind when striving to increase the value and impact of your company's brand name:

- **Think like a consumer.** Define your brand from a consumer's viewpoint. What do your customers enjoy about your company? What benefits and values do you offer that other companies don't?
- **Take a look in the mirror.** Have you overlooked things you'd like to change? Are there areas that could use improvement? If you see things you're not happy with, change them.

- **Stay relevant.** You may have a successful company now, but remember: If you stand still, others will speed past you. Success requires an ongoing commitment to excellence.
- **Find your unique selling proposition.** What sets you apart from the competition? Analyze your brand position relative to others in the market, and look for areas where you excel.
- **Explore opportunities.** Find ways to clearly differentiate your brand from the competition, without making promises you can't keep. Opportunity is there if you're willing to look.

Design Services to give your brand the right appeal

How many times have you set out to make a simple newsletter or brochure for your business and wound up, hours later, poring desperately over software tutorials, no nearer to your goal than when you started? Don't feed bad. It takes years of training and practice to expertly navigate some of those design programs, and who has time for that? But before you think about passing the project off to your high-school-age niece who is artistic and "good" with a computer, think

again. Will anybody but an expert be able to understand the advantages and disadvantages of certain layouts or color options? Will anybody but an expert be able to ask you the right kinds of questions to fully comprehend what you need, and to be able to take your project smoothly from start to finish?

Let us give that design project the expert touch it deserves. Just ask yourself:

1) What kind of project are you imagining? Is it a simple flyer for a summer sale, or are you planning an entire overhaul of your company's look: new logo, new letterhead, new color scheme, new website? Having a clear idea of the final product in your head will give us a lot more to work with, making the process more efficient—and effective.

2) What kind of budget do you have? If you know from the get-go what you're able to spend, that will give us a better idea of how to approach your project. We won't try to oversell you; we will respect your budget and work within your means.

These two simple considerations can help us design items that will get you the kind of attention your company deserves.



Some Facts about Email

Most of us can't imagine life without email. But have you ever considered that email may not actually save you all that much time?

Several studies prove that people check their in-boxes far more often than they imagine. Most people believe they check mail maybe once an hour. The truth is, if a person is on the computer working on other projects, he or she will check email once every five minutes.

The rarely considered negative is this: every time you check your email to read an update or to log a new appointment, it takes an

average of a minute for your brain to recover and refocus once again on the task you were originally doing. This constant switching of attention back and forth might not seem like much at the time, but in the long term, it's exhausting. The brain becomes overwhelmed, mistakes can be made, and important information can be missed or misplaced.

Take a look at your own email habits. While it's not practical to stop using email, perhaps there are some changes you can make to ensure it remains an efficient part of your day.

Product Listing

We Sell Printing to Help You Sell More Product.

- Booklets
- Brochures
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- Envelopes
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- Postcards
- Rack Cards
- Sell Sheets
- Tickets
- Custom Items



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Books in Review



In their new book *Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard*, brothers Chip and Dan Heath explore why some major changes are, apparently, easy to make, while others pose a constant struggle. For instance, why is it so easy for a person to make the choice to get married and then sit, but nearly impossible to change oneself to the gym three times a week after making a commitment to get fit?

The brothers explain that the brain is motivated by two separate "systems" in their brains: the rational system and the emotional system. When the two systems are in opposition to one another, change is difficult, but when the systems are in alignment, change comes much more easily. The book explores many examples of people facing difficult changes, from losing weight to changing the internal structure of a business, and shows how, by bringing both systems into alignment, these changes were made possible.

Switch How to Change Things When Change is Hard

by Chip Heath and Dan Heath

Why are some decisions easy to make, while others pose a constant struggle?

The book breaks down the psychological research into easily understood, extended metaphors that make the application of the principles possible. The book concludes with a Q&A section in which they suggest ways to resolve 12 of the most common challenges that people face while working toward change. A great read for anyone facing change—in short, everyone.

Guess Who I Am

This man was born on August 23, 1912, the third of three boys. He was raised in Pittsburgh, Pa., and was enrolled by his parents in dance classes when he was eight. He and his brothers hated the classes and were frequently called snikes by the neighborhood boys.

After a few years away from dance classes, however, his man decided to enroll; he was now 15 and thought the classes would provide a perfect way to meet girls. He graduated from Peabody High School in 1929, at the age of 16, and enrolled in Pennsylvania State College to study journalism. The market crash forced him to quit classes in order to help his family financially. One of the ways he did this was to enter local talent competitions with his brother Fred, performing dance routines he choreographed himself.

His family eventually opened a dance studio, which became successful enough to merit opening a second location. He taught at the school while earning his BA in economics, and also while attending law school. Eventually, dancing went out, and he left law school to pursue a career as a dance instructor and choreographer, first moving to New York City, and eventually, Hollywood. The rest, as they say, is history.

Probably best known for his dancing and choreography in such famous musicals as *An American in Paris* and *Singin' in the Rain*, this star of the stage and silver screen is, of course, the late **Gene Kelly**.

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Looking Back

1980s—First artificial heart is implanted in Barney Clark, age 61.

1960s—*My Fair Lady* Wins Best Picture at the Academy Awards.

1940s—Harry Truman is widely quoted for his sayings, "The buck stops here," and, "If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen."

1920s—Nellie Ross of Wyoming becomes the first female governor.

Business Funnies®



"I'll buy them if you let me carry them out in a size five box."

March 2011 ■ 7

Every time we lay ink on paper, we're creating an impression...

It's no coincidence that we, as printers, call each printed sheet that rolls off your presses an "impression." The fact is, every piece of printing we produce—no matter how seemingly insignificant—creates an impression for us... and for our customers.

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Sales

Selling in a Buyer's World

The advent of the Internet has put a lot of power into the hands of consumers. Prospective clients no longer have to rely on salespeople for their information about a product or service. Finding information is as easy as a quick Google search, where buyers can find a wealth of information—good and bad—about your product, as well as your competitors' products, industry statistics, and consumer-generated rating systems.

Today's consumer is more likely than ever to blow off a traditional cold call. Even if you do manage to connect with a buyer, they'll probably wind up asking you to send them the information in an email, which they may or may not read, rather than listening to your pitch on the phone.

But just as technology has taken some power out of the salesperson's hands, it has also brought new ways to engage with the marketplace. Today's sales relationship is still about making connections and building trust—it's just done in a different way.

Social media sites such as Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook are a great place to start. Because so much of the content on these sites is generated by consumers, a salesperson with insider information can often add an important level of authority to the conversation by answering questions and addressing concerns and misconceptions.

Another effective way to use these sites is as a venue for asking questions. Find out what consumers are looking for, what they don't consider important, and what their past experiences with similar products have been. Each conversation builds an important rapport with consumers who, more often than not, simply want to feel heard and understood in a frequently overwhelming marketplace.

It's important in the online environment not to come on too strong. Direct prospective buyers to your website as a source of information and as a way to guide the discussion, not simply to make a sale. The key here is to build a relationship of trust, to earn a reputation as someone who has specialized, industry-based knowledge, along with the integrity of someone who genuinely cares about consumer experience.

Odd Facts

- **McDonald's**
- 7% of all Americans eat at McDonald's each day.
- 1/3 of all potatoes grown are sold as french fries.
- Sweden has the world's only ski-through McDonald's restaurant.
- Men can read smaller print than women; women can hear better.
- Percentage of men who would marry the same woman: 80.
- Percentage of women who would marry the same man: 50.

- **Only Presidents**
- The only President awarded a patent: Abraham Lincoln, for a system he created to help buoy vessels over shoals.
- The only president to remain a bachelor: James Buchanan.
- The only president to win a Pulitzer Prize: John F. Kennedy, for *Profiles in Courage*.

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