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Pave The Way To Better Business With Direct Mail Marketing

With more than 99% of American homes now turning to direct mail coupons as part of their everyday shopping pattern, many service businesses have also turned to direct mail as a viable source for creatively increasing their revenue, with a solid direct mail marketing plan. Direct mail can be the most efficient way to promote the name of your construction business and help attract new customers. Here are a few tips to get you started:

Present A Strong Image:

- **Use Quality Photographs, Logos & Colorful Illustrations:** For added effectiveness, try to maintain a very consistent visual image for your business throughout all of your advertising campaigns. If you have any photographs, use them.
- **Use Full Color!** A picture is still worth 1000 words! When possible, avoid most black and white marketing options. Look for professional full color printing capabilities. Research has shown that full color advertising options can actually increase redemption rates by 30% to 60%.

Sometimes it may be best to hire a professional graphic designer, a marketing agency or a direct mail marketing team to design your direct mail campaigns rather than to create something that may look unprofessional. This is a great opportunity to make sure your direct mail device conveys the message that you want to get across.

Plug a Message of Savings:

- **"FREE" Always Works Great!** Nothing beats "free" and it can surely help to persuade new customers to try you for the first time. Offer free consultations, complimentary services or upgrades with purchase.
- **Dollars Off, Not Percentages!** Customers will react much better to strong dollars off discounts and incentives. Percentage discounts really are not perceived to be as strong, especially if they are only 10% to 20% off. Unless you use 50% off or higher percentage types of discounts, they will be perceived as weak offers and ignored.
- **Use Care With Disclaimers!** Try to avoid excessive disclaimers and rules for what is not included in these varied offers. Try to keep your special offers simple with words like, "No Double Discounts. Expires 00/00/09." Use expiration dates of no more than 60 to 90 days to keep your offers timely.

Annual Marketing Calendars & Budgets: Strategically examine your seasonal sales peaks and valleys. Develop an Annual Marketing Calendar that promotes all of your services throughout the year. You may also be able to turn historically soft months into strong months, by planning in advance with extra marketing and advertising support. Invest in your business success by direct mail advertising programs consistently throughout the entire year.

Affordable Direct Mail Solutions: Look at various direct mail marketing and advertising opportunities available to you. You can create solo direct mail letters, newsletters, free-standing inserts, postcards and brochures. Visit your local Yellow Pages or the Internet to find direct mail resources near you. With direct mail, you can specifically target

neighborhood homes surrounding your business. It is best to target homes within three to ten miles of your business, while targeting at least 50,000 homes or more. At approximately three to four cents per home, direct mail marketing is extremely affordable, as opposed to solo direct mail campaigns which usually cost between fifty cents to one dollar per home. Use reputable and nationally respected resources, with a proven track record. Ask to see samples of mailing devices with samples of similar businesses to yours.

- **Direct Mail Magazines:** Clipper Magazine, Savvy Shopper and Mint Magazine sales representatives are prepared to help you plan the most effective annual direct mail marketing campaigns with customized advertising solutions for your business. For example, Clipper Magazine is a unique premier quality full color glossy direct mail magazine. The cost of cooperative and magazine format direct mail is usually only three to four cents per home as opposed to solo direct mail campaigns which will usually cost between fifty cents to one dollar per home. When you add up the costs of artwork, printing, mailing labels and postage, it is a greater advantage to use colorful and upscale direct mail magazines, cooperative direct mail or a combination of both.
- **Direct Mail Coupon Envelopes:** The direct mail coupon envelope resources like Valpak and Money Mailer cooperatively mail loose independent coupons from various local businesses to 10,000 homes per targeted zone. When you add up the costs of artwork, printing, mailing labels and postage, it is a greater advantage to use cooperative direct mail or a combination of both.
- **Solo Direct Mail:** If you are going the solo direct mail route, it is a good idea to send over-sized colorful direct mail postcards, full sheet fliers and free-standing inserts, whenever possible. The postage is less expensive than standard mail and unlike envelopes; they don't have to be opened for the potential client to immediately see your offer. Use a high quality paper stock for your postcards and fliers. They are more durable and they are more appealing to the recipient. For solo direct mail, you will need to write the copy, create the artwork, determine your targeted markets, and hire a local direct mail house to facilitate the mailing.
- **Find A Resource That Does It All For You!** Some direct mail resources do it all for you! Benefits include complimentary marketing and advertising consultation services with vivid full color printing on high quality glossy paper stocks, professional photography, expertly designed layouts and a complete array of comprehensive high quality resources at an extremely affordable price.

Set Realistic Expectations: Direct mail really works, especially with repetition of very strong offers! Like any form of advertising and marketing, it usually takes a long term investment. Coupons are trackable – if you want to determine your effectiveness, plan to ask every customer how they heard about you. You will also need to measure your total sales volume each week or month, especially on the products and services that you are promoting with your direct mail efforts.

For more information on direct mail services in your area, please visit Clipper Magazine at www.ClipperMagazine.com.