

The Sturdy Dozen

12 Direct Mail Tips to Strengthen Your Marketing Efforts

Many Pizza shops have turned to direct mail as a viable source for creatively increasing their revenue. In addition to other types of restaurants and retailers, shop owners are regularly marketed through the various direct mail options. Steve Zuckerman, president of Clipper Magazine shares some of his expertise as he suggests the following key strategies to help your future direct mail marketing be as successful as it can be:

Getting Started

There are many different ways to utilize a direct mail advertising campaign. Direct mail devices can illustrate the simplicity of your pizza restaurant services with the full range of food products that you provide. Your direct mail marketing campaign can share the benefits of how your small shop or large restaurant is still a current and valuable option. Regardless of your menu, eat-in or take-out accommodations, direct mail can also be the most efficient way to promote the name of your pizza business and to help you find new patrons.

1. Dollars Off, Not Percentages! Yes \$9.95, \$14.95 and \$19.95 will always work better than 10% or 20% off. Your pizza 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.

2. 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 00/00/07." Use expiration dates of no more than 60 to 90 days to keep your offers timely.

3. Present Professional Appearance:

If your budget allows, it's 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. After you have a great looking direct mail piece, pass the proof around to your partners and employees. Ask them for their input. This is a great opportunity to make sure your direct mail device conveys the message that you want to get across. You should also show it to

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some of your business associates. They will gladly offer valuable advice and insight about your message and design.

4. Serving Tasty Messages: We know that in the pizza business, it is extremely competitive with discounts, special offers and promotions. Most pizza restaurateurs are very successful, just listing the prices per pizza with a few combinations. Don't be afraid to sell up with specials on 3, 4 or 5 pizzas as well as to promote add on sodas, desserts and other food products, rather than to promote just one or two pizzas.

5. "FREE" Always Works Great!

Nothing beats 'free' and it can surely help to persuade current customers to try new products as well as to get new first-time customers to try you for the first time. Consider offering a free gift with purchase or a purchase with purchase incentive. For example, one 'FREE



Medium Pizza with Any Two Large Pizzas' or 'FREE Liter of Soda With Any 3 Large Pizzas' always works great.

6. Solo Mail Postcards: 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.

7. Give it Time: Regardless of your pizzeria's expertise, an on-going campaign is necessary to drive the point home. Aligning with a professional product manufacturer is a great way to increase your shop's visibility and still stay true to your advertising budget. Manufacturers will offer quality advertising templates that you would merely need to insert your contact information in to. The work is practically done for you. In addition to providing boilerplate advertising templates, many product manufacturers will work with you to present their products in a pleasing manner in your establishment.

Like many products on the market, manufacturers offer a unique point-of-purchase display that will not only accent your décor, but create client curiosity.

8. Marriage Mail Options: As you investigate the price of a solo direct mail campaign, you may discover the wonderful financial and creative benefits of nationally respected direct mail resources like Clipper Magazine, Val Pak, Money Mailer and others that are available in your local community. 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 usually cost between fifty cents to one dollar per home. When you add up the costs of artwork, printing, mailing labels and postage all in one package.

9. Loyalty Club Programs: Ask about loyalty club programs that will inexpensively target your current customer database with email blasts of special pizza offers and seasonal specials. You just need to register, collect every customer's email address and submit your special notes for these email blasts. You can add new email addresses every month. Besides a small monthly fee, email blasts are a terrific direct marketing alternative, as there are no postage costs!

10. Complimentary Marketing Consultations: No matter what form of radio, TV, newspaper, magazine or direct mail marketing you plan to use, ask your advertising sales representatives to share examples of what has worked well for other similar business owners.

11. Start With Realistic Expectations: Direct mail advertising really works, especially with very strong offers and ongoing campaigns! Like any advertising, promotion and marketing, it takes a long term investment to successfully market your business. Visit with your direct mail sales consultant to set realistic expectations, so you are not disappointed. Coupons and mini gift certificates are easy to track. It's not about getting hundred of new first-time clients from each advertisement. Many people will be attracted to your shop to come in without the coupon or direct mail advertisement. One new patron

may result in several thousands of service sales dollars per year – so as few as 5, 10 or 20 new clients from any one advertisement needs to be considered a big success.

12. Measure Results: To determine the statistical effectiveness of your direct mail advertising campaigns, plan to ask every client how they first heard about you. Many clients will bring in their coupons or mini gift certificates. Some will still ask their friends or co-workers for a referral or recommendation after seeing your direct mail advertisement, so the combination will be a winner for you. You will also need to measure your total sales volume each week or month, especially on the retail products that you are promoting with your direct mail efforts.

To serve up sales increases, it's time to give your marketing plan a bigger slice of direct mail marketing. It seems like most families eat pizza at least once a week. If they don't, it's our job to entice them to do so with direct mail offers that will make your telephones ring and your pizza ovens start to run overtime!

For a complimentary direct mail advertising consultation or more information about Clipper Magazine resources near you, call 866-802-1429 email marketresearch@clippermagazine.com or visit their web site at www.ClipperMagazine.com.

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