



REAL ESTATE DIRECT MAIL

HOW TO MAKE IT MORE EFFECTIVE

How to Make Real Estate Direct Mail More Effective

Direct mail is the oldest form of direct marketing and has endured and prospered in spite of the advent of the internet and email. No other form of direct marketing makes the same impression on customers as a targeted, well-designed direct mail piece.

Does it work? Think back to the last time you wanted to replace your roof or thought your car needed an oil change. Did you find yourself more attentive to the “junk mail” in hopes of finding a service provider? Maybe a discount coupon you could use? It is the same with real estate direct mail. If 7% of people move each year and you mail 1,000 pieces then 70 recipients are hyper-sensitive to real estate direct mail in their search for a Realtor.

A study* some years ago from the U.S. Postal Service showed that when customers are retrieving and reading their mail – a period of time known as “the mail moment” – they are highly focused and attentive to the contents of their mail. This daily ritual provides a unique opportunity for Realtors to get their messages read. A direct mail piece with personalization and colour makes it a high-impact form of direct marketing, helping you take advantage of the “mail moment” and spur customers into action.

In a survey commissioned by Pitney Bowes and DMNews 73% of consumers prefer mail for receiving new product announcements or offers from companies they do business with, as compared to 18% for email. Mail was also preferred by 70 percent of respondents for receiving unsolicited information on products and services from companies with which they are not currently doing business.



SO WHAT ARE THE TOP 3 WAYS TO IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR DIRECT MAIL PROGRAM?

#1: Use Headlines That Grab Attention

You have 5 seconds or less to make enough of an impact on the reader that they will either set aside your direct mail for reading later or flip it over while they are looking at it.

Bad Headlines:

- Just Sold - 1234 Main Street
- Just Listed - 1234 Main Street

Good Headlines:

- Thinking of Selling? That Is What I Just Did in Your Neighbourhood
- Look What The Real Estate Market is Doing in Kitsilano!
- Looking for a BIGGER Home for Your Growing Family?
- Kids Moving Out? Perfect Home for Downsizing

#2: Mix it Up

There are many direct mail experts telling you that a minimum of 12, 18 or 24 pieces a year is required, but depending on your budget and resources I would aim for 12 touches a year and mix them up. Over the 12 months you could send the following:

- Four 4 Just Listed / Just Sold 6" x 9" Postcards
- Two Memo pads with the Title of Things To Do Today
- Four Market Update Newsletters on 8-1/2" x 11" glossy paper
- Two Non Real Estate related postcards (See #3 below for ideas)

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#3: Mix it Up

If your direct mail is a picture of a house you just sold then it is only of interest to the 7% of people thinking of moving, but if it included valuable information it is far more likely to be retained for future reference or even end up on the fridge.

Here are some ideas to get you going:

Local Events Schedule

Send them a calendar of all of the local events. It is something they will read and put on the fridge for reference and the connection to you will be much stronger as they will appreciate the effort you have made – but it doesn't have to take a lot of time or money.

Blank Phone Number Directory

On the back of a direct mail piece you can have a heading "Important Phone Numbers" and lines they can write on. Without a Yellow Pages often important numbers are hard to find. It is unselfish and shows you are thinking about the recipient. Said another way; it is about them not you and it will be kept by the recipient for a long time as they complete it and the numbers are important to them.

Local Restaurant Directory

Research and compile a list of local restaurants near your farm area. Ask yourself if you would keep a local Restaurant Guide? Would you tuck it into the drawer in the kitchen or put it up on the refrigerator?

Would it make you think of the sender every time you looked at it? Would it keep them closer to the top of your mind when you are thinking of using their service or product?



DIRECT MAIL IDEA FOR SUMMER

Compile a list of local golf courses including par 3's where families like to go and put all of the information on the back of postcard. You could also add water parks.

Like all of your marketing efforts direct mail is a process. It requires planning, preparation and hard work to maximize the return on investment. It costs the same to mail an ineffective direct mail piece as it does an effective mail piece. The difference is in the effort you put into the process.

*The Mail Moment, U.S. Postal Service, 2005 business, but it is expensive, hard to track results and takes time away from your raving fans.

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