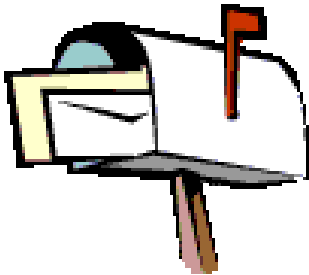


- **The “A” pile versus “B” pile**
- **Salesmanship in Print**
- **Create Enthusiasm**

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“The only purpose of advertising is to make sales... figure its cost and result. Accept no excuses which good salesmen do not make. Then you will not go far wrong.”

Claude Hopkins, From Scientific Advertising

Since the Powerline program was introduced over five years ago we've had the pleasure to speak with literally tens of thousands of real estate agents and lenders. These conversations are of utmost value because they have shaped the technical and marketing strategies of Powerline. Our products team has learned from some of the best producers in real estate and lending—so you can be confident the coaching and instruction you receive is proven, effective and maximizes your return. One area of marketing where we see particular disparity with regards to results is advertising using direct mail. In fact, it is as if for every agent or lender for whom direct mail is the lifeblood of their business there is a counterpart who swears direct mail is totally worthless. Why is that?

It would be naïve to suggest there is a simple quick-fix answer. But it would be just as irresponsible to suggest only a select few talented sales people can create highly profitable and responsive direct mail. The reality is anyone who has a desire to can. It's not difficult. But like any thing worthwhile, you must invest before

you receive a return. In this month's newsletter, we'll give you some of the most effective strategies used by our top-producing Powerline customers and the “secrets” we've learned from gurus like Claude Hopkins, Gary Halbert, Dan Kennedy, John Caples and Clyde Bedell. You may discover a whole new avenue of growth for your business.

The “A” Pile

Start at the beginning. If your direct mail piece never gets read, it never has a chance at producing a return. Gary Halbert refers to this as the “A” pile versus “B” pile model. This simple truth (think about your own mail opening experiences) reveals that everybody divides their mail into two piles, A and B. The A pile contains mail that is perceived to be of utmost importance and most be opened immediately. The B pile contains everything else.

Obviously, to maximize your response you need to maximize your exposure and that means to get your mail into the A pile. Gary Halbert

explained it like this, “What would I do if I had to make this mailing work? I mean literally if the piece didn't get read I would be beheaded?” If you thought like that, do you think you might put more effort into creating a response?

To get your mail into the A pile, don't mail bulk. Bulk mail is not forwarded, it's not personal and mail carriers will delay its delivery. (I have a good friend who works for the US postal service and I was shocked when he told me that was true, especially around heavy mail times i.e. Mothers Day, Christmas etc.)

Secondly, remove any teaser copy. Anything on the outside of the envelope that reminds you of Ed McMahon and Publisher's Clearing House. Urgent, Confidential, Rush— are teaser copy that is tired. Public awareness is too high, and you will create a negative impact. What you are trying to create is the perception of a personal letter. Not necessarily a letter from their long lost relative but genuine correspondence from one human to another.

Salesmanship in Print Creates Emotion

Once the prospect has divided their mail into A pile and B pile, the next most important step is to make sure your letter stays in the A pile. To accomplish this, understand your prospect is opening your letter believing it's most likely personal correspondence and then realizes it's a marketing piece. Their natural first reaction will be negative. But that's okay, because you've accomplished your initial goal and with a little ingenuity you can quickly turn them around... but how?

You've only got a moment, less than five seconds to capture the prospect's attention so it's imperative to write a powerful specific benefit headline. Dan Kennedy, a well-respected direct marketing instructor emphasizes utilizing uniqueness, emotion and specificity in your letter's headline. What he means by this is:

The headline must be specific. It's imperative to focus on some particular demographic... first time homebuyers, refinance opportunities, etc. Don't try to write a compelling letter that covers every aspect of your business. (All encompassing marketing pieces really fizzle when you couple the response with a direct marketing report where you reveal expert advice—think about what the prospect must be thinking... "How can they be an expert on every aspect of business?")

The offer must be unique. Claude Hopkins believes uniqueness is the single most powerful response vehicle. He says think of the one, two or three things that you can offer that your competition either can't doesn't or (important**) does but doesn't reveal. Claude's vast experiences have proven that often just disclosing the processes that are inherent to your offer, yet not fully understood by the prospective client create uniqueness.

Use simple language—marketing letters are just salesmanship in print. If

you are good at verbally conveying your services, then you can become proficient at written correspondence.

A good way to do this is to record your next presentation, then pull the verbiage that strikes emotion.

Remember, creating emotion means from within the prospect, not from within you.

No Call To Action? No Response!

Every piece of direct mail that you send out should have:

- 1) A first class postage stamp
- 2) No teaser copy on the envelope
- 3) A specific focused benefit headline
- 4) Copy that conveys your message in simple language and creates emotion within the prospect
- 5) A toll free 800 line for non-threatening response for call to action

You must offer the prospect a "call to action" within your marketing letter. Something that motivates the prospect to raise their hand and inquire for more information. If you just promote your business i.e. Just Listed Card, Rate Sheet, Farm Letter but fail to instruct the prospect to act further—you'll limit your response.

The purpose of your direct mail letter is to locate interested prospects. You can't locate them if they don't respond.

Every marketing guru we've ever learned from, will instruct you to use a toll free number and provide 24 hour free recorded information, and if appropriate couple an informational report. Long before Powerline technology was conceptualized, this methodology was being exploited by all of the leading marketing experts. Powerline simply makes it easier—you have greater accountability, real time notification and a live connect option—features that really enable you to create the atmosphere you need to maximize your direct mail campaign.

Voice Broadcast Valued Rate Plan

As you may be aware, Voice Broadcast is a new technology that will enable you to send out thousands of recorded messages to either exclusively answering machines (terminating on live answers), live answers (terminating on answering machines) or both simultaneously to any database you desire. The service was previously billed on two rate plans;

High Volume

\$300 minimum—15 cents per minute

Low Volume

\$10 service fee—27 cents per minute

We have learned that the Voice Broadcast marketing plans are cyclical, like most marketing plans. To better accommodate our users we have instilled a new rate plan for all low volume users. Now you can enjoy the benefit of the high volume rate plan when your marketing plan requires it. The first \$300 in calls will be billed at 27 cents, everything over that will be billed at 15 cents. High volume users will remain at 15 cents per unless they desire to switch. Just give us a call at (800) 882-9155.

Refinance Line Opportunity

If you are using the Home Affordability Line (HAL) or thinking about implementing it, you have until July 15th to add the Refinance Line at no cost. This survey enables homeowners to explore their refinance opportunity similar to that of a verbal refinance consultation. If you aren't using the HAL, you can get both for the price of one until July 15. After July 15th, the cost will be \$195 to activate and \$10 per month service fee.

