

Are You Sneaking Up On Your Prospects

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In your last Success Marketing Strategy we have been discussing direct mail formats. I first explained the appropriate and un-appropriate use of the less expensive 'self-mailer' formats.

Now, I'd like to talk about my preference form of direct mail which is the envelope mailing. If you decide to use an envelope mailing you now have two other basic choices to make using what I call the billboard or the sneak up approach.

Many marketers favor the sneak up approach. In this approach there's nothing on the outside of the envelope that identifies it as business mail. There is no company name in the return address. There is either a person's name or no name at all, just the address. There is no teaser copy, no headlines, words or phrases indicative of what's inside.

Sometimes an odd size envelope rather than a standard number ten business envelope is used.

To carry this sneak attack to the ultimate extreme there are no labels used. The addressing is either done by hand or individually typed and postage stamps are used not postage meter impressions.

The theory behind this is sometimes called 'A' Pile, 'B' Pile; that most people sort their mail near a waste basket. A lot of so called junk mail obvious as 'B' Pile Mail gets thrown out unopened or after only a glance. The mail that gets 'A Pile' treatment often opened immediately and read looks like personal mail. It comes in envelopes. There's a letter inside when you open it.

The object of the sneak attack is to insure 'A Pile' treatment. I've used versions of this sneak up approach many times with significant success. I believe in the validity of the theory. This approach is especially applicable to mailings to high level executives or business owners, mailings to doctors and lawyers, political fundraising direct mail or charitable fundraising direct mail.

An added twist to this technique is the use of a famous person's name or an important person's title as part of the return address on the envelope. I happen to be a contributor to several republican and conservative political organizations so I wound up on every republican fundraising mailing list there is.

As a result, not only do I get envelopes return addressed from the Republican Senatorial Club but also from other Republican political figures. Even knowing that it is fundraising mail I kind of feel compelled to open it.

I've received sneak up mail from an insurance firm return addressed from Art Linkletter at a street address. No company name, no clue that it was from an insurance company. Titles can also work. Not long ago I got an envelope return addressed from, "The Chairman of the Board, The Golden Nugget Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada."

Much more likely to be opened than an envelope just from The Golden Nugget and the envelope was typewriter addressed no stick on label. It had a postage stamp not a meter impression and the letter inside was on the chairman's personal stationary individually addressed to me. I read it. Had it just been from The Golden Nugget and had a brochure inside instead of a letter I would have probably thrown it out unread.

Now the sneak up attack can also work against you which I will explain in your next Success Marketing Strategy in just a couple of days.