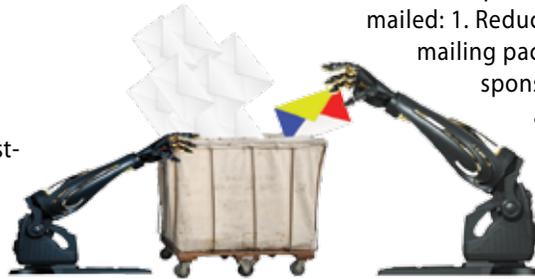


What Has Your Direct Mail Control Done For You Lately?

BY KIM KRAUSE SCHWALM

In today's world of ever-rising postage rates and ever-shrinking response rates, it's never been more important to squeeze every ounce of profitability out of your direct mail efforts. Fortunately, the chance to improve your direct mail results is right in front of you whenever you plan your next mailing.

It's important to take advantage of every available opportunity to include at least a few test panels in each mailing, assuming you have enough viable names to do so. That's because even simple tweaks to your current direct mail control can add more profits to your bottom line—sometimes a lot more profits. What's more, you'll combat package fatigue and keep your control package mailing profitably longer.



There are three main ways you can make your current direct mail efforts more profitable for every piece mailed: 1. Reduce the cost of your mailing package; 2. Boost the response rate; or 3. Raise the average order size/gift amount. Let's look at a few ways you can accomplish these goals without making a substantial investment of time or money.



No. 1: Increase profits by reducing the cost of your mailing package: By testing, you may discover ways to cut package costs without appreciably affecting response. For example, switching from 60-pound to 50-pound paper can reduce paper costs by 16.5 percent on average. You can reap the same savings by using a 20-pound white wove carrier instead of 24-pound. You can also try eliminating a color, or testing with and without personalization.

If your current control is a component package, try taking out a component—a buck slip, for example. If it's a self-mailer,

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Improve Your Results by Improving Your Creative Brief

BY JEANNE JENNINGS



Creative is an important part of any email campaign. Creative refers to the copy and design of your email – in other words, what it says and how it looks. While the copywriter and designer are responsible for these,

the ultimate responsibility lies with the marketing manager or other person in charge of the campaign.

You can't expect the copywriter and designer to develop great creative unless the marketing

manager has provided a clear blueprint outlining business goals, supporting documentation, and his or her "vision" for the email message. Too many companies don't understand this. The old garbage-in, garbage-out adage applies here.

I've written about creative briefs before, so I won't go back over the basic elements of an effective creative brief. But I do want to add a few things to it and reiterate their value.

Social Media

Don't forget about social-media sharing when you develop your creative brief. A recent Silverpop study found that social-sharing links garnered average click-through rates of 0.5 percent, which is much higher than traditional "forward-to-a-friend" links. The study also found that social-share links increased reach an average of 24.3 percent over the number

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What's New?

▶ Marketers belong on the Mobile App Team. See page 8.

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Mobile Websites vs. Mobile Apps: Three Reasons Sites are Better

BY AARON MAXWELL



It seems like practically everyone is coming up with a mobile app for their organizations. But if you're trying to get the most out of your online presence, you need to focus on creating a mobile-optimized website instead. What's the difference between a mobile website and a mobile app?

Mobile apps are software; each one has to be downloaded and installed on a mobile device before it can be used. Plus, many mobile apps come with a download fee.

On the other hand, a mobile website is simply a version of your website geared specifically for mobile devices. Users do not have to download or install anything. Instead, they simply head to your mobile website just as they would your traditional website—either by typing the name of your site into their browsers or by arriving at your site from a search engine.

So why are mobile-optimized websites better? There are three main reasons:

1. Mobile websites are universal. Browsers can visit your website no matter what type of mobile device they use. Mobile apps, on the other hand, have to be specially crafted for each device. There are separate apps for the iPhone, the Blackberry, the Android, and so on. If you want to create mobile apps for your business, you will have to spend time and money creating an app for each device. That's like saying you have to create two different websites -- one for Mac users, and one for PC users!

With a mobile website, you only design and create one version because it can be accessed from any mobile device, anywhere. And, with the right setup, you can even update your traditional and mobile

sites simultaneously! With apps, you would have to maintain and update each one separately.

2. Mobile websites are more convenient for searchers. Let's say you're looking for a place to eat lunch while you're out running errands. Are you really going to take the time to download and install a restaurant's mobile app just to see its hours or what's on the menu?

With a mobile site, users just head directly to the restaurant's website to get the information they need without the hassle of a download or an installation.

3. It is easy for mobile apps to get lost in the crowd. There are hundreds of thousands of mobile apps out there, and more are popping up by the day. That means you have to promote your app to make it stand out. And, if you have separate apps for the iPhone, the Blackberry, and the Android, you are going to have to spend time and money promoting each one. However, it can be nearly impossible for smaller businesses to get featured in app store charts—meaning that your mobile app will likely be lost in the shuffle.

Not so with a mobile website. With a good mobile site, you need only worry about traditional SEO. After all, your traditional site's page-one search engine ranking works for mobile, too! So, by opting for a mobile website, you focus solely on SEO, killing two birds with one stone.

Aaron Maxwell is founder of the premiere mobile web design agency, Mobile Web Up. Keep ahead of the important trends - read Mobile Web Up's "Mobile Tech and Business" magazine at www.mobilewebup.com/blog today.

What Can Celebrities Teach Direct Marketers?

Dana Anderson, senior VP-marketing strategy and communications at Kraft, told marketers the value of pop culture in evolving their digital communications.

Have swagger. To sell your idea, you need charisma and you need swagger. (Robert Downey, Jr.)

Be sly. Develop an experimental mindset that allows employees to "pilot" or "test" new digital media.

Play house. Bring people together to learn

Don't settle. Be realistic, but be self-aware. (Angelina Jolie)

Be a little reckless. Push the boundaries. (Lady Gaga)

Live large. Find a way to make digital work in your world. (Jay-Z)

Kiss and tell. Share successes and new projects. (Katy Perry)

Source: *Advertising Age*, November 30, 2010.

DMAW CALENDAR

Deadline for registration: 48 hours before the event, space permitting. Registrations received after that will be charged the onsite rate and are subject to space availability. Cancellations must be received 48 hours in advance. No-shows will be billed. Register online at www.DMAW.org.

Wednesday, May 11, 2011

List Bazaar

Full Day Conference

Devoted to List Professionals

8:00 am – 5:00 pm

Maggiano's Little Italy

Chevy Chase, MD

Wednesday May 19, 2011

DMAW May Luncheon

Noon – 2:00 pm

SEIU Conference Center

Washington, DC

Thursday, June 23, 2011

Social Media Marketing Day

An In-depth Session on

Social Media Marketing

8:00 am – 5:00 pm

Conference Center at Heart House

Washington, DC

1st Tuesday of every month

Annapolis Direct Marketers Social Club

6:00 pm - ???

McGarvey's Saloon & Oyster Bar

Annapolis, MD

Wednesday, July 20 - Friday, July 22, 2011

6th Annual Bridge to Integrated

Marketing & Fundraising Conference

Gaylord National Hotel and Convention

Center on the Potomac, National Harbor, MD

Wednesday, October 19, 2011

Association Day

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Kellogg Conference Center at Gallaudet

University

Washington, DC

Saturday, May 7, 2011

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Syma Mendelsohn, President, smendelsohn@rcmd.com

DMAW Executive Director

Donna Tschiffely, donna@dmaw.org
703-689-DMAW, fax 703-481-DMAW

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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

BY KRISTIN MCCURRY

The 2011 Bridge to Integrated Marketing and Fundraising is just around the corner on July 20 through 22. Presented by your DMAW and the Association for Fundraising Professionals DC Chapter, this year's conference will be set again at the Gaylord National Conference Center at National Harbor and features a line up of amazing speakers, sessions, and networking opportunities.



I wanted to give each of you a sneak preview into this year's plenary sessions, but before you read this, log on quickly to www.bridgeconf.org and register. Early bird registration rates are only available until June 20th!

You can start your conference off right with our Bridge Conference Opening Keynote, Bryan Dodge, president, Dodge Consulting. Author of *Good Life Rules and Becoming the Obvious Choice*, Bryan will energize and challenge you Thursday, July 21 at 9:30 a.m. It will be a great way to kick-start the conference into high-gear by helping stimulate your thinking, open your mind to new ideas, and leave you ready to tackle your direct marketing or fundraising challenges.

On Friday morning, we will get down to some serious strategy discussions. Steve Cone is executive vice president of integrated value and strategy for AARP. Cone is a national leader in marketing and brand communications and has established an industry-wide reputation for

programs that drive results, strengthen brands, and deepen customer relationships by communicating relevant and highly targeted messages across a spectrum of media in integrated campaigns. Steve is a powerful speaker and has written two books *Steal These Ideas!* and *Powerlines: Words That Sell Brands, Grip Fans, and Sometimes Change History*.

Following up on Steve's morning session, the Bridge conference will welcome Lisa Shannon on Friday afternoon. Inspired by her travels and a report in "O, The Oprah Magazine," Lisa began the first national grassroots effort to raise awareness and funds for women in the DR Congo. Lead by her efforts, they have sponsored more than a thousand war-affected Congolese women – who are raising more than 5000 children - through Women for Women International. Lisa will be sharing some of her amazing stories included in her book, *A Thousand Sisters*, based on her experience as the founder of Run for Congo Women.

Five Habits of Highly Effective CMOs

5

Experiment. Example: Keep employees nimble by creating rotating roles.

Challenge the status quo. Example: Ford Motor Co. broke tradition with TV-heavy media and invested more than 25 percent in digital advertising.

Act continuously. Example: Adaptive marketers place a premium on speed and action when it comes to using new channels.. They think big, take small steps, and grow rapidly.

Participate personally by giving everyone a role in shaping the brand experience. Example: Mandate that employees become fluent in emerging media and technology.

Tear down boundaries by creating incentives for collation. Example: DMOs must break down organizational silos that prevent information sharing and use social technologies to disseminate knowledge across silos.

Source: *Advertising Age*: November 30, 2010.

How Re-thinking Your Creative Process Can Increase Response— And Your Bottom Line. *Would YOU Respond To Your Direct Mail Appeals?*

BY DAVID HAZELTINE



Over the years,

I've picked up a few exercises that force me and the many talented creative people with whom I've worked to step

back and take a good hard look at the direct mail packages we create.

I see it all the time. Busy marketing and development professionals often defer to old habits, like simply "picking up" artwork from previous mailings as they create new direct mail appeals. In an effort to meet the mail date, and with so many other things on your plate, perhaps you—like so many others—will invest most of your time poring over the copywriting, re-writing, and approval process for the new letter. You'll invest time in selecting the right mailing lists, crafting the right offer, and even getting quotes on the print/mail production, too.

Don't get me wrong, spending time to craft a great letter is important. But in an effort to keep things moving and get your mailing out on time, some equally important elements simply get "picked up" from a previous package. Many of the details take a back seat, such as how you want your prospects, donors, and customers to respond; what information you collect on the reply device (and its aesthetics); and last, but by no means least, the outer envelope. If not given the attention they deserve, these elements can have a dramatic effect on the results of your mailings.

It's important to give some serious thought to how you, personally, view, filter, process, and respond to the direct mail you receive at home. Whether you realize it or not, you look at mail packages

you receive very differently than the mail pieces you create at work.

It's really as simple as this: When most people *create* direct mail, they create it using what I call an inside-out process. They write/create the letter first, then move to the reply device, then (maybe) to the reply envelope, and finish with the outer envelope. Alternately, when we all *receive* direct mail, we are forced to process it from the outside in. The outer envelope—all by its lonesome—is how we gauge whether or not we're even interested in opening the piece (we all know the three-second rule). If we like what we see, we'll decide whether it makes it to the "keep" pile—along with the bills, birthday card from Mom, and our favorite catalog.

Now, if you were to change the ways you create your mail packages, using the outside-in approach, you'll likely make it more appealing—and that's half the battle to getting a response. Appealing mail makes it to the "keep" pile, gets opened, and hopefully compels the recipient to become your next donor or member. Here are three best practices for creating better mail packages—using this outside-in approach:

1. *Write your outer envelope's teaser copy first.*

This assumes you're using one, of course, as not all DM outers should have a teaser. But if you are, think about this: By the time you've sat down to create your DM piece, you likely have a theme for the letter, copy points, and know who will sign the piece. Imagine that all the thoughts in your head have come together as a perfect DM package, complete with a killer letter and offer and right-on mailing lists or house-file data selections. Now, what should the outer envelope say to get me, the recipient, to open it?

2. *Mail it to yourself.*

Mock up and mail the package to yourself *before* you finalize the artwork and send it off to the printer. This is a practice I've used for years, and it really works. When your package elements are 98 percent complete, print them out in full color; trim and fold them just as you want your lettershop to do; make up a outer envelope (if it's the same format you've used before, simply paste your new OE art over a previous mailing); and then add your inserts, seal it, add a First Class stamp, and toss it in the mailbox.

In a day or two, when you're not really expecting it, you'll see it in your mail among some competition. Open it slowly. Try to handle and read it as a prospective donor would, and see what you think. There's a very good chance you'll be making a few important tweaks to it the next day. Note: This step does require an extra two to three days in the schedule, but it's worth it!

3. *Emphasize the "you" factor.*

Make the package as a whole about "you" -- the individuals you are mailing -- and not about "we" (your organization). Your content should, of course, include the wonderful things your organization does, But we all subscribe and listen to WII-FM -- "What's In It For Me?" Consider using the words "you" or "your" on the outer envelope. In your letter, make sure the number of times the word "you" appears exceeds that of "we." Also, consider *how* you want people to respond, by both giving them choices and making each of those options very clear.

I hope that I've provided you with a "take-away of the day," and that you'll look at your creative process a bit differently. Put these practices to work ASAP (tomorrow's okay) and then reap the benefits!

David Hazeltine is vice president, fundraising, at DMW Direct Fundraising in Plymouth, MA—a results-driven agency that provides full-service direct response fundraising and membership marketing to over 50 nonprofit organizations nationally. David can be reached at d hazeltine@dmwdirect.com, at 508-927-6034 and at www.twitter.com/davidhazeltine.



**2011 Bridge
CONFERENCE**

Geo-Mapping Myth Busters: Four List-Targeting Strategies That May Help You Find Hidden Gold

BY AMY HOUKE



Executives spend millions in research and site planning to determine the optimum location for a business based on traffic patterns, demographics,

and competitive analysis. Homebuyers spend hours evaluating the school districts, tax rates, and proximity to shopping before purchasing a home.

Yet, nonprofit organizations often fish for new donors and members across a vast market defined (sometimes) rather haphazardly. The dollars you spend to acquire new donors—particularly in the mail—make it absolutely necessary to fine-tune your fishing expeditions as much as possible.

Myth No. 1: The best areas for me are the ones with the highest number of donors. Many organizations make the common error of querying their donors by ZIP code, looking at total quantity of donors, and then developing a fundraising plan around these areas. It is important to remember, however, that heavily populated urban areas will naturally produce a higher raw number of donors simply by virtue of the number of people who live there. What is important to look at is the percentage of the households that your donors represent.

Two different ZIP codes with the same number of donors produce very different results:

ZIP Code	City	Donors	Total House Penetration
10037	New York	432	10,372 4.17%
10025	New York	432	48,011 0.88%

When you evaluate each ZIP code in terms of how successful you have been in penetrating each area, a very different story unfolds. The ZIP code thought to be the best (because of its high number of donors) actually has a much lower penetration level. The ZIP codes thought to be less productive—based on their lower donor counts—are producing much higher penetration levels!

Myth No. 2: It doesn't matter where I've mailed in the past, only where I'm mailing currently and will in the future.

Let's look at our examples above. Would it surprise you to know that the .88 percent penetration seen in 10025 was achieved without ever having actively solicited a single dollar there? If even mediocre penetrations are being achieved where mail has never dropped, then it's worth mailing there. Conversely, if a ZIP code has been mailed ceaselessly since the inception of the institute's mailing program, and still has produced only marginal penetration, it is a candidate for removal from the mailing plan.

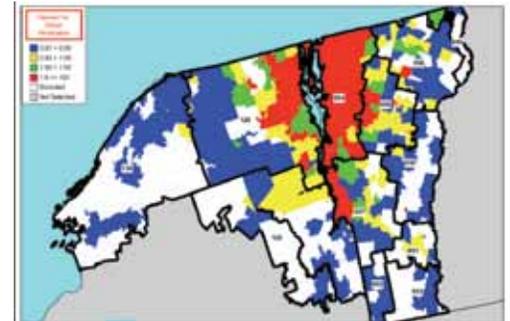
Myth No. 3: Demographics don't matter. Take a look at the demographics within the ZIP codes that are not currently part of your mail plan. You may be missing some small gold mines. For instance, let's say that your typical donor is an older woman with a high affluence level. Identifying ZIP codes with high concentrations of your donor look-alikes can provide you with new territories to mine. For instance, in the chart below, the first set of ZIP codes are much more attractive—demographically—than those in the second set.

ZIP Code	City	% Female	% Age 50+
11042	New Hyde Park	59%	78%
11957	Orient	51%	73%
12852	Newcomb	51%	68%
11965	Shelter Island Hts	52%	68%
10589	Somers	54%	66%
12836	Hague	49%	64%
12409	Bearsville	49%	62%
11939	East Marion	50%	62%

ZIP Code	City	% Female	% Age 50+
10005	New York	42%	19%
12604	Poughkeepsie	56%	19%
10474	Bronx	32%	17%
10006	New York	40%	17%
14642	Rochester	46%	17%
14802	Alfred	43%	16%
12821	Comstock	17%	15%
14614	Rochester	2%	14%

Myth No. 4: My donors are homogeneous. I won't see any concentration worthy of a change to my mailing strategy.

As evident in the sample map below, geographic concentrations (or absences) of donors are almost always evident, whether it's a product of your past fundraising efforts, event locations, your online presence (or lack thereof), your program's service area, or competing charities' presence. Here the red represents areas of higher concentration, followed by lessening penetration levels (indicated by green, yellow and blue).



With ever-increasing production and postage costs, nonprofits need to continually fine-tune their prospecting efforts. With a minimal investment of time and money, you will likely find hidden pots of gold within your database. So go ahead—implement this strategy into your next fundraising campaign and see if you don't find some hidden gold for your organization.

Amy Houke is director, list and print media, at DMW Direct Fundraising (www.dmwfundraising.com) – a results-driven direct response agency that collaborates with clients to develop the full potential of their fundraising and membership marketing programs, through financially sound direct mail, online and integrated programs. She can be reached at 314-432-3286, or ahouke@dmwdirect.com.

Also check out DMW President Tom Hurley's mapping session—Mapping Your Donorbase: Finding Success in Small Places— at Bridge 2011! Attend the break out session of DM Track 9, Friday, July 22, 8:30 - 9:30.

What is the Difference Between an Ad Agency, a Direct Marketing Agency, and a Vendor That Offers Agency Services?

BY NANCY FREEMAN



When I introduced this question to the LinkedIn Direct Mail group, I got quite a response ... both large and varied. In

the main, though, direct marketing got high praise for its emphasis on "driving the return." What else did we hear?

Vendors with "agency services" may have an art department in addition to print/mail facilities, and these folks can offer a mix of services. But print and production are the main descriptors, said respondents. In addition, affordability may be a feature of this shop's creative offering.

Most observers noted that **ad agencies** tend to also offer public relations and print/media advertising, including TV and magazine ads – many of which can't produce measurable results. Ad agencies also take on campaigns designed to increase branding and recognition, as opposed to making sales. As one commentator noted, "Ad agencies build the brand but do not necessarily get the sale. Direct marketing agencies get the sale."

So how do **direct marketing agencies** get the sale? Almost always by employing direct mail as one component of the mix. Invariably, direct marketing agencies stress *measurability*, which is the hallmark of direct marketing itself. Measurable projects can include direct mail only, or a mix of direct mail, email, telemarketing, personalized-URLs, microsites, and even quick response or QR codes. No doubt mobile and short message service (SMS) will become part of the mix, too.

One responder noted that, with so much crossover, price can be the primary difference between the three. I disagree. With 25 years in the business, I've learned the *customer's specific needs* must drive the choice. As one responder put it, "You need to define your overall objective and then shop around to see what works best." Another marketing pro noted, "The lines of demarcation are blurring; as all types of firms increasingly dip their toes in other ponds, the water keeps getting muddier." Maybe, but I'm still an advocate for clear definition of objectives, followed by choice of tactics.

Whatever you decide, perhaps the best advice I heard was, "Don't relegate partners to work in isolation. The creative brief should include context and examples of other marketing efforts (yours and the competition's). Remember to share and explain your overall strategy, brand language, and aesthetics."

Hear! Hear! And thank you to all the good folks on LinkedIn who speak up so candidly and convincingly!

Nancy Guy Freeman is EU Services' manager of corporate training and customer development. A veteran direct marketer, Nancy has taught many EU University classes and has expansive knowledge in all aspects of direct marketing. Reach her at 301-795-6340 or nfreeman@euservices.com.

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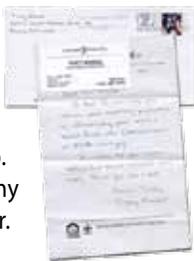
Ugly Direct Mail Works. Here's Why.

BY DEAN RIECK



Everyone likes pretty things. In nearly every situation, people prefer pretty over ugly. Pretty people tend to earn more. Pretty houses are worth more. Pretty almost always beats ugly, except when it comes to direct mail.

In the world of direct mail marketing, ugly has a big advantage. Below is an example of what most people would call an "ugly" direct mail piece. It's a simple solicitation about refinancing my house. And I've received it three or more times now. The envelope is a standard white Monarch with a canceled stamp and what appears to be a handwritten address. The letter inside is a short handwritten note with a business card stapled to the top. The letter is personalized with my name. The envelope is one-color. The letter and business card are



two-color, printed on one side. The whole package is small and cheap. No bleeds, die cuts, photos, or frills. I love it.

Yes, to me this ugly piece of direct mail is absolutely beautiful. Why? Because there is no pretense of cleverness. This piece seeks to generate phone calls and it does absolutely nothing else. Here is the text:

Dear Mr. Rieck,

I feel I can help you reduce your monthly payments by refinancing you into a lower fixed rate Conventional or FHA mortgage.

I wrote to you twice before but never received your reply. Please give me a call.

*Yours Truly,
Tracy Kindall*

That's it. It doesn't get any simpler than that. This is lead generation, so it doesn't have to say much. There's nothing complicated to explain. The letter just promises to lower my payments and presents a call to action.

The piece is not without its flaws. The stamp cancellation indicates Baltimore, MD, while the return address is Medina, OH. So we know this isn't really a personal letter from the sender. In addition, while the font is quite good, you can tell that every letter looks the same. Every "o" is the same as every other "o," for example.

But I doubt too many people would notice such things.

Overall, this is a well-conceived mailing. The first time I received it, I opened it before realizing that it was "ad mail" and not a personal letter. I smiled and mumbled to myself, "You got me." So if it got me to open it, with my years of direct mail experience, I know it's getting ordinary home owners to open it as well.

So why would an ugly direct mail piece like this work? Because it looks real. It looks personal, like something a real person would send. It doesn't trigger the junk-mail-alert radar built into everyone's brain. It doesn't pummel the reader with cliché copy. It gets to the point instantly.

Ugly direct mail works because there's no design to get in the way. This has been proven through experience. I've even seen the results of head-to-head ugly vs. pretty tests, my own and my clients'. My advice: Never be afraid to test ugly direct mail. It's not a branding medium. It's a direct response medium. Do what works to get response.

Dean Rieck is president of Direct Creative, a full-service direct marketing creative firm based in beautiful Westerville, OH. His powerful copy, smart design, and common sense consultation have made sales, generated leads, and raised funds for more than 250 businesses in publishing, financial services, software, high-tech, nonprofit, education, health care, and other industries.



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COPYWRITING

The Power of a (Well-Told) Story



It's no secret that emotions rule the day in good fundraising copy. But the question is, "How do we get the reader, the prospective donor, to connect emotionally with what our organization has to say?"

The answer: Tell them a story.

As Christopher Chabris and Daniel Simons point out in their book *The Invisible Gorilla*, "[Humans] naturally generalize from one example to the population as a whole, and our memories for such inferences are inherently sticky. Individual examples lodge in our minds, but statistics and averages do not"

That is why infomercials always – always! – include personal success stories told by "regular people." Direct marketers know the power of testimonials. Letting potential donors learn from others about the unique strengths and effectiveness of your organization is an influential marketing tool. Well, you might think of a compelling story as a testimonial on steroids.

BY FRED VALLEJO

As a copywriter, I've told stories about children, about adults, and about animals. All had emotional resonance. All worked. For example, a letter to acquire donors to an international-relief began this way:

"If there's one word I can't stand saying, it's 'No' to a desperately poor child who has suffered unspeakable hardships. A child like little Lico. Just 14 months old. Lico's high fever and cold reached a terrifying peak.

He began to gasp for air. He couldn't breathe. Lico's mother, Rosenda, was beside herself with fear. Her baby boy was gravely ill. His fragile life hung in the balance."

By comparison, a letter for a wildlife-protection organization started off with a story about a mountain gorilla named Mrithi, who had starred in the movie *Gorillas in the Mist*:

There is a profound silence in Africa just before the dawn, when the creatures of the night have finished their shift and the creatures of the day have not yet begun.

The noise of men marching through the forest must have made a terrifying contrast to that silence. Mrithi would have shouted a warning that they were in his territory. The patrol that found his body estimated that the attack must have come at about 4 a.m. Local farmers on the edge of the park said they heard many gunshots at about that time"

Here are the opening lines to a captivating story written not in third-person, but in first-person, and not for direct mail or

email, but for the radio. It was created by the acclaimed business-book author and ad man Roy H. Williams for, of all things, a diamond seller. Would it get your attention while stuck in rush-hour traffic? I bet it would.

"Antwerp, Belgium, is no longer the diamond capital of the world. Thirty-four hours on an airplane. One way. Thirty. Four. Hours. That's how long it took me to get to where 80 percent of the world's diamonds are now being cut. After 34 hours, I looked bad. I smelled bad. I wanted to go to sleep. But then I saw the diamonds."

A well-told story has to power to "sell" almost anything, and do so fluidly. It can create credibility, entice curiosity, and stir the need to know more. Best of all, it can build an unshakeable relationship – a bond – with the reader that can make moving to the call-to-action seamless, logical, inevitable. After reading a compelling story, a reader doesn't have to be "sold," they're emotionally and engaged and often *want* to donate or buy.

So the next time you're casting about for a pointed fundraising hook for your next mail or online initiative, don't just "broadcast" to your audience (i.e., convey big numbers and lots of facts), seek to "narrowcast" instead – all the way down to the number one. One compelling story written from one regular person to another.

Fred Vallejo, an award-winning freelance copywriter and creative consultant, spins well-told stories from his home in the Wasatch Mountains of Utah. He can be reached at fredv@mwwt.com or 435-645-9360.

What's An App To Do?

BY DAVE WOOLDRIDGE



If your company is developing a smart phone application, involve your marketing department early on. In order to stand out among more than 300,000 apps, it's impor-

tant to spend the time refining you app idea into a viable product that users will

want. This requires plenty of competitive research to ensure there's an audience for your app.

Marketing should never be an afterthought. If you wait to focus on marketing after your app is already in the App Store, then you're missing out on the countless pre-launch marketing opportunities. Programming and marketing should never be viewed as separate, unrelated tasks.

Your app is your most powerful marketing tool. Utilize your app's existing audience to help draw in new customers by employing grassroots community marketing tactics. Allow your users to easily spread the word about your app or share game

scores and achievements by integrating in-app social networking support for Twitter, Facebook, Game Center, OpenFeint, etc.

Your app requires a viable monetization strategy. Figuring out how your app will make money may seem like a no-brainer, but in order to sustain a profitable, long-term business, this deserves more thought than you would expect. Launching it as a paid app may not best serve your particular audience.

Dave Wooldridge is an adjunct professor at the New York University School of Continuing and Professional Studies. Dave teaches an online course titled, "The Business Side of iPhone and iPad App Development." The class ties in with the new edition of his book, *The Business of iPhone and iPad App Development: Making and Marketing Apps that Succeed* (Apress, 2011).

Does Your Business Really Need An App for That?

BY DAVID M. MASTOVICH



Smart phones now account for 27 percent of the mobile phone market led by nearly 50 million iPhone or Android users worldwide.

Those seemingly smart consumers want to be able to communicate, buy, and enjoy whatever they want, whenever they want. As a result, more than 400,000 mobile applications or apps have been developed in the last three years.

So does your business need a mobile app right now?

The most used mobile apps are for playing games, catching up on news, sports, and weather, social networking, and listening to music. But there are a number of successful business apps too.

When it comes to food, apps are a natural fit. In its first three months, the Domino's Pizza app generated more than \$2 million in orders. The app made it easy and fast to order and engaged customers with opportunities to win prizes. Restaurants can feature menus and allow users to make reservations. Other apps help people find restaurants and some even show photos of dishes people have uploaded.

Nike Training Club is targeted at women and designed to be a full-body training app with workouts and drills focusing on strength, cardio, and core training. Local fitness centers post the workout of the day to motivate members. Health and fitness club "finder apps" help travelers locate a gym and get a workout in while on the road.

Entertainment, music, books, magazines, and even birthday, anniversary

and holiday gift shopping are increasingly done via mobile. It's estimated that the value of digital and physical goods people will buy with their mobile phones will reach \$200 billion globally by 2012. Amazon's app compares prices from local retailers for over a million products sold on Amazon.com.

These examples and other success stories show how apps can help companies achieve the following:

- 1. Brand**—Many of the "first-to-app" companies were those with famous brands like Nike, Coke, and Domino's. Apple pretty much created the app space. As a result, there's a cutting edge or coolness factor associated with having an app. If your company creates an app and markets it via multiple channels, the opportunity exists to enhance your brand.
- 2. Please**—Consumers want convenience. You can make or keep customers happy by making their lives easier. If they can learn about and buy from your company quickly and easily, you can please them. When you provide them with valuable, timely information, you keep them happy and your company (and app) becomes a part of their routine.
- 3. Connect**—Think in terms of those health and fitness apps. The user has an ongoing, positive connection with the company. You have an opportunity to achieve regular marketing touches in a non-marketing manner through feel good connections.
- 4. T.O.**—No, not the football player/reality show guy. Track and optimize. When customers use your app, you have information to track and trend. Plus, your mobile app helps with search-engine marketing in that your company name is online one more time.

But before you jump on the mobile app bandwagon, you still need to consider your options. Today's smartphones have capabilities nearly to the level of desktops and support both regular websites and mobile versions. As a result, you might be able to achieve your goals in a more cost-effective way by creating a mobile version of your website.

Some companies require more capabilities for mobile than their regular website offers. In those instances, a mobile app and the cost associated with it make sense. But for many others, simply developing the mobile version of the website will suffice or be even better than the app. For example, Wikipedia's mobile site is tailored to fit the size of the screen on which it is viewed and seems more user-friendly than the app.

If you have weighed the benefits vs. the overhead costs of developing the app and decided it is time to move forward, remember to make it about them—your current and potential customers:

- Begin by identifying the "who" as in who is the target market for the app and why they would use or need it?
- Provide fresh, updated content that adds value for users. The more time-sensitive, the better. Announce specials and provide new information.
- Remember it is about convenience. Make their lives easier and become part of their routine as much as possible. Build an app for each mobile phone platform so it is available for anyone who wants to use it.
- Make sure the app does something and isn't just a mobile website. Otherwise, why make the bigger investment?
- Get the word out about the app. Tell current and potential customers about it and give them a compelling reason to use it. Utilize multiple mediums like email, text, Twitter, your website and others to reach them.

Your business may or may not need a mobile app today. But you definitely need to analyze the opportunity and enhance your mobile presence now and in the future.

David M. Mastovich, MBA, is president of MASSolutions, Inc. With a core philosophy of integrated marketing, MASSolutions focuses on improving the bottom line for clients through creative selling, messaging, and PR solutions. In his recent book, *Get Where You Want To Go: How to Achieve Personal and Professional Growth Through Marketing, Selling and Story Telling*, Mastovich offers strategies to improve sales and generate new customers; management and leadership approaches; and creative marketing, PR, and communications ideas. For more information, please visit massolutions.biz.

PRODUCTION

Lean on Me



Most of us have lived through a storm or two. Late one summer night, a storm hit my house, blowing out patio doors, windows, half the shingles, and 13 trees. Debris from my

neighbor's garage was spread across my back yard, while that of another neighbor's three-season porch lay scattered across the front. Power was out for days, but even worse was cleaning up the shards of glass strewn everywhere about my lawn.

Needing help, I called my brother who lives two hours away. He left his business in the care of others that morning and arrived early with plywood, plastic sheeting, a generator, and chainsaws. Before sundown we had the cleanup well in hand.

Do you remember Lean on Me, the classic hit by Bill Withers? The song is about being

□ continued from page 1 (bottom)

of original email messages delivered. Social-media links equal viral marketing, which equals free PR for your company.

It's not enough to say "include social-share links" in your creative brief. Tell the creative team which social-media outlets you want included. On a website, you can include the social-media networks that exist today. For a recent website I developed for a client, there were 181 in total. We included these in a drop down. But you don't want to do that in email, so you need to narrow the focus.

Silverpop found that Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter were the most often included social-share links, but that Bebo, Delicious, and LinkedIn actually received a higher percentage of share-link clicks. Determine which social-media outlets are most relevant to your audience, then share that information with your creative team in the brief.

If you're doing an email newsletter with a number of different articles, you'll want to include social-media links for each item so

BY KEVIN NIELSEN

there when someone has a need. Withers's soulful lyric that we "all need somebody to lean on," is true. In the realm of personal relationships, it feels good to know there is someone who will drop everything to be there for you.

This feeling translates to the business realm. At any tier of the business relationship, it feels good to know you have a vendor you can count on. Not just a vendor who handles some element of your work. Not just a vendor who has the lowest price. Rather, a vendor who is such a reliable resource that you gain confidence in them; you know they are there for you. Some examples:

- The art for a large legal mailing had been released a week late. It was Thursday afternoon and the client was under pressure for all 3.6 million pieces to be postmarked the following Tuesday. Meeting the Tuesday drop meant running other presses and working the weekend. It was important to the client and the content of the mailing, so we made it happen.
- Recently, an agency head shared a story about a postage check not arriving on

readers can share just what's of interest. This is more effective than having a reader share the entire newsletter, when only one article may be what they want to pass on.

Video

A recent Forrester Research report found that including video in email can double or triple click-through rates in email messages. The easiest way to do this is to include a clickable screen shot of the video and then have it open a new browser window and play there.

Include the URL for the video in the creative brief; this will allow your copywriter to view it and write appropriate copy about it. It will also allow your designer to pull a screenshot to use in the email and give the programmer the URL for the link.

Dynamic Content

Your creative brief should lay out any targeting you'll be doing in the email. Let your creative team know how you are segmenting your list and what content, if any, is to be targeted to each group. Providing this detail up front will allow them to write

time. Funny thing about the post office, they want money before they accept a mailing. In this case it was a sizeable job with a six-figure postage sum and the mail had to drop on time. The agency called the owner of the mail shop who agreed to front postage funds to ensure a timely drop. This is taboo. Thankfully, as promised, the postage arrived the next day and everything worked out. While this story is simple to share, the trust and friendship in place to make the story possible is deeper and has a history.

In business, as in life, a big part of what makes it work is having someone to lean on, and for others to know they can lean on us. Looking for that type of relationship? Look for people who:

- Are flexible enough to adjust to ever changing schedules;
- Share new format ideas;
- Come to you with cost-saving suggestions;
- Occasionally bend the rules to help you;
- Drop everything when a storm hits.

Kevin Nielsen serves as account executive with Japs-Olson Company of St. Louis Park, MN. He can be reached at kn Nielsen@japsolson.com

□ copy appropriate for each segment – and to develop a layout to accommodate the dynamic placement of content.

Testing

If you're running any tests, that should also be included in the creative brief. Be specific. Don't just say "subject line test" – provide a methodology to guide the creative team. You might specify that you want to test one key benefit against another in the subject line. Let them know the two key benefits you've chosen to test and ask for a minimum of three subject line possibilities to use for each.

The better the creative brief, the smoother the creative process will be – and the better your results.

Jeanne Jennings is an interactive marketing strategy and product development consultant with more than 20 years of experience in the online realm. Her direct response focus gets results for her clients, which include Hasbro, Network Solutions, PRWeb, VanillaSoft, Verizon and Vocus. Jeanne recently taught MarketingSherpa's full-day Email Marketing Essentials Workshop Training in 10 cities across the US and Canada. She authored *The Email Marketing Kit: the Ultimate Email Marketer's Bible* and, since 2001, has been a regular columnist on email marketing for ClickZ Experts. Reach Jeanne at JJ@jeannejennings.com.

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take advantage of lower postage costs by downsizing from a 9- by 12-inch package to 6½- by 11½-inch (or smaller). Simply folding a flat self-mailer—i.e., “magalog”—in half either horizontally or vertically can qualify you for substantially lower postage costs.

No. 2: Increase profits by boosting the response rate: This is where tweaking the copy or design can pay off big. One of the most proven tests to lift response is a fresh headline. A new headline can often result in a 20 to 50 percent lift or more.

Other tests that often lift response include: a new carrier (a new teaser or going without one at all); a new front-cover design (if it's a self-mailer); doing 4-color instead of 2-color; adding a lift note; or changing the format (i.e., convert a self-mailer to a #10 component package. I've seen this lift response by more than 50 percent!)

No. 3: Increase profits by raising the average order size/gift amount: A few subtle copy and design changes can raise the average order size or gift amount. You can put more emphasis on a higher-dollar order by featuring your “best deal” or making it stand out more on the response device.

For a more aggressive boost, you can make the offer sexier. For example, add premiums or other incentives for larger-size orders or gifts. Your goal is to craft such an irresistible

offer that someone would feel like a complete idiot for not taking you up on it.

Don't forget about finding that next kick-butt control. While you're looking at getting your current control to work harder for you, don't neglect the need to regularly test a completely new package—i.e., new copy, new design, and/or new format. The cost of not doing so can be huge.

Your current direct mail control may be performing well right now, but nothing lasts forever. Packages fatigue. Customer attitudes change. New competitors emerge. Or perhaps your package isn't “evergreen”—and some uncontrollable event comes along and renders it obsolete.

Try out new copywriters to get a fresh perspective and approach to your marketing efforts. Even if they don't hit it out of the ballpark on the first go, think twice about throwing it aside. You've already made a major investment of time and money.

If the test package came close to beating your current control, it may be worth tweaking and re-testing. Plus, by the time you re-test it, your current control may have fatigued more. So the new package may beat it and earn its place as your new control.

Are you letting your online marketing efforts grow stale, too? As easy and inexpensive as it is to test new email or web copy, you may be shocked how many

marketers are letting their online efforts grow stale. According to Anne Holland, publisher of WhichTestWon.com, 57 percent of marketers are not doing ANY tests to improve their email campaign or newsletter results. Even worse, 66.2 percent of marketers have not tested their landing pages or web sites to improve conversions.

Yet some of the simplest tests can add up to a huge boost in profits—increasing e-commerce conversions by 20 to 25 percent and lead-generation from submissions by 30 to 40 percent from the exact same traffic! A great place to get new testing ideas is to check out the free library of 130 past A/B tests at www.whichtestwon.com.

As you can see, getting a strong control is only half the battle. You have to test relentlessly to keep your control working as hard for you as it can. That means always having new tests ready to topple it—and send your profits soaring.

Kim Krause Schwalm is copywriter and president of Creative Synergy, Inc., located in the Washington, DC area. Kim has worked with some of the world's top direct response companies for the last 25 years, as either an in-house marketing leader or freelance copywriter/consultant. To learn more about Kim's services or view portfolio samples, visit www.kimschwalm.com.

In Memoriam — Carol Enters

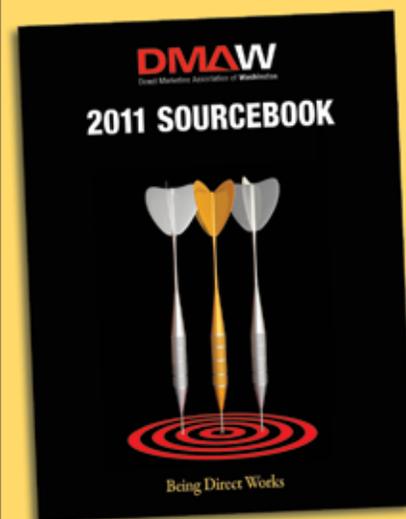
Fundraising list pioneer Carol Enters died March 8. She was 82. Enters opened the Carol Enters List Co., (CELCO) in Fairfax, VA., in 1981 and sold it in 1993, retiring to Florida. “Carol's passion for helping nonprofits, her exemplary leadership skills, and direct marketing expertise were well known and loved by her clients, friends, and peers all across the country,” said a statement issued by CELCO.

“Carol was a one-of-a-kind trailblazer in direct mail fundraising, helping to establish many of the practices in the list industry that created the foundation we all work from today,” the statement continued. Her death brought about numerous remembrances, even though she had not been active in the industry in nearly two decades.

Enters did not want a funeral service. The family asked that donations be made to a breast cancer charity or to the Suncoast Hospice, Pinellas Park, FL.

She is survived by a sister, Patricia, sons Gregory (Dianne) and Bruce, stepdaughter Trish (Beth), granddaughters Julie (Chris) and Jennifer (Brian), great-granddaughter Elle Monet and nieces Janet, Renee, Kathy and Frances.

The Definitive Guide To All The Best Resources in Direct Marketing



POSTAL DEVELOPMENTS

BY ELLEN PAUL

The U.S. Postal Service Launches A New Rate Calculator Service



I mean, really, how many times have you pondered the post office's intricate postage-rate charts to try to ascertain which class of mail would be best? A dozen?

Two dozen?

And how many times have you given up in distress and frustration, trapped between automation and non-auto rates, zone charts, piece-and-pound calculations, advertising vs. editorial copy ratios, and other incomprehensible mumbo jumbo? A dozen? Two dozen?

Mhmm. I betcha it's more. A lot more.

Well, the post office feels your pain. And in an effort that's both noble and generous (and maybe just a tad self-serving) to help ease your distress, the USPS has

come up with a neat little electronic gizmo to help you calculate your optimal postage rate.

If enough of us use this new tool, it could relieve the stress of certain customer service postal workers I've talked to. When I couldn't find the answers I needed recently, I called them. These poor souls fumbled through the same charts that had me foiled, but then it got worse. Much worse. They started reading the postal fine print. (*Note to my Dear Reader: Never ever read postal fine print. It will drive you mad. Stark, raving mad!*) Anyway, confusion gave way to obfuscation. But they labored valiantly onward, fighting their way through the regulations for five or 10 minutes until they arrived at an answer. Not *the* answer, perhaps, but an answer none the same.

The journey was exhausting. For both of us. I was so relieved the search was over, I'd have accepted any answer short of my 401(k) balance. I tell you, there's got to be a special place in heaven for these folks who have to do this all day long.

Anyway, the Business Calculator on the Postal Explorer website lets you calculate prices for all shapes and classes of mail, both domestic and international. Simply go to pe.usps.com and click on Postal Explorer, then click on the Business Calculator in the upper left.

Not sure what's what? Need a dictionary to understand the inside-the-post-office lingo? The site provides a navigation tool to give you definitions and links to other references. (*Warning: This "easy-to-access" information varies from easy to not-so-much. Approach with caution.*)

Not sure what you need? Calculate several rates and classes and compare the results. Simply hit the "Show History" button to have all the calculations you've just made shown in a nifty side-by-side format for easy scanning.

Not sure where the nearest post office is? Keep clicking. You'll find its street address. You'll even find its hours of operation.

So there you have it. Automation may force yet another group of postal workers into an early, well-deserved retirement. But the stress migraines we communally suffered from trying to ascertain the best postage rates should be a thing of the past.

And is that great or what!

Ellen Paul is president of Paul and Partners. Reach her at ellen@paulandpartners.net or 703-996-0800. Tune into her blog at <http://paulandpartners.blogspot.com/> or visit <http://paulandpartners.net>.

NEWS NOTES

- **Capital Hospice**, a nonprofit providing end-of-life care to patients and families in Northern Virginia, Washington, D.C., and Prince George's County, MD, exercised the first of two one-year renewal options in its contractual agreement with **DirectMail.com**. The integrated direct marketing firm will manage all aspects of the organization's 2011 direct mail program, overseeing year-end, special appeal, acquisition and renewal mailings. Visit www.DirectMail.com or call 1-888-690-2252.

- **Lisa Donnelly** has joined **Nexus Direct** as director of account planning. In this

role, she will carry out cost-effective list and media acquisition strategies and enable Nexus Direct's clients to stay ahead of their competition through the firm's pipeline of data planning, list brokerage, database development, and project analysis. Before joining Nexus Direct, Lisa founded and expanded the list brokerage and content strategy departments at Merkle, working across many industries including finance, insurance, consumer goods, and pharmaceuticals.

- **Roger Craver**, recipient of the DMAW Educational Foundation's Sisk Award for Direct Marketing Vision in 2000, has been inducted into the American Association of Political Consultants Hall of Fame. Craver is renown in direct marketing and

progressive political circles for his work with the National Organization for Women, Greenpeace, Amnesty, NARAL, Handgun Control, Inc. (now the Brady Campaign), the World Wildlife Fund, Environmental Defense and dozens of others. Older organizations were relaunched by him: the ACLU, the League of Women Voters, the Sierra Club, Planned Parenthood and The Wilderness Society. In a move possibly unique to political activists, Roger shocked the consulting community by resigning from several lucrative accounts as a matter of principle when he disagreed with the organizations' lobbying practices. Today, Roger is the founder of DonorTrends, a company providing fundraising intelligence, predictive models, and market

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Packaging Innovations Offset Rising Costs

BY SCOTT KRAVITZ



Over the last 25 years,

the cost to mail a one-ounce letter has doubled, jumping from 22 cents to 44 cents per ounce.

With additional

increases pending and higher energy costs looming on the horizon, we can only expect this trend to continue.

What does this mean for direct mail marketers? Primarily, that rising postage costs will be a major factor dictating how we communicate with customers and prospects. Lucky for us, innovative solutions and cost-effective alternatives are countering those rate hikes and keeping the overall cost of direct mail in line with marketing budgets.

It's important to recognize the overall goal of direct mail: to entice recipients to respond to a call-to-action. With that in mind, here are five ways to lower

expenses and create better value for direct mail campaigns:

1. Select products and packaging that can mailed as an automated flat. This means that the U. S. Postal Service can automate the processing of these products, significantly reducing the postal rate per unit. There are a couple of ways to do this. The first is by selecting mailable, durable products that easily fit into traditional flat mailers and can withstand the wear and tear endured in the shipping process, including items such as USB drives, T-shirts or tote bags. The second option is to choose packaging innovations such as the CGX Flex Mailer®, which enables dimensional products to ship as automated flats.

2. Manage package tracking internally. While UPS, Federal Express, and USPS premium delivery options trace the movement of specific packages throughout transit, the Postal Service's Intelligent Mail® barcode (also known as IMB) can be printed directly onto packaging, enabling customers to manage the process themselves. Thanks to modern technology, what once required expensive infrastructures can now be executed at a much lower cost through your local fulfillment house.

3. Watch your weight. Apply those new year's resolutions to your promotional products' packaging and watch the savings add up. One of the easiest ways to

keep expenses down is to reduce the overall weight of your package. Next time you're selecting products and direct mail content, keep the overall weight in mind. By reducing the weight of your mail by just one ounce, approximately equivalent to the weight of 10 pennies, you can save 17 cents per mailing. Multiply this by 10,000 mailings and you've just saved \$1,700.

4. Be flexible in terms of materials and production of packaging. Before you choose the packaging for your next direct mail campaign, ask your distributor if there is excess capacity in a specific line of products, or if they're trying to get rid of a certain paper stock. Simple changes that don't impact the end result you're looking for can have a major effect on your ROI.

5. Personalize your mail. Study after study shows that recipients are more likely to open relevant personalized mail. Customize your packaging in a way that targets individual consumers or prospects. While it may be more expensive on the front end, you might be surprised at the increase in response rates. This means you can send fewer mailings out for the same results.

Scott Kravitz is a sales and marketing director at Consolidated Graphics. For more information on packaging solutions that save money, Scott can be reached at 301-341-6241 or skravitz@cgx.com. To learn more about Consolidated Graphics, please visit cgx.com.

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research to the nonprofit and political communities. diMobile is his latest company, building mobile engagement applications for the next generation of activists and hell-raisers.

- **DMW Direct** recently launched a new blog, No Green Bananas. The blog is designed to share insight gleaned during 20 years spent developing innovative campaigns aimed at the Baby Boomer generation and the senior market. "As Baby Boomers 'come of age,' there has been a lot of press about the impending 'Silver Tsunami,'" said Bill Spink, executive vice president and chief creative officer at DMW Direct. "We liked the No Green Bananas title because, while it is easy to dwell on perceived

negatives of aging, maturing can be a good thing!" No Green Bananas presents varied perspectives from the DMW team's experience in marketing to 50-, 60-, and 70-somethings for decades. Not to mention, many of the bloggers are 50+ themselves. The blog features one to two new posts each week. Topics discussed include winning marketing strategies, creative approaches, and media-buying tactics for marketing to adults age 50 and older, as well as personal insights on being a Boomer in 2011. Special emphasis is placed on best practices and trends in generational marketing. For more information, please visit www.nogreenbananas.net.

- A recent surge in the volume of direct mail marketing has prompted Washington,

DC-based **The Mighty Copywriter** and Bethesda, MD-based **Bethesda List Center** to release a new how-to primer, *The 3-Minute Guide to Direct Mail*. The primer is intended for a new generation of marketers, many of whom feel the need to become better acquainted with direct mail fundamentals. "Many marketers are rediscovering direct mail," says Bob James, president of The Mighty Copywriter. "They're disappointed by email's responsiveness and are learning that social media is fairly 'soft-sell.' But a lot of today's marketers aren't comfortable with direct mail basics, the way earlier generations were. The new primer is for them." *The 3-Minute Guide to Direct Mail* can be downloaded at no charge at www.TheMightyCopywriter.com or at www.bethesda-list.com.

Making Your Website Mobile

BY ANDERS ROSS

There is a special procedure for designing a mobile website. The easiest way to build a mobile website is to modify your existing website and make it compatible for mobile handsets. There are a few principles and elements to understand before you begin.

Layout

Browsing a mobile website can be time-consuming, so put the most important information at the top of the page. The layout might include the following elements:

- **Logo:** The logo should be attractive, but take care of its size. Make sure it doesn't exceed 2 KB, because images take a long time to load on mobile networks and you don't want your website to look incomplete.
- **Navigation:** Minimize left and right scrolling; that's difficult on a phone. Instead, arrange your content in a single column. Typing on most mobile devices involves small or virtual QWERTY keypads, which are not easy to use. If your website is going to be mobile-friendly, it needs a thorough navigation system.
- **Content:** The information on your mobile website should be easy to read and navigate, and it shouldn't take much time to figure out because visitors are probably on the go while they're looking at it. Select the content that should be displayed and tailor the menu by adjusting text so that users don't have to zoom. As for typography, consider using headings to control font-sizing.
- If you want to put images on your mobile website, they should be in JPEG, GIF or PNG format; these are fairly lightweight. Compress pictures to avoid zooming, and allow users to turn images off as they browse. Always use the alt text property for images.

Coding

Mobile websites can be coded with XML, XHTML or basic HTML, and CSS. Title tags, description meta tags, heading tags, and file names should be carefully crafted with target keywords that maximize available content. Many new mobile-interface developers hesitate when it comes to coding. Below are some tips that might remove that hesitation.

Make sure your code is proper and 100 percent valid, because most mobile browsers aren't as able as their PC counterparts.

Seeing what your layout looks like on all existing mobile browsers is not always easy. One way to address this problem is to use fluid layouts that automatically adjust to screen size. To accomplish this, avoid setting widths in pixels and use percentages or ems instead.

Style Sheets: You can target various mobile devices to create a better user experience. For example, for users browsing your website with handheld devices, you can use in your website's header: <head>:

view plaincopy to clipboardprint?

```
1. <link rel="stylesheet" href="handheld.css" type="text/css" media="handheld">
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Ads

Don't fill the page with ads on either your mobile or main website.

Applications

If you have a large user base, create a dedicated application that targets a variety of mobile interfaces. If you make an app for specific handsets, then you don't have to worry about fancy scripts and you can

enhance the application your own way.

Page Size

When assigning a style to a mobile website, keep it simple and keep page sizes small. The maximum page size for a mobile page is 25 KB, so make everything fit and use fewer than 10 KB if possible. Keep in mind that users often have data plans that charge by the kilobyte.

Page Links

A good mobile website design has "back" buttons and links. Navigating the Internet from a mobile phone isn't easy, and many phones aren't equipped with "back" buttons, so provide them to help visitors escape dead ends. Also, make sure every page is linked to another page.

Testing

Test the mobile version of your website on multiple devices (and preferably on different platforms). It's the only way to be sure that your website offers a good experience. If you don't have access to multiple devices, use a web-based emulator such as iPhone-Tester.com.

Anders Ross is the co-founder of iShift, as well as a freelance designer and web addict from Frankfurt, Germany. Reprinted with permission from instantshift.com.



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FAST-ACTION DIRECTORY

DMAW Headquarters: email info@dmaw.org

Articles: Nancy Rathbun Scott, Editor, 703-496-3259, FAX 703-310-7640, Email: nancy@nancyscott.com

AdVents Advertising: Terri Jones, 703-471-4902, tjones@dmaw.org

Inserts: must be related to DMAW events; contact DMAW Headquarters to inquire or schedule.

Job Exchange: Submit by email to Ann@dmaw.org; you will receive a reply confirming cost prior to posting. Deadline for print version is 15th of month preceding publication; electronic version posted to website within 48 hours. Cost: MEMBERS: "positions sought," free; "positions available" at \$100 for first 50 words, \$1 for each additional word. NOT-YET-MEMBERS: \$200 for first 50 words, \$1 for each additional word.

[Note: If the nonmember advertiser chooses to join for \$199 for 12 months, then the ad being placed and all subsequent ads are billed at the member rate, plus the advertiser receives print and electronic copies of AdVents and all other benefits of membership.]

News Notes: Send to Nancy Rathbun Scott, Editor: Items of professional interest or significant personal news about members.

Deadline for Articles and News Notes: 15th of the second month preceding issue date (e.g., deadline for May issue is March 15).

DMAW Educational Foundation: Send correspondence or charitable donations to DMAWEF, 4414 Walsh Street, Chevy Chase, MD 20815; Attention Karen Depew, Executive Director; email karen@northwoodconsulting.com

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Executive Director: Donna Tschiffely, donna@dmaw.org

Editor: Nancy Rathbun Scott, Liberty Communications, 703-496-3259, nancy@nancyscott.com

Advertising: Terri Jones, 703-471-4902

Production Staff

Design: Liberty Communications, 703-496-3259
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Marketing AdVents is published monthly by the Direct Marketing Association of Washington to bring its 1,300+ members news of DMAW's varied activities and information of professional interest, including postal-related news. Columns, such as in this and other issues, represent a vital member service. Members with industry-related educational information they wish to share are encouraged to submit articles. A helpful memo explaining guidelines for features is available from the editor.



DMAW Educational Foundation Mentor Spotlight

On March 7, DirectMail.com participated in DMAW-EF's "Mentor for a Day" program, hosting Salisbury University marketing major

Sarah Cibelli at its Prince Frederick, MD, facility. DirectMail.com's support of DMAW-EF and efforts to develop young marketing talent, however, run much deeper. Since 1986, DirectMail.com

has sponsored the John Swain Memorial Scholarship, named in honor of John Swain, co-founder of DirectMail.com and longtime DMAW member, through the DMAW-EF. In addition, DirectMail.com works with a local career center's graphic arts program, assisting in its certification process, judging competitions, and conducting tours and educational sessions.

Kirk Swain, principal, DirectMail.com and son of John Swain, says, "Through our contributions to the education of the next generation of marketers, we strive to secure a bright future for the direct marketing industry overall. These up-and-coming young professionals will be tomorrow's leaders, and we welcome the opportunity to share the knowledge and experience we've gained over the past 41 years in the industry."

Q & A with Sarah Cibelli

What did you expect to gain from your experience participating in the "Mentor for a Day" program?

I decided to apply for the program because I want to learn as much as possible about the marketing industry, and I believe it is important to have industry experience before graduation. The classroom

teaches theories, but mentorships and internships allow their application in real-world situations.



Kirk Swain
DirectMail.com



Sarah Cibelli
Salisbury University

What did you learn as a result of the program and how has this mentorship experience shaped your understanding of direct marketing?

The information I gained from my experience at

DirectMail.com exceeded all my expectations. I expected to meet key DirectMail.com employees and learn more about the direct mail industry, but I visited each department and took a detailed tour. I learned many things, such as the importance of recognizing that every client is different and realizing that techniques that worked for one may not work for another. I also learned that communication is key. A client may tell DirectMail.com they want a "gate-fold" brochure, but everyone has a different understanding of what a "gate-fold" is. I also sat in on an actual sales meeting, where the client knew the direct mail results it wanted to achieve, but not how to accomplish them. I was impressed by DirectMail.com's ability to demonstrate exactly how it could execute a direct mail strategy to achieve those precise objectives.

How do you plan to apply/expand upon what you learned?

I am currently working on the DMAW-EF's Collegiate MAXI Competition, and this year's contest requires one piece of direct mail. Thanks to my mentorship at DirectMail.com, I now have a much better understanding of direct mail techniques—and several creative ideas to share with my team!

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JAPS-OLSON COMPANY



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