



### Inside

- **7** deadly mistakes in direct mail
- **7** ways to improve your offer
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## Mastering your direct mail

Tips and suggestions from direct marketing master,  
Alan Rosenspan

## Message from Australia Post

Dear Marketer,

In today's economic climate, it is more important than ever to show that your marketing dollars translate into results. Accountability is critical, and that's why direct mail is such an effective marketing channel.

Because you know who receives your mailing, you can track who responds, when and what channel (ie website, phone, mail) they use to respond. Even more, you can test different offers, audiences and creative in the one campaign to gauge the best approach for maximum response and effectiveness, giving you valuable information for future campaigns.

We know how important it is to get results you want. That's why Australia Post's Mail Marketing team is proud to bring you this special booklet of tips and suggestions from direct marketing master Alan Rosenspan, so you can improve your direct marketing activities and achieve greater results from your campaigns.

I trust you will enjoy reading this collection of valuable tips from Alan and find them useful when planning your next campaign.

The Mail Marketing website provides information to marketers on why and how direct mail can be integrated into the marketing mix. For more information on why mail is an effective marketing channel, visit [www.mailmarketing.com.au](http://www.mailmarketing.com.au). Here you will find a range of resources, tools and tips to help you plan and execute a direct mail campaign, including research, case studies, campaign tools, and lots more.

Regards,



**Mark Roberts**  
Manager Mail Marketing  
Australia Post

## Message from Alan Rosenspan

Dear Friends,

You know the saying:

*"If you give someone a fish, they'll eat for one day. If you teach them to fish, they'll eat for a lifetime."*

On the other hand, as a consultant, I know *"If you teach someone to fish – they'll never need to hire you again!"*

Let me take that risk. This booklet includes a large number of secrets for success in direct mail – including three of my own personal ones below.

Why direct mail in an age of electronic, interactive, and social media?

Direct mail continues to be the most important and most effective medium for direct marketers – provided it's done correctly. In this booklet, I hope to share some of the ways you can accomplish this.

So let's start:

### 1. Be a great listener

I have always found that ordinary copywriters are talkers.

They're fascinating to listen to. They have great stories and observations, and often a good sense of humor.

But great copywriters are listeners. They absorb information, and are always hungry to learn more.

They know that the solution to most problems can often be revealed by the person explaining it.

Gene Schwartz is one of the world's best direct marketing copywriters. His first rule of copywriting is *"be the best listener you ever heard."*

Schwartz describes the package he did that launched Boardroom Reports. He was hired by Martin Edelson, the publisher, who asked him, *"Okay, what do we do?"*

*"I said, 'I'm gonna sit and I'm gonna listen, and you're gonna talk.' He talked for about four hours, and I just sat there taking notes."*



## Message from Alan Rosenspan

*"Now my copy was 70 per cent his conversation. The headline was 'How to Get the Heart of 370 Business Magazines in Just 30 Minutes a Month.' It was his thing. It was his idea. All I did was write it out and give it to people."*

One of my own techniques is to ask the client, "What do you think is most important?" Or even, "What do you think I should do?" It's rarely where I end up, but it's always a great way to start.

The second piece of advice is something that you probably already do, but it will become even more important as you progress in your career.

### 2. Take it personally

You may not be signing your own name to the letter that you're writing.

You may not be the one who prepares the brief; or decides the strategy; or chooses the format.

You're probably never the one who decides how much time you have on the project.

Regardless, it is you who are responsible for whether or not it works.

You should feel that every project is a personal challenge – and it is up to you to do the very best job you can with no excuses.

Dr. Sheldon Kopp is the author of the self-help book, "If You Meet the Buddha on the Road, Kill Him." It's an extraordinary book, and it includes "The Existential Laundry List."

Number 33 on the list says "All important decisions must be made on the basis of insufficient data."

But number 34 says, "Yet you are responsible for everything you do."

Several years ago, I made a presentation to a major client that included the work of several creative teams in the agency. The client looked them over and said, "What would you do?"

*The question startled me.*

"You mean, what does the agency recommend?" I sputtered.

"No," she said quietly, "what would you – Alan Rosenspan - recommend?"

## Message from Alan Rosenspan

The question forced me to admit that I didn't feel strongly about any of the work we were presenting; and I promised to come back in a week with something better, which I did.

Six months later, I had my own agency, where I did all my own work. But it was work that I believed in.

### 3. Push yourself

You're probably the very best judge of your own work, more than your boss, the account people or the client.

You know when you've done a great job, or a not-so-great job.

You know when you've tried your hardest, and when you've just coasted.

In fact, you're the only one who really knows.

And the more you push yourself now, the more successful you'll be, and the faster you'll get there.

When I began as a copywriter, I wrote at least three or four versions of everything I did. Even memos. But that's not just the passion and energy of youth.

When I recently presented to American Express, I did 12 different versions of a package. These were full layouts (my own roughs) with headlines and subheads.

The result: we beat their long-standing control twice – and we're still using the ideas.

I hope you find these and the rest of the tips in this booklet helpful when planning your next direct mail campaign.

Sincerely,



**Alan Rosenspan**

President

Alan Rosenspan & Associates

# 7 deadly mistakes in direct mail

Direct mail is still the largest and most important form of direct marketing.

When it's done right, nothing can be more powerful or create more business. The classic letter for the *Wall Street Journal* was mailed for over 30 years and produced over \$1.2 billion worth of business.

We all make mistakes from time to time, but the trick is not to make the same mistake twice.

And so, having created, evaluated and reviewed thousands of direct mail packages around the world, I'd like to share some mistakes that I have seen over and over again.

## Mistake #1. Just selling benefits

We've all been told that benefits are the most important thing you can tell people.

They want to know "WIIFM" – What's In It For Me? Why should I buy your product? How does it benefit me? What do I get?

In other words, don't just tell me that your car comes with anti-lock brakes because that's a feature. Tell me that it's a lot safer and easier to drive, even in wet weather. Because that's a benefit.

But benefits alone are not enough.

And there is some evidence to suggest that people are motivated more by the avoidance of pain, than the promise of pleasure.

A study by an energy company proved it. The study was done among people that had energy audits. The person conducting the audit asked the homeowner one of the following questions:

"Did you know you can save an extra 75 cents a day by implementing these recommendations?"

"Did you know it costs you an extra 75 cents a day if you don't implement these recommendations?"

Which do you think was more effective?

If you selected the second one, you're absolutely correct. So how could this work in direct marketing? You may be able to improve response by focusing on what will happen to your prospect if they don't use your product or service.

As an example, we did two mailings for a software company that focused on ISO 9000 certification. The first mailing talked about how the software could help you pass certification and included all the benefits. It was a large and expensive mailing.

The second mailing was a simple letter package. The outer headline read, "ISO 9000 certification. Will your company fail?"

This was the winning package.

## Mistake #2. Not showing your target market

I did a seminar for a travel company that focuses on the 45–65 year old market. (One of the fastest growing segments of the travel industry).

On the cover of their catalogue, they had an adorable photograph of a 4-year-old girl.

What's wrong with this picture?

The humorist Robert Benchley once wrote, "There are two classes of travel ... first class, and with children." The very last thing that the average older adult wants on their vacation is to deal with children.

Instead, I recommended that they show an attractive couple, in the right age range, that will immediately communicate the fact that

this catalogue and these vacations are for people aged 45–65.

One of the first questions any prospect will have about your product is, "Who's it for?" By showing a photograph of your target customer right at the beginning, you can answer that question and establish a rapport with your prospects.

## Know your customers

Understanding who your customers are, what they like and what they do, help bring your marketing campaign to life.

For genuine consumer insights that will get you closer to your customers and prospects, visit [www.fdsolutions.com.au](http://www.fdsolutions.com.au)

## Mistake #3. Not showing your product in use

Business-to-business advertising almost always gets lower readership scores than consumer advertising – even though it appears in more targeted publications.

The reason? Most business advertising never shows the product in use.

Most business ads have pictures of boxes, or "concepts" or things other than the product.

While I realise this may be difficult to do when you're selling high technology products or even financial services, it's well worth the extra effort. And if you can't show the product in use, at least show happy people benefiting from it.

**Mistake #4. Not giving them a reason to act now**

Several years ago, I had a boss who always asked me two questions whenever I wanted to purchase something like a new computer.

The first was pretty simple. He'd ask, "Why do we need it?" And in fact, most salespeople are trained to give their prospect what's known as "the elevator pitch."

It's called that because you're supposed to be able to provide, in the course of a short elevator ride, a fast explanation of why you need the product.

I could usually answer this question, but his next one often threw me, "Okay, why do we need it now?"

In today's economy, it is not enough to give people a reason to buy your product and service. You must also give them a compelling reason to act now.

The CEO of a high technology company recently wrote, "Companies are being much more selective. Even after our sales people have convinced the chief information officer of the product's technical merits, the chief financial officer's decision takes forever."

This principle, by the way, can also be applied to your offer. Don't leave it open-ended – put a deadline on it. "You must respond within 30 days" can be an excellent way of increasing response.

**For copywriting tips and a list of companies who can help you create perfect copy, visit [openuptomail.com.au](http://openuptomail.com.au)**

**Mistake #5. Using "Adspeak"**

A friend of mine used to be the editor of *Travel & Leisure* magazine. She read dozens of prospective articles every month.

Whenever she came across a certain phrase, she would immediately stop reading and reject that article.

The phrase was "A study in contrasts ..."

It was used to describe countries, cities, restaurants, just about everything, and it appeared in at least five articles a month.

In advertising and direct marketing, you must resist using clichés, clever lines, or headlines that impart no actual information. People either tune them out, or just don't read them.

For example, a recent ad in *BusinessWeek* was for AMD (I never heard of them either). Their headline across a 2-page spread – costing about \$100,000 – said "AMD Makes it Possible."

That's Adspeak, and it really doesn't mean a thing. However, in the copy of the ad they mentioned that they were able to help a famous auto company cut their design time on a new electric vehicle from one year to 10 weeks.

A headline of "How AMD Cut Design Time from 12 Months to 10 Weeks" is much more specific, and much better.

**Mistake #6. Not leading them on**

The University of Maryland didn't want their students to trample all over the grass on their new main promenade. So they planned to put concrete paths to connect the buildings.

However, instead of arbitrarily putting in concrete paths, they planted the grass, and waited a couple of months.

In that time, the students naturally created several paths through the grass as they walked from class to class.

Only then did the University add the concrete – and only where the students actually walked.

In many direct marketing packages, there is no natural path to follow; no direction for the reader. There's often not even a clue on what the most important part of the package is, or why the prospect should respond.

It is important to take your customers on a journey so that they know what they are supposed to do next. Don't assume that they know, tell them.

**Mistake #7. Assuming people will read every word**

They won't.

I can't tell you how many direct mail packages I've looked at where they "save the best for last."

Unfortunately, the only person who got that far was the copywriter and the client.

That's why it is absolutely essential to:

1. put your main benefits in your headlines and other prominent places
2. put strong, selling captions under every photograph. After headlines, they are the "most read" part of any ad or direct mail piece
3. highlight news, if you're lucky enough to have any
4. make sure the offer stands out.

The key is to make your direct mail easy to scan – so that people will understand the product's main benefits and the offer in just a few seconds. Then, if they're interested, they'll read more.

## 7 ways to improve your offer

Direct marketing is, above all, the art and science of getting people to do things.

Our main focus is getting people to act – and act immediately. Consider this: even the most powerful fundraising letter, with the most heart-breaking story, would fail if it only made people feel something instead of doing something about it.

And the single best way to get significant numbers of people to act is with the offer.

Here are seven suggestions for developing a compelling offer.

### 1. Offer something extra

Smuggler's Notch is a ski resort in the States that offered 30 per cent discount off a week's vacation. They called me in when response began to drop.

"How much is the 30 per cent worth?" I asked. They answered "About \$500."

Now that I knew how much money I had to work with, I came up with an offer that sounded much more valuable, but actually cost them less.

The offer was \$300 in "Smuggler's Gold." This was money you could spend anywhere at the resort, on your hotel bill, on new ski equipment, or even at the restaurant.

The extra \$300 sounded much more attractive than the 30 per cent discount. It was also more specific.

### 2. Offer something that accelerates the sale

One of my software clients offered a free golf club. It was a valuable offer and generated a good response. However it didn't lead to a single sale.

I recommend offers that are more focused on your product or service. By this I mean offers that will help someone make a buying decision or even speed up the sales process.

In our direct mail for Systems Paving, our offer is that we will take a digital photo of your house and then show you what your house will look like with a beautiful new driveway.

This not only improved response – it dramatically increased the number of people who bought. This offer has been absolutely unbeatable for almost 10 years.

### 3. Offer something that has value to the prospect

Many companies make the mistake of offering more information or a brochure about their company. I'm sure they're very proud of it.

However, it has very little or no value to a prospect.

### Offer something money can't buy

In order to prevent customers from using their Awards points to redeem Qantas Frequent Flyer points, Commonwealth Bank created a mailer that for the first time ever, allowed customers to use their Awards points to redeem anything they wanted – something that money can't buy. They achieved an ROI of 341 per cent.

Find out more details on this case study and other success stories at [mailmarketing.com.au](http://mailmarketing.com.au)

*Used with permission from ADMA.*

**"The key to developing a compelling offer is to think about what the prospect would want, what would help them make their life easier, and what would help them make a better, more informed decision."**

### 4. Offer something that's worked before

Some years ago, I did a project for the MathWorks. It was an offer test designed to beat their control, which simply offered "more information."

I went back over their materials and discovered that the MathWorks computer scientists had generated over 100 white papers and reports, and all of them were available as possible offers.

But which one or ones should we choose?

My first instinct was to let the prospect choose. So in one package, we allowed people to choose any five papers from the list of 100.

But that takes hard work, and most people just don't have the time. So in the second offer we tested, we made the choice for them.

I asked my client which were the most popular white papers and reports, and then came up with the following offer:

"Free! The 5 Most Requested Reports and Articles from the MathWorks."

This offer out pulled the control seven times over. I think it worked for three reasons:

1. people always want what other people have – particularly in very competitive industries like high technology
2. these were proven offers – after all, they were the most popular ones, and
3. we made it very easy for them.

So if you have an offer that's worked well before – it might work well again.

Laubman & Pank (an eye care and eye health specialist) offered a \$150 voucher for a pair of glasses with Transitions lenses to their readers, on top of putting in the actual Transition film into the DM pack. As a result they exceeded sales target by 184 per cent from the 6.3 per cent who responded.

Find out more details on this case study and other success stories at [mailmarketing.com.au](http://mailmarketing.com.au)

*Used with permission from ADMA.*

### 5. Offer something negative

People have a greater fear of loss than a desire for gain. That makes sense – you don't want to lose what you already have, do you?

One way to revive an offer might be to take all the positive information you have, and take the opposite approach.

For example, Fisher Investments used to offer information on how to succeed in the stock market. That worked – but now they offer “8 Mistakes to Avoid” which is pulling three times as well.

Think of what's the worst that could happen if people don't buy or use your product or service. Then turn it into an informational offer.

### 6. Add urgency to your offer

Include a “reply by” date or even “Please respond within 7 days”. This will encourage people to act more quickly, and not put it aside and possibly forget it.

You can even test what's called a “fast 50” – the first 50 people to respond will get a special offer.

But don't make this mistake.

A software company in Massachusetts offered a free baseball cap to the first 100 customers to respond – and they received over 800 replies.

They wanted me to write a letter to 700 customers, to explain they wouldn't get a cap.

I had two questions for them. “How much do the hats cost?” I asked. They said, “We got a great deal – only about \$2 per hat”.

My next question was, “How much is the average customer worth?” They said, “That depends on what they order – could be anywhere from \$1,000 to \$5,000.”

“Send them all a hat!”

They agreed, and my letter read “Even though you weren't one of the first 100 customers to respond, we want you to have a baseball cap”. Their customers were very happy.

**For examples of tried and tested offers that can help you acquire and keep customers, go to [mailmarketing.com.au](http://mailmarketing.com.au)**

### 7. Finally, sell your existing offer more strongly

Sometimes you have a good offer – you're just not calling attention to it, or describing its value.

When we started working for Scott's LawnService, they already had an offer – a Free Lawn Analysis. But it was almost buried in the package.

We made it the hero of our new package, and described it in more detail than they ever had before. I wrote that “we check for 36 different kinds of weeds”.

The client asked, “How did you come up with that number?”

I said, “I counted all the weeds on the form.”

Our Free Lawn Analysis package won a Gold ECHO in 2004, followed by a Bronze ECHO in 2006.

Was it beautifully written? Um...not really. But it clearly sold the offer and the value of it.

It's a combination that will beat good or even great creative 99 out of 100 times.

How did I come up with that number? I counted.

# 50 extra ways to improve response

A couple of years ago Australia Post's Mail Marketing published my booklet "101 Ways to Improve Your Response" and since then I have learnt a few additional lessons along the way that I would like to share with you. I hope you find these useful.

To receive a copy of my "101 Ways to Improve Your Response" booklet visit [mailmarketing.com.au](http://mailmarketing.com.au)

## The Outer Envelope

### 1. Use a double window

A second window can include a respond by <Date>, a signature, or even the offer. It makes the envelope look intriguing and more likely to be opened.

### 2. Use a larger window

We've used them for UpToDate and also First National Bank. It shows the return address through from the letter, which allows you to version each letter without going to a lot of extra cost.

## Envelope with six windows!

Origin achieved an uplift of 277 per cent in calls when they mailed out an envelope with six windows that represented the many roles held by a home-based business proprietor.

Find out more details on this case study and other success stories at [mailmarketing.com.au](http://mailmarketing.com.au)

*Used with permission from ADMA.*

### 3. Use a window with a colour tint

We've used both yellow and red, sometimes tinting the cellophane, sometimes just using colour on the window to give the appearance of a tint. It makes the envelope stand out more.

### 4. Use highlighter on the envelope

It can dramatise an important point – such as the deadline for responding. You can even highlight "Personal and Confidential".

### 5. Put a "do dad" on the envelope

It could be a small black box, a mock bar code, a "Form Number 7342" – anything that makes your envelope look more important.

### 6. Rotate your outer envelopes

The second or third time I see your envelope, I already know what's inside it. Take your control letter, brochure and offer and simply put them into a different envelope. And change it regularly. You'll get more people to open it.

### 7. Put a label on it

The new control for *The Wall Street Journal* uses a larger, gloried address label with their logo on it. So do the controls for other businesses. We've also tested labels with the offer on them, or even the "Important Information". It usually works very well.

### 8. Allow the first line of copy to show through the window

This only works when you have a great lead-in line. And never use the entire sentence. Make sure they have to open it to see how you finish the ...

## 50 extra ways to improve response

### 9. Test a strange size or shape

Anything that makes your envelope stand out from everyone's else's envelope. That's your competition that day.

## Make your envelope stand out

According to Eye Scan Research, the average recipient will scan an envelope, turn it over, and decide whether or not to read the contents, all in about seven seconds.\*

Find out how Innovative Envelopes can help make your direct mail stand out by visiting [auspost.com.au/envelopes](http://auspost.com.au/envelopes)

*\* Professor Vogeles, Institute of Direct Marketing*

### 10. Stamp your outer envelope

Almost any message will do, provided it looks like it was stamped before delivery. You could test "Received" or "Urgent" or even "For Address Only". I recommend all caps and red.

### 11. Test a vellum or plastic envelope

Just make sure your advertising message doesn't show through. Otherwise, there's no reason for the person to open it.

## 12. Bulk up your envelope

Anything that makes it look “puffy” and not flat will increase your opening rate. One bank used a crumpled up dollar bill with the message, “If your business cash sits in a typical checking account, it’s just like throwing it away”.

### Make a real impact

Use different shapes and designs to deliver your brands message more powerfully. Impact Mail allows you to send addressed mail items of virtually any shape or design.

Visit [auspost.com.au/impactmail](http://auspost.com.au/impactmail)

## The Letter

### 13. Put the benefits in the margin

It allows people to quickly “scan” the letter for benefits, and then decide to read. This technique is now best practice for many financial services companies.

### 14. Then put an 1800 number or call to action right underneath them

If the benefits are compelling, they may not have to read the letter at all. Anything that makes things easier makes them work better.

## 15. Test different paper

Vodafone in New Zealand produced a highly successful package on computer print-out paper (to demonstrate they were cutting the cost of your service). We just presented a letter written on a Yellow legal pad for the New York State Bar Association.

Swinburne University of Technology mailed an invite using a linen note-taking napkin to grab the interest of prominent Australian business people. Every person who received an invite attended the dinner, and some took notes on the actual napkin.

Find out more details on this case study and other success stories at [mailmarketing.com.au](http://mailmarketing.com.au)

*Used with permission from ADMA.*

### 16. Focus more on the letter

American Express has lifted response by eliminating the brochure in some mailings. It forces people to focus on the letter – the most persuasive element.

### 17. Test an unusual salutation

If you can’t personalise it, why settle for Dear Colleague, or Dear Friend? An antique magazine began their letter with, “Dear Lover of Beautiful Things”.

## 18. Don’t exaggerate

Nobody likes a bragger – not even in direct marketing. Exaggerating your claims and benefits makes your copy unbelievable.

### 19. Use white space

Makes it easier to read. As someone once said, “A letter needs a layout.” Make sure your letter has at least a 3cm margin on both sides.

OgilvyOne in Germany did a terrific letter from the Evangelical Church, inviting ministers to attend a special event about declining church attendance.

The letter consisted of only one sentence with the words sparsely distributed down the page.

The sentence was:

Dear <Name,>

Does this

remind you

of your

last church

service?

### 20. Use the back of the letter

This is valuable real estate you should never waste. We use it to include a Q&A, testimonials, even a summary of benefits.

### 21. Version your testimonials

For one client, we used to say, “Here’s what our customers say about us”. We changed this to “here’s what your neighbours say about us” and we version it by state, town or even block, if possible.

## 22. Test a script font

It’s used by many non-profits to make the letter seem more “real”. But make sure the font is easy to read. You might also use a script salutation – but make sure it matches the signature at the bottom of the letter.

### 23. Don’t use a word I don’t know

Your reader won’t be intrigued – they’ll feel stupid. And they won’t continue reading. Don’t use a word you don’t know.

### 24. Indent each paragraph

This makes the letter easier to read. But the most important thing to indent is ...

### 25. Indent the offer

And make sure it’s right up there in the first three paragraphs. It invites people to “keep reading – we’ve got something for you”.

**For free tips on how to create break-through, exciting and effective direct mail, visit [mailmarketing.com.au](http://mailmarketing.com.au)**

### 26. End the first page of the letter with an incomplete thought or sentence

This is the best way to make sure people turn the page. You can also write (over, please.)

### 27. Use short words and simple language. Why? It works

It's not that people are stupid – they just don't want to go to the effort of figuring out exactly what you mean.

## The Brochure

### 28. Put your strongest benefit on the cover

Otherwise, they'll never open it to look inside.

### 29. Show a photograph of your target market on the cover

The first question anyone will ask when they pick up your direct mail is, "Who is this for – for people like me?"

### 30. But remember the 20 per cent rule

Show photos of people who are 20 per cent younger than your target market, 20 per cent more attractive, 20 per cent better dressed – because that's how most people see themselves.

## Make it personal

Personalisation allows you to talk directly to the individual, increasing your customers' engagement with your brand's message. To learn more about personalisation and the benefits of mail, visit [openuptomail.com.au](http://openuptomail.com.au)

### 31. Personalise the cover

Digital printing makes it easy (and not that expensive) to put the person's name on the cover of the brochure.

## Engage and involve your customers

Lexus Australia achieved a sold-out record of the IS 250X within three months after sending out an interactive direct mail pack, which included a series of square cards that when assembled by the reader, revealed an image of the new luxury car.

Find out more details on this case study and other success stories at [mailmarketing.com.au](http://mailmarketing.com.au)

*Used with permission from ADMA.*

### 32. Surprise me!

How many times have you opened up a brochure and been surprised by what's inside? Your only limit is your imagination.

### 33. Show before and after

Our brochure for Scotts LawnService had a lip at the bottom of the brochure. It had a picture of a bad-looking lawn with dandelions. The caption read "Before Scotts LawnService".

When you lifted the flap, a beautiful green lawn was revealed. The caption read "After Scotts LawnService".

### 34. Involve them in your brochure

For one client, we used check-off boxes and asked, "How many of these benefits do you think are included?" When they fully opened the brochure, they saw that all the boxes were checked.

### 35. Use problem / solution

But make sure you use at least three of them. Your prospect is bound to identify with at least one.

## Pass the parcel

Clever use of mail helped Oz Child to reach four-times the number of their initial target audience. They mailed a pack with four envelopes inside, each containing an invitation to attend an Oz Child Unite event.

The intention was for the initial recipient to pass-on the enclosed envelopes to another business.

Find out more details on this case study and other success stories at [mailmarketing.com.au](http://mailmarketing.com.au)

*Used with permission from ADMA.*

### 36. Promote pass-along readership

"Do you know anyone else in your company who might benefit from this information? Please feel free to pass it along."

Research shows 70 per cent of people are willing to forward an email. Many might do the same with an interesting brochure. In B2B, you might even consider putting two brochures in the same mailing.

### 37. Ask three provocative questions

For one of our controls for American Express, we ask three questions before we get to the product. All we want to do is get people to say "yes" to any one of them – then we can sell the product.

### 38. Be creative

Be more creative with your mail pieces and make it really stand out from the crowd.

## Make a sensory connection

Sensory Mail allows you to reach all five of the senses – touch, sight, smell, taste and sound, resulting in engaging communications that can be impossible to ignore. Find out more at [auspost.com.au/sensorymail](http://auspost.com.au/sensorymail)

**39. Show a smiling telemarketer**

It's corny, but it encourages more people to call in. And when they do, you can answer their questions, qualify them for your sales force, up-sell and cross-sell them.

And make sure you list the hours that people can call.

**For different types of mail response devices and suppliers visit [mailmarketing.com.au](http://mailmarketing.com.au)**

**Miscellaneous****40. Clearly label it as a response device**

Otherwise, the reader may be confused as to what to send back. For credit card mailings, we usually put "Acceptance Certificate" at the very top.

**41. Tell them when they can expect to hear from you**

If you can give them a time frame (ie 5–10 business days) that's great. Otherwise, write, "We'll rush you the information you requested ..."

**42. Make the offer sound exclusive**

Our control for one collective company includes a "Yes" and "No" box. But the "No" box says "No, please give this offer to another collector".

**Steering the way to success**

To launch their new 370Z model, Nissan mailed a distinctive mail pack that included a steering wheel. The wheel drove their target audience to a unique website where they could take the 370Z for a virtual spin, utilising the wonders of Augmented Reality. The campaign achieved outstanding results and created a lot of positive noise amongst consumers and the press.

Find out more details on this case study and other success stories at [mailmarketing.com.au](http://mailmarketing.com.au)

*Used with permission from Nissan.*

**43. Make the spaces big enough**

If you want people to give you their credit card information, their phone number or anything else, make sure they have enough room.

**44. And don't use glossy paper**

Their pen will smear, and they may decide not to respond.

**45. Consider a stamp or other involvement device**

The reader can lift it from the letter, and place it on the reply card. It has always increased response.

**46. Consider what you put under the stamp**

For one client, we used the stamp to reveal the offer that was underneath.

**47. Don't settle for an ordinary BRE**

Your Business Reply Envelope doesn't have to be white – it can be bright yellow. It can have the offer right on it, "Please rush me my free report". It can include "Priority Processing" or anything to make it seem important.

**Reply Paid is a cost effective way to increase responses to your direct mail campaigns, build goodwill with your customers and provide an easy response mechanism.**

**For more information go to [auspost.com.au/replypaid](http://auspost.com.au/replypaid)**

**48. Put a prize in the package**

Adding something extra, something unexpected will always increase response. World Vision has included a pack of seeds in their mailings for years – it's never been beaten.

**49. Re-mail quickly**

If you're planning to do a follow-up mailing, don't wait longer than 3–5 days. Otherwise, people will completely forget what they received before.

And don't worry about people who have responded in the meantime. Simply include a sentence that says, "If you have already responded, thank you. If not, here's another opportunity ..."

**50. ABT (Always Be Testing)**

Sales people are reminded that they should ABC – Always Be Closing. Direct marketers should always be testing.

Yes, it takes more time. Yes, it's more expensive. However, we have found differences in response of 10 to one when we've tested two different approaches or offers.

To find out 101 more ways to improve your response, visit [mailmarketing.com.au](http://mailmarketing.com.au) and order a copy of Alan's original booklet.

# Alan Rosenspan

Alan Rosenspan is the President of Alan Rosenspan & Associates in the US, a direct marketing creative services and consulting company.

Alan and his teams have won over 100 awards for creativity and results, including 20 DMA Echo Awards. He has been a Creative Director for Ogilvy & Mather, Ogilvy & Mather Direct and Bronner Slosberg Humphrey (Now Digitas.)

In 1994, he started his own direct marketing creative and consulting company, and he has developed award-winning successful campaigns for many clients including American Express, Capital One, Scotts Lawn Service, Systems Paving, Humana, Life Line Screening, and others.

Alan has written over 100 articles for direct marketing publications around the world. Most can be found on his website at [www.alanrosenspan.com](http://www.alanrosenspan.com)

Alan is the author of *Confessions of a Control Freak*, published in 2002. He has contributed chapters to several direct marketing books, including *The Direct Marketing Handbook* and *Direct Marketing 2000*.

Alan has been a regular speaker and seminar leader at conferences and symposiums across the U.S., as well as Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Finland, France, Holland, Italy, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, South Africa, Switzerland, the UK and the Ukraine.

Alan was voted the 1997 "Direct Marketer of the Year" in New England. He is also a past-president of the New England Direct Marketing Association.

In February of 2006, Alan was selected for the Andi Emerson Award For Lifetime Achievement and Service to the Direct Marketing Creative Community, by the John Caples Board of Directors.

For more information on how and why to include mail in your marketing plans, plus facts and tips on creating effective direct mail visit [www.mailmarketing.com.au](http://www.mailmarketing.com.au)

Australian adaptation and additional tips by Australia Post Mail Marketing.

