

SURVEY

DIRECT MARKETING

Embracing Digital

Direct Marketing is moving beyond direct mail but even in the digital age the basic principles of good DM apply, writes **DOUG CASEY**

In an increasingly digitalised world, the landscape for Direct Marketing is changing. The increasing use of social media and the incorporation of technology by consumers into their lifestyles is presenting a number of fresh challenges for the DM sector. According to **Brian O’Kennedy**, chairman of the Irish Direct Marketing Association: “In future, successful DM will require marketers to use the complementary strengths of print and digital to develop effective strategies. The convergence of digital and offline is a hot topic. Personalised URLs combined with a mail piece garner high response rates. At our recent Loyalty and Retention Conference, a number of companies spoke about how they are using digital to forge a closer relationship with clients.”

O’Kennedy says that IDMA members are much more positive than a year ago. The association has remodelled its committee structure and attendance at events has also improved. “We are a member-led organisation so we’re trying to make it a lot more inclusive,” he says. The association has also been tapping into the benefits of using digital along with traditional direct mail. According to **Su Duff**, client services manager: “When we launched the revamped IDMA website last year, we sent out a card with a unique code which the recipient could enter on our website to win prizes. Rather than just handing out leaflets with the web address on it and asking people to visit, we actually gave them a reason to visit.”

Fostering customer loyalty and retention has been the main focus driving DM activity in the past year, says **Stephen Stynes**, managing director of DirectBrand: “Retention programmes



Su Duff, IDMA

encompass leaflets and simple letters to explanations about services and loyalty inducements. Special offers are also hugely popular in the current environment. We’re in such a switching culture at the moment that companies have to be on their toes in relation to assuming that their competitors are, in one way or another, trying to target their customers.”

IDMA board member **David Connor**, managing director of digital agency Eighty Twenty, believes that social media is a game-changer for the DM sector. O’Connor says that it’s not just clients having to educate themselves about the opportunities being presented by digital, but also the Direct Marketing sector as a whole. “As a brand you lose a little control but you open up opportunities in a sense

that when you engage with a brand in the proper way online, you are able to learn a lot more about your customer. The industry needs to understand how the consumer engages with social media.”

Peter Whelehan of Direct Marketing Campaign Management (DMCM) says that businesses are increasingly looking for accountability and direct results. “In my experience they have been investing more in DM, though across a broader spectrum of DM media. Budgets are spread more thinly and there’s more integration of traditional DM media such as print and mailing with email, telemarketing and newer digital and social media.

“Digital channels give marketers more options and allow for better targeting, often of relatively small groups or clusters of people with similar characteristics that have high social relevance to them. What the targeting is being used to communicate in terms of message and creative, and how it’s measured, is crucial. Testing, measuring, learning and refining campaigns on an ongoing basis is what it’s all about.”

James Dunne, digital planner with RMG Target, says digital DM creates immediacy around an offer or a message. “When peer-to-peer endorsement happens in the digital space that’s when you’ve really cut through,” says Dunne. “Strategically, social media enables brands and businesses to leverage a whole new way to develop relationships with customers. The challenge falling out of this is to stay relevant socially.” However, Dunne cautions that with social, mobile and other digital platforms, it’s easy to get caught up in the jargon and the hype. “It’s worth remembering that successful DM

relies on generating response. The most compelling and most relevant work always wins out, online and off.”

Estelle Gorby, managing director of Acorn Marketing, says that even in the digital age, printed DM has an important role to play. “The growth in online does not negate mail activity, it actually stimulates it,” says Gorby. “Many of our DM campaigns now have an online activation level so it’s quickly becoming a vehicle that helps to drive interaction with customers. Digital channels help to extend the lifetime of response of a direct mail campaign and provide us with a platform to continually communicate with people. They are actually helping to drive a higher response to direct mail.”

Direct Marketing experts insist that the tactics for a campaign largely depend on the product or service. According to **Kyla O’Kelly** of Javelin Direct Marketing: “Facebook is a key part of a significant

‘The most compelling and most relevant work always wins out’

amount of work that we do, whether spreading news and awareness, engaging with promotions and competitions or driving an event attendance. Email is something we have been using in a more B2B context. Some campaigns are purely digital, others require DRTV and radio, direct mail, sampling, promotions, online quizzes and mobile marketing. But the right tactics will always win the day. We did a campaign recently that was a simple door drop with a basic offer and the phones rang.”

O’Kelly’s view is that direct mail can have an “incredibly powerful” impact on a campaign if used correctly. She explains: “For me, it is a different experience leafing through the IKEA catalogue than going online. I do both, but they influence me in slightly different ways. So by no means do I think that mail is going to fizzle out. All media have their strengths and direct mail’s impact in the hands of a customer is quite unique.”

DMCM’s Peter Whelehan concurs. “Direct mail, email, digital and social media can all work, either individually or together, depending on the campaign brief. The new media options simply offer the marketer more options for better targeting. Less printed DM means less clutter in that space, so impact and response rates can often be seen to be higher today than they were pre-digital.”

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L-R: James Nevin, Rob Cumiskey, Jessie Wong, Dermot O’Shea, James Dunne, Damian Bilski.

RMG Target grows its digital DNA

It’s been a busy six months with six new faces at RMG Target. James Dunne joined as Digital Planner in January. Dermot O’Shea has stepped into the role of Digital Architect. Jessie Wong is championing world class innovations as Head of Digital Production. Rob Cumiskey brings smart thinking in the social space as Senior Account Manager. And the creative team has been strengthened with the addition of James Nevin as Associate Creative Director and Damian Bilski as Interactive Designer. With digital wins in the last six months that include Vodafone, Fáilte Ireland, SuperValu and Centra... the team have already made their mark.



OPINION | AMIE PETERS

Direct Mail Still Works

These days people often have more than one email account, two mobile phones and numerous online network profiles. Despite this constantly changing and fragmented media environment, it's important to remember that the average consumer only has one letterbox and that's not likely to change any



time soon. The letterbox is a unique portal into your customer's home and mind. Important things come through the letterbox. While the mail includes bills, it also includes positive messages like birthday cards, party invitations, vouchers, gifts and all the items you order online. Since I began working in Ireland I've discovered four big myths when it comes to mail, so let's set the record straight:

Myth 1: Irish people don't like mail

Since the advent of email and smart phones, it might appear that direct mail has had its day. However, many miss the distinction between high-tech and high-touch. It is a simple fact that mail has a very emotive connection with the Irish consumer. Collecting the mail at the letterbox is a life-learned habit. According to a recent study, for 70% of us it's the first thing we do when back from a holiday. And even though email, mobile and social networks are growing rapidly, six out of ten Irish adults prefer to receive information by mail, over three times the preference for email.

Myth 2: The Social Media Generation doesn't like mail

The 18-25 year olds are a highly connected, digitally orientated generation. But here's the thing: almost three-quarters of the social media generation consider receiving mail a pleasure. What's more, they are more disappointed relative to the general population when there's no mail for them. And, perhaps more interestingly for your business, 14% of this age group confirm direct mail is a trigger for purchase; that's three times as many for social network ads (5%). It's counter-intuitive, but this digital generation loves the personal, tangible nature of mail.

Myth 3: People don't read direct mail

While Irish households are emotionally connected to the letterbox, are they actually reading what comes through it? When you consider that 72% of all adults put time aside to read the mail, they're in a very receptive frame of mind. These days they're searching for relevant information and value for money. So it comes as no surprise that Irish people are reading more addressed direct mail than ever before.

Myth 4: Direct mail is not relevant

There's no question that 'bad' direct mail is not relevant. But direct mail is a different animal to what it used to be.

Marketers know customers are more choosy and discerning. So when you make direct mail relevant, informed and personalised, consumers don't just like it, they read it.

For business owners and cost-conscious marketers, the three most important letters in business today are ROI. When it comes to the marketing mix there are a lot of shiny new toys to play with. The advent of social networking provides a channel that is fun, new and exciting. However, advertising through social networks is still unproven. One of the big questions for 2011 is what's the value of a Facebook fan?

What's the value of a Facebook fan?

As social networking finds its niche in customer service, direct mail continues to

offer companies a proven channel for sales acquisition and customer loyalty. This means that direct mail and online can work together, providing your business with a measurable and accountable plan and giving your customers a personalised and relevant experience.

FIVE TIPS FOR GETTING STARTED

1. Your customer list is your most valuable asset. It needs to capture key information accurately like name, address and purchasing history.
2. Personalisation is the magic bullet. Show your customers how valuable they are to you simply by using their name. It's also not difficult or expensive – just ask your local print shop.
3. Get the message right. Think benefits not features, and use the word 'you' as much as possible. Spend time on the message: it's well worth the investment.
4. With direct mail you can test your campaign on smaller audiences, allowing you to fine-tune your campaign so that you get the maximum return on investment.
5. Track the response. For example, set up a unique campaign email address or include a response coupon for the person to return to you. Measure your response rate to work out your return-on-investment.

*Amie Peters is head of An Post's Mail Media Unit.
See anpost.ie/mailmedia*

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We've won 36 awards for our clients
This one's for us



Acorn Marketing
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An Post Direct Marketing Awards 2011

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Effective DM

DOUG CASEY highlights some of the winning entries from this year's An Post IDMA Awards

Bringing All The Elements Together

Field of Dreams was a very successful promotion for breakfast cereal brand Kellogg's in 2010. The idea was that sports clubs could win a €100,000 makeover for their club facilities and entries had to be accompanied by tokens from Kellogg's boxes, so the campaign drove a lot of extra sales. According to **Ogilvy One**, the agency which devised the campaign, around 250,000 consumers actively engaged in the campaign. The whole campaign was what they call in the trade '360': on-pack, PR, media partners, advertising, digital, point of sale, social media, trade marketing and direct mail.

Direct mail was used to generate awareness of the Field of Dreams concept and involved communicating directly with club leaders and sporting bodies. The direct mail pack contained a personalised letter,

leaflets and posters and a mini Corn Flakes box for collecting the on-pack entry tokens. All of these elements

were housed in an outer envelope featuring the Kellogg's cockerle as if painted on a pitch. The cost for 2,000 mailings? Around €25,000.



Tough Nut Cracks It



Peter Whelehan runs a small DM agency called **DMCM** and he admits that last year he was finding the market incredibly difficult, due to the business being relatively new and having to compete with larger, established agencies. So he decided to use DM to promote his own business, though he only had €1,000 to get his message across. The pitch was that due to increasing fragmentation of media, the specialist in-depth DM expertise that was once prevalent across agencies isn't what it used to be. Because of this, DM is an increasingly Tough Nut to Crack – unless clients turn to specialists like DMCM.

Whelehan's target market was executives in 40 companies who he knew from research were believers in direct marketing. So he sent them all a coconut (tough nut, etc) with a brochure designed around a coconut theme too and the pitch letter printed on a tropical leaf design. Whelehan says a response of 50% rose to 98% with a follow-up call and the campaign delivered revenues of €53,000. Apparently, the 40 coconuts cost 29c each at Smithfield Market. He adds: "If prospects let DMCM crack a brief for them it will really bear fruit and give a real sense of achievement – just like when a coconut is successfully cracked open!"



Simple Sticky Solution Makes IRS Stand Out From The Crowd

The humble yellow Post-it note can be a very effective way to catch attention. Javelin Direct made clever use of Post-its when seeking attention for its client IRS, a media house that sells advertising on behalf of local radio stations. The occasion was the release of JNLR listenership figures, when media buyers are inundated with 'we've done best' announcements from radio stations. The challenge for Javelin was to make IRS stand out from the crowd.

The strategy was to be the first to the target audience, and to use an innovative approach. So Javelin found out from the Irish Times on which page the paper would be covering the ratings results on the following day. Two personalised Post-it notes were created and printed, one attached to the front page and one on the report inside. Then 250 copies of the newspaper were delivered to the target audience. A creatively connected A4 insert was also included, detailing the JNLR figures and supporting information. Around one quarter of the target audience contacted IRS as a result, which Javelin says was unprecedented in a cluttered environment where IRS competes head to head with RTÉ Radio 1, 2FM and Today FM for national spend.



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Join the Revolution!

IDMA
IRISH DIRECT MARKETING ASSOCIATION LTD

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Web: www.idma.ie

How To Get The Best Response From Junk Mail

For a lot of small businesses, their main Direct Marketing activity is unaddressed mail or flyers. This marketing channel has become more challenging recently as an increasing number of households affix 'No Junk Mail' above their letterbox. But there are a lot of households and whether it's 1,000 or 100,000 flyers, An Post or private delivery companies will find a way to deliver them.

Acorn Marketing won a Gold award at the IDMA Awards for its unaddressed mail campaign for insurer 123.ie. Acorn's managing director **Estelle Gorby** advises: "It's essential to firstly choose the right vendor to deliver them, optimise the time of day and also ensure that they get cut through when they drop through the door. This can be achieved through creative design but also by understanding which formats work best."

Olive Fogarty at Ogilvy One says right message, right time, right place is the age-old rule. "The flyer should grab people's attention with the message, offer or design. It should be easy to read and easy to respond to – website, call centre or clear directions. It always helps if it's local too."

Javelin Direct's **Kyla O'Kelly** says retailers can make flyers more effective by making the offer seem compelling, even if it isn't. "Providing very easy ways to respond and added incentives to go online for more

information are good too," she adds. "Everybody loves a foil scratch panel and QR codes can help excite the audience. Always remember that people are looking for the right products and services and they still need to purchase the nuts and bolts of daily life as well as other treats. The market is there."

Peter Whelehan of DMCM says the most effective unaddressed mail is the most creative. "That means thinking outside the box in terms of format of the DM piece (size, shape, folds, texture and so on). If the piece is different it will get noticed and grab the attention of the recipient. Targeting is also very important. While unaddressed flyers often tend to be blanket dropped, clients sometimes don't realise that clever targeting is possible with An Post and other suppliers to do a drop in a catchment area around a particular business address."

James Dunne at RMG Target suggests that flyers should

provide a come-on to digital platforms such as Facebook where offers can come to life through useful content and experiences like product demo-videos or even competitions. "Increasingly, the digital space is where consumers go to get 'educated' on products and services, as well as entertained. At RMG Target we speak a lot about 'purposeful play' – giving something functional and fun that drives conversion rates."



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Kellogg's Field of Dreams

- 5,500,000 engagement opportunities
- 250,000 active participants
- 507 registered sports clubs
- 385 press mentions
- 6 gold marketing awards
- 2 Grand Prix awards
- 1 agency made it all happen.

Ogilvy DUBLIN

CRACKED IT!

MORE AWARDS THAN ANY OTHER CAMPAIGN

LEADING BY EXAMPLE WITH BEST PRACTICE DM

A tough nut to crack

Devising a perfect campaign is truly a tough nut to crack. So when DMCM set out to do just that it was a big challenge. To put down a marker by demonstrating what's possible. It did this by devising a perfect campaign for, well, itself!

Bearing fruit

A simple creative idea well executed to a highly targeted audience, that drove business and revenue. It went on to be nominated for, and win, more Awards than any other campaign at the 2011 An Post Direct Marketing Awards.



**DIRECT
MARKETING
CAMPAIGN
MANAGEMENT**

Unique agency model

DMCM differs from the traditional agency model. High overheads and large unwieldy teams are replaced by slicker one-to-one contact. Relationships with clients are more direct so campaigns have more clarity, happen quicker and cost less.

Media challenge

While there are lots of new media to contend with the principles of acquisition and retention remain the same. DMCM applies these principles to the most relevant media whether it be Social Media, Digital, Advertising or Direct Mail.

Why it won

Why did DMCM win so many Awards? We'd be happy to share this with you by presenting it as a case study. Or maybe you're simply not 100% happy with your current agency, in which case we'd love to hear from you and possibly even crack a brief!



**PETER
WHELEHAN**
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WWW.DMCM.IE

OPINION | GARY BROWN

Core Principles Of DM

Times change, economies change, laws change, rules change, everything changes. We go from bust to boom and boom to bust. Brands change, consumers change, marketing and media channels change. We move from the marketing age to the digital age. Always moving, always changing and, regrettably,



making the same mistakes as before. History says we should learn from our mistakes. However, as we all know to our detriment, here in Ireland it seems that we do not learn. In the 1970s, a bank nearly brought down the economy with the Insurance Corporation of Ireland debacle. Now the same thing has happened again, only this time with more banks involved and the scenario is much, much worse. What these two disasters have in common is a reckless neglect of accountability.

What has this got to do with Direct Marketing? One of the main principles and cornerstones of DM is the principle of control. Control ensures and enforces accountability. If we are in control of our targets and budgets, we are ensuring accountability. We want action, we want clear propositions, we want value, we want return on investment, we want results. We want accountability and if we demand accountability we nearly always get results.

As direct marketers, we are in the results business. Our business focus should always be on making sure our share of the marketing budget is spent in a way that is targeted and accountable. In this current economic climate, results matter more than ever. Brands are under such market share and margin pressure that they can no longer afford to spend money on what was loosely called 'awareness advertising'. In lots of cases, that's another description for spending advertising budgets on something that is very hard to monitor and difficult to evaluate, i.e. lacking accountability.

As an experienced and grizzled marketer, I have always struggled with the concept of awareness advertising. After all, awareness is an involuntary act. Once you become aware of something it is very difficult to make yourself unaware of it. So if a brand keeps spending lots of money making people aware of something they are already aware of, that seems to me to be a waste of money. If a consumer is already aware of a brand then surely the brand should be spending money persuading that person to buy that product or service. That's where accountability and Direct Marketing come in. Direct marketers use persuasive marketing techniques and strong and direct calls to action to get those consumers to buy.

In this digital age the principles of Direct Marketing – targeting, interaction, continuity and control – are

particularly important. Digital marketers really need to up their game in the whole area of targeting. Proper targeting will make the message more relevant and relevancy is the key driver in getting consumers to engage with a message. If the message is not targeted, it is not relevant. If a brand can develop a targeted and relevant messaging programme for its consumers through the various digital media, it is on its way to building a dialogue that becomes anticipated by the consumer.

But the messages must be relevant. Relevancy comes from proper and relentless targeting and data analytics.

Relevancy is the key driver for message engagement

My biggest bugbear right now is all the digital rubbish we have to wade through in order to get relevant and engaging messages. A

lot of digital marketers forget to plan for what comes next after they send their message out there into the ether. There is a big gap in continuity planning among brands that deploy digital media. The consequences of using digital as a channel have never really been thought out in great detail. Hence all of the stories we hear about brands engaging in damage limitation exercises because a digital communication has backfired or has been hijacked by consumers.

Continuity planning is particularly relevant to app development and creation. Once you send that digital message or device out there, you are in fact ceding ownership of that piece. Consumers will interact and deal with it as they see fit. They will like it, loathe it and, in some cases, change it, and you know even that's not bad if they have gone to the trouble of engaging with it. It's all of the consumers who do not engage with our messages we never think about. Isn't it funny how we never measure the amount of people who never engage with our communication? Now there's a real Holy Grail to pursue.

Gary Brown is Group CEO Below the Line at DDFH&B Group



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DM Strategies

What impact is digital having on Direct Marketing campaigns? Is print on the way out? What are the essential elements of successful DM campaigns?

DOUG CASEY has been finding out from leading DM experts

Estelle Gorby

Acorn Marketing

“Direct Marketing is all about the customer and how we can connect with them directly, online, in print or offline. It’s important to have a true understanding of the potential customer – what



media they consume and refer to and what will engage them and get cut through. Whether online or offline, Direct Marketing is essential because it drives a direct response and supports all other elements of campaigns. It’s now more important than ever for our clients to look at the return on investment on their marketing spend. This means that Direct Marketing is even more critical than before. DM provides companies with transparency and has become a critical part of the marketing mix again. In an environment where budgets are being cut, understanding how your marketing is performing is vital and Direct Marketing is ideal in this respect.

“For every campaign, we start with the customer, the idea and then what’s the best way to execute it and reach the customer and devise what digital elements are involved. It’s all about the customer. How to target them, what to target them with, how to talk to them, what media they consume and why they might not buy your brand. Once you get under the skin of your potential customer, this will drive your entire strategy.”

Peter Whelehan

Direct Marketing Campaign Management (DMCM)

“Direct Marketing in the digital age, just like traditional pre-digital DM, is still all about identifying, locating and qualifying customers or prospects and then targeting them with



relevant communications that appeal to their known wants and needs. It’s just that in the digital age there’s a proliferation of new media options. The crucial element is ‘targeting’ and selecting the right media to get to, and engage with, the right customers or prospects. Printed DM may suit one brief while digital, social media or a combination may suit another. It really just depends on the specifics of the brief, as this will determine the most appropriate DM channel to use for targeting.

“My advice to companies undertaking Direct Marketing activity is to have a clear, written brief before undertaking any DM activity. Now is the time to be spending on DM. Why? Because many businesses have cut back, providing those who do continue to spend with an opportunity to create more impact. Combined with highly competitive supplier and agency rates, this means campaigns can be implemented at a significant discount compared to what a similar campaign might have cost three to five years ago.”

Olive Fogarty

Ogilvy One

“Direct Marketing has always been about having a direct relationship with the consumer, and digital media has really opened up many more channels and opportunities to do this. Ogilvy has been embracing digital



since the late 1990s and digital planning is a critical part of our strategic planning approach. Digital channels facilitate multi-phase activity (such as follow-up email). Viral messages can drive mass awareness and impact and so help ‘warm up’ the prospective audience. Facebook and other social media can provide immediate dialogue with customers by answering queries or responding to issues.

“However, direct mail will always play a role. There is lots of research that demonstrates that multi-channel DM campaigns are far more effective, especially a combination of mail and email. Consumers regard the different communication channels in different ways. Some are more formal, some are more intimate, some are more serious, etc. So depending on the message and depth of relationship that exists, different channels will be appropriate. DM has always been a very powerful tool in B2B marketing. Business relationships are the same as any other relationship – they need to be fostered. DM, both offline and digital, is a great way to support personal relationships with your customers and increase their value to your business.”

Kyla O'Kelly
Javelin Direct

“Direct Marketing is now about how every media available to us can work powerfully together to deliver. That means keeping a really open mind at the beginning of every brief about how we may reach our end goal. For me, DM has always been about a perfect sales loop: creating a sales lead, selling to the right customers from those leads and sticking hard to the right ones for the future. Creatively it’s about finding a cracking insight and customer need and connecting powerfully with individuals with the answer. The media used could be digital film online, social media, targeted mail



with QR codes, or a simple customer service telephone call. It’s about using the right tools to get to the right end.

“If you are embarking on a DM campaign yourself, get all the free advice you can online before starting out. You’ll be surprised how much you can learn with a couple of days Googling. If you are looking for an agency, treat it like looking for a new boyfriend or girlfriend. There is one out there with a personality and a size and shape that suits you and your product. Don’t be afraid to go and see several and ask to chat about your needs. When you narrow it down, talk to a couple of their clients before making your move. Finally, don’t be paralysed. Try things out and take some little risks.”

Geoff McGrath
RMG Target

“Due to digital technology, it has never been easier to develop truly engaging and

totally dynamic relationships with consumers. That said, in many cases it is being incorrectly used.

Social media strategies need to be incorporated into existing CRM strategies rather than replacing them. There is an inevitable shift towards digital communications, but the motivations to do so are sometimes misguided. Digital presents very exciting opportunities for marketers to create brilliantly immersive experiences for brands to share with consumers (and vice versa). This should be the key driver for choosing digital above offline communications. Digital communications also offer budget efficiencies but cheaper doesn’t always mean better.



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We never set out to win awards.

We did set out to up response to a literacy helpline by 600% using DRTV, drive 250,000 people to iloveshopping.ie by sweetly tormenting them with a little song you couldn’t get out of your head, raise €600,000 for Unicef with a campaign including a viral that made people laugh out loud in 190 countries around the world, and to bring new definition to targeting by creating personalised stamps for Irish business leaders. And then we won Gold for best creative work overall. Curious, that. For a 20 minute presentation on work that works, contact kyla@javelin.ie or annabel@javelin.ie or call us on 01 858 7900.



GOLD BEST OVERALL CREATIVE
GOLD BEST LOW BUDGET
GOLD BEST DIGITAL
GOLD BEST DIRECT MAIL LOW VOLUME
SILVER BEST DIRECT MAIL LOW VOLUME
SILVER BEST LOYALTY CAMPAIGN



“Direct mail is a very powerful channel if and when used correctly. The basic principals don’t change just because new technologies have come available. A beautifully crafted and well targeted direct mail communication will also be appreciated and well received by the recipient. Each conversation with consumers needs to be planned and the most appropriate channel for that conversation then needs to be utilised. In many instances, this channel is direct mail. In many other instances, it’s not.”

Edel McCabe

TEQUILA

“The principle of direct, personalised communication remains the same but digital allows for more immediate and relevant content. The use of rich data and analytics allows for easy segmentation and tailored communications. In my experience, companies are investing more in DM. For our recent Audi A1 campaign, the convention for a car launch was press and radio. However, our target audience spend their time online so direct interaction with them was



always going to be much more powerful. One of the main reasons for the Audi success was the ability to create our own audience through Facebook. Once someone accepts your invitation into your brand, the opportunities for conversations and brand participation are endless.

“I believe there is still a role for direct mail but the creative output must be of high quality. There are many cohorts who are very receptive to direct mail, from an older audience who like their information in an easily digestible format to younger people who don’t really get mail anymore. As always, relevance is crucial.”

Peter Jones

Innovative Print Solutions

Innovative Print Solutions majors on the security aspect of its operations. Part of the Coleridge Group, the Ballymount-based company is one of the few Irish firms to have been awarded the ISO 27001 (data management security) along with C&CCC and ISO 9001 accreditation. According to Peter Jones, business development manager, these



accreditations set the firm ahead of its competitors. “No blue chip in the UK would procure any mailing house without the proper security accreditation,” says Jones. “We have always felt it important to adhere to the proper security standards and stay ahead of the game,” he says.

Jones believes that IPS’s guarantee that information transfer is conducted in a secure manner not only gives the company a unique position in the marketplace but also helps towards improving overall security for its clients. “Almost every data security breach in recent years was the result of not adhering to ISO 27001 standards. If we all try to stick to these standards, there would be far safer handling and security of data.”

Jones says the firm’s equipment can personalise and mail match up to 12 pages. “It can also 100% guarantee the mail match. This is important at a time when the more personalisation any company does in their direct mailings the better. We have invested heavily in the whole area of DM to ensure that whether we are doing financial or marketing mail for the international or domestic market, each personalised piece goes through the same procedures and security protocols. As a result, DM is at the very core of our business and is an area which can only expand as more and more people begin to look for more measurable marketing results.”

70 of the top blue chip companies in Ireland use

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The combination of CCCC, ISO 9001 and ISO 27001 (data management and security) accreditations make Innovative Print Solutions Ltd the most Secure and Comprehensive supplier of Sensitive and Security Mailings in Ireland

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- Postal Management
- Hologramming
- Ticketing solutions



Michael McKenna

Data Ireland

Data Ireland, owned by An Post, prides itself on maintaining Ireland's most accurate consumer and business databases and providing extensive data profiling services.



According to commercial director Michael McKenna: "We currently provide mailing lists for over 80 business sectors from a pool of over 100,000 updated Irish business contacts. Updating these lists involves quite a lot of work and at any time we could have as many as 10 agents who process thousands of records a year on an annual basis to ensure this database is up to date. In addition to this, we are constantly monitoring data sources relating to new businesses, which is validated and added to the database."

This database works off a CD, which users load onto their PC or office network and then buy credits to export as many or as few contact names as they want. The database can be filtered very quickly by type of business, size, location and executive role. It allows users to build their own mailing or contacts list to their own precise specifications. Now Data Ireland is bringing this data online. "Over the coming weeks we will launch business.ie, a new online service that will give companies the same access to our databases that they have on the CD. By essentially adding a 24/7 service, we are hoping to increase business at Data Ireland significantly," says McKenna.

McKenna's view is that Direct

Marketing is becoming more important, particularly as businesses demand a return on any investment. "What are really in demand today are targeted client lists so that companies can fish where the fish are rather than adopting a spray and pray mentality. These customers want to see where the fish are and then catch them."

Dave Furney

RR Donnelley Ireland

RR Donnelley Ireland's offering spans the creative side of Direct Marketing campaigns to the execution of a myriad of print and online solutions. The company won the Supplier of the



Year gong at last year's 2010 Direct Marketing Awards, an accolade that managing director Dave Furney credits to RRD keeping ahead of the trends in the sector. "We align ourselves to our client's objectives and utilise the latest technologies and enhancements in

production techniques," says Furney. "We work closely with An Post to ensure we maximise the benefit of postal charges in the final delivery."

Since the downturn started, RRD has seen growing demand for bespoke, personalised mailings. "We were ready to deal with this and make sure customers were getting the focused and personalised direct mails they were looking for," adds Furney. Before starting any DM campaign, RRD analyses customer and prospect data. "We engage with customers from very early on in the direct marketing process. This engagement ensures we discover what they need and who they are addressing. Working directly, or with the client creative agency, RRD source the best technology, production and route to get the customer's direct mail out to the market," says Furney.

Furney adds that this approach not only ensures the resulting mails are as personalised as possible but also that they are cost effective. "The most important thing for businesses to remember is that early engagement is essential when undertaking a direct mail campaign. The earlier customers align the creative and production processes, the greater the benefit in impact and cost minimisation."



AWARDS

We have been awarded the "Supplier of the Year Award" at the 2011 Direct Marketing Awards.

LOOK

In keeping with our growing success RR Donnelley have recently rebranded.



RR DONNELLEY

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