

B2B Direct Marketing, the 40/40/20 Rule still applies

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So, you've decided you want to organise a marketing communication, direct mail or e-mail targeting your business client base. The normal tendency is to immediately start thinking about a clever message. Or perhaps you're visualizing an impactful graphic image or presentation. Oh - you're already in trouble. You don't understand the 40/40/20 rule of direct marketing which, although has altered significantly in the B2C marketplace, still applies when marketing to the business community.



The 40/40/20 rule says that 40 percent of the success of your campaign will depend on your list selection, 40 percent on your offer, and only 20 percent of your success will be attributed to your creative execution. Guess where most marketers spend 80 percent or more of their time? *Yes - on the creative - because that's the fun part.* But that's not where your success will be determined.

Your List (Audience) Is King

40 percent of your success will be determined by the list that you mail or e-mail to. If you're communicating with current customers or prospects that already know you, then you have an excellent list. But if you're trying to grow your brand beyond those audiences, you need to ensure that you're talking to good prospects that are likely to be interested in your services.

Key to successfully targeting your audience is through a well-defined [mailing list](#). If you don't have a mailing list or the time to build one, purchase a pre-qualified list from a reliable company, such as RGA. [RGA's databases](#) are well researched and provide good data for targeting buyers of meeting and event services. And, RGA's [Data Cleaning Centre](#) will help refine and target your existing client database. Identifying a potential customer base enables you to craft a message that's designed specifically for that audience and will help maximize the success of your campaign. [RGA Despatch Centre](#) can manage the whole direct mail service and offer the very best value for an email/post mailshot despatch.

It's All About the Offer & WIIFM Test

What's in it for me? That's what your audience will be asking themselves. A marketing communication that speaks only about your firm might make you feel good, but it will most likely fail to deliver the results you're seeking. Only by identifying the audience can you create a communication asset that will educate, entertain and inspire potential clients.

Offering a discount is certainly an option, but not the only one, and it may not be the most effective. What else can you offer a prospect as a reward for taking the next step? It could be an invitation to visit and experience the facilities or a free event management consultation. What, specifically, do you want the prospect to do? And, what reward will they (the potential client) receive for doing it?

Now You Can Start the Creative

Only after you've determined your audience and your offer should you start working on the creative. The understanding you gained during the first two steps will help you and/or your marketing people craft a much more effective communication. At this point, you're executing a plan. You know who you're talking to and what you want them to do. That knowledge will make it much easier for you to craft a message that drives to the specific action you're seeking. And that will ultimately improve the effectiveness of your campaign.

Designing a marketing communication around a clever idea or presentation can be fun. But remember the 40/40/20 rule. Give careful thought to who your audience is and what you would like them to do, then give them a compelling reason to take the action you want. This will maximize the effectiveness of your campaign and the return on your marketing investment.

Taken from The 40/40/20 Marketing Rule by Jack La Rue