

# Starting a direct mail campaign



# Is direct mail for you?

Take the test.

# Mal Warwick says...

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“Too often, organisations have unrealistic expectations when they undertake their first direct mail effort.

They tally the donations, figure in their costs and declare their verdict. If their mailing doesn't make a profit, doesn't make at least a one per cent return (as they have always heard a mailing should), they conclude that direct mail just isn't for them.

In many cases, that decision has cost their organisation all of the growth and money a properly managed campaign -- even one they thought had "failed" -- might have given them.”

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“Their mistake was in looking at direct mail as a limited campaign -- when they should have been looking at it as an ongoing, long-term process of building a programme.

Properly executed, a direct mail programme can provide your organisation with loyal supporters, rapid growth and a consistent source of working capital.

Equally important, it can systematically identify the people capable of making the very large gifts and bequests on which so much of your group's future success depend.”

# The clincher

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Sure, testing direct mail will take some time and some money.

But if you want to build a constituency of supporters,  
there's no better way.

The key is:

**Start simple**

# Direct mail...

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- Can be targeted at specific types of donors
- Gives you a measurable response
- Can be tested
- Has room for advocacy
- Builds constituency

# Aspects of direct mail

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- Mailing list
- Communication pack
- Timing
- Response mechanism
- Constant testing
- Support agencies

**Let's look at each of these in detail!**

# Mailing lists

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- Have you listed down the names of everyone you know? Have you got the names of all their well-wishers and friends?
- Have you checked the telephone directory?
- Have you approached all local clubs for a list of their members?
- Have you contacted professional associations in your town/ city such as Rotary, Lion's Club, etc.?
- Have you checked out the lists of mail-order buyers and subscribers (from Otto Burlington, Reader's Digest, etc.)?
- Have you approached banks for a list of their credit card holders or account holders?
- Have you contacted professional mailing list brokers?
- Have you tried shops, hotels and boutiques?

# Communication pack

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- Outer envelope
- Appeal letter
- Reply form/ reply envelope (BRE)
- Folder/ leaflet/ brochure (optional)
- Lift letter (optional)
- Gimmick/ sensory aid (optional)

# A communication pack could be...

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- Story/ case study based
- Project based
- Issue based
- Organisation/ institution based
- Occasion based
- Event based

**Exercise.** Understand the difference between each of these and come up with an idea for each, for your organisation.

# Exercise

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Choose any one of the six types and prepare a creative brief for a communication pack.

Remember:

An effective pack

- commands attention
- has a clear message
- communicates the benefit
- is consistent
- caters to the head and the heart
- creates trust
- initiates action