



# Direct Mail Marketing FOR Your Business



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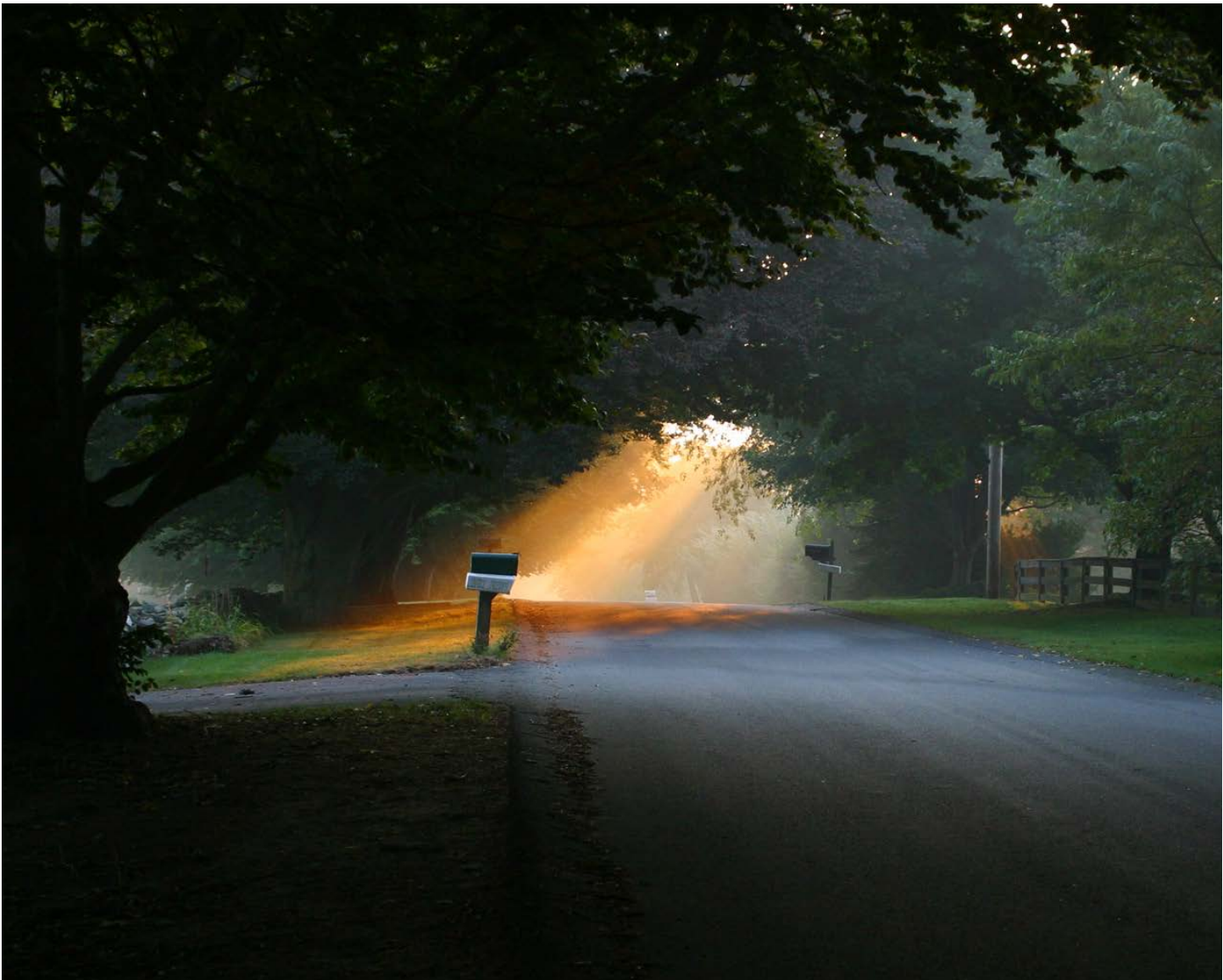
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# Introduction

## **Direct Mail Marketing is where Bluegrass started.**

From design to printing to mailing, we help your mail pieces and campaigns go far.


**A Powerful Tool.** An 18% higher return on investment when marketing campaigns use direct mail. On average direct mail stays in the home for 17 days. Direct mail in a digital world means effective, direct, and personalized communication. Purchase rates increase by 250% with omnichannel marketing (direct mail combined with digital marketing).

**Make It Personal.** Customers respond to direct mail that is colorful and personalized up to 500% more often! With variable data printing each mail piece can be customized to the recipient.

**Getting It Out the Door.** Modern technologies such as SuperWeb high volume printing, programmable inkjet addressing, and camera verification ensures reduced postage rates and accurate delivery.

Bluegrass offers creative print designs, copywriting, tracking, reporting, and more.





# **Guidelines for Bulk Mail (Plus, Tips for Preparation)**

Companies that want to cut costs — that would be most businesses, wouldn't it? — can save a lot on postage by sending their qualified marketing pieces at bulk mail rate instead of first-class mail.

# Guidelines for Bulk Mail (Plus, Tips for Preparation) (cont.)

Companies that want to cut costs — that would be most businesses, wouldn't it? — can save a lot on postage by sending their qualified marketing pieces at bulk mail rate instead of first-class mail.

The USPS offers big discounts for marketing mail. The discounts are definitely earned because the mailer or, in most cases, a professional mailing service like Bluegrass, must do all the prep work for the mailing. That pre-mailing work is much more complicated than sticking a stamp on an envelope and so nearly always — it makes sense for a third-party professionals like Bluegrass to handle this task for clients.

## Bulk mail discounts

With discounts ranging from 35 to 65 percent, those earned by using bulk mail are huge. For example, let's say you have been mailing your sales letter using first-class mail. Each letter then costs 55 cents to mail, the cost of a Forever stamp. If you instead sent the same letter bulk mail, it could cost as little as 8.6 cents per letter.

Or, if you had a marketing piece that qualified as a flat and weighed 1-ounce, it would cost \$1 to mail it first-class compared to as little as 16 cents at the bulk mail rate. The USPS says bulk mail is typically 35 to 65 percent cheaper

than first-class postage for sales flyers, promotional postcards, newsletters or brochures. Discounts vary depending on the destination, size, and type of mail piece.

## Paying less for postage could allow a boost in marketing

The savings could be reinvested in additional marketing or in other areas where your company could use a boost in its budget. Maybe you could afford to send that postcard to another 100 or so potential customers. Or, perhaps two or three mailings, a few weeks or months apart, instead of just one to promote your product, using the power of repetition to heighten visibility of your brand.

The savings on postage is why we encourage customers to consider using bulk mail — the USPS calls it marketing mail these days — instead of sending these pieces first-class mail.

## Meeting the required minimum

If your mailings meet the following requirements, you may be eligible for discounted postage rates:

The mailing must include 200 or more pieces or weigh 50 pounds or more. Individual pieces can't weigh more than 16 ounces.

# Guidelines for Bulk Mail (Plus, Tips for Preparation) (cont.)

Mail that qualifies includes letters, flyers, circulars, advertising, newsletter, bulletins, catalogs and small parcels.

As you can imagine, if your business sends a lot of mail – 500 direct marketing letters a month or a quarterly newsletter to supporters of your charity – sending those pieces at bulk mail rates can save a lot of money.

## Rules for preparation

A major reason most companies opt to have a professional mailing service handle their bulk mail is that it takes a significant amount of time to meet all the USPS requirements. Doing bulk mail in-house will also require investment in

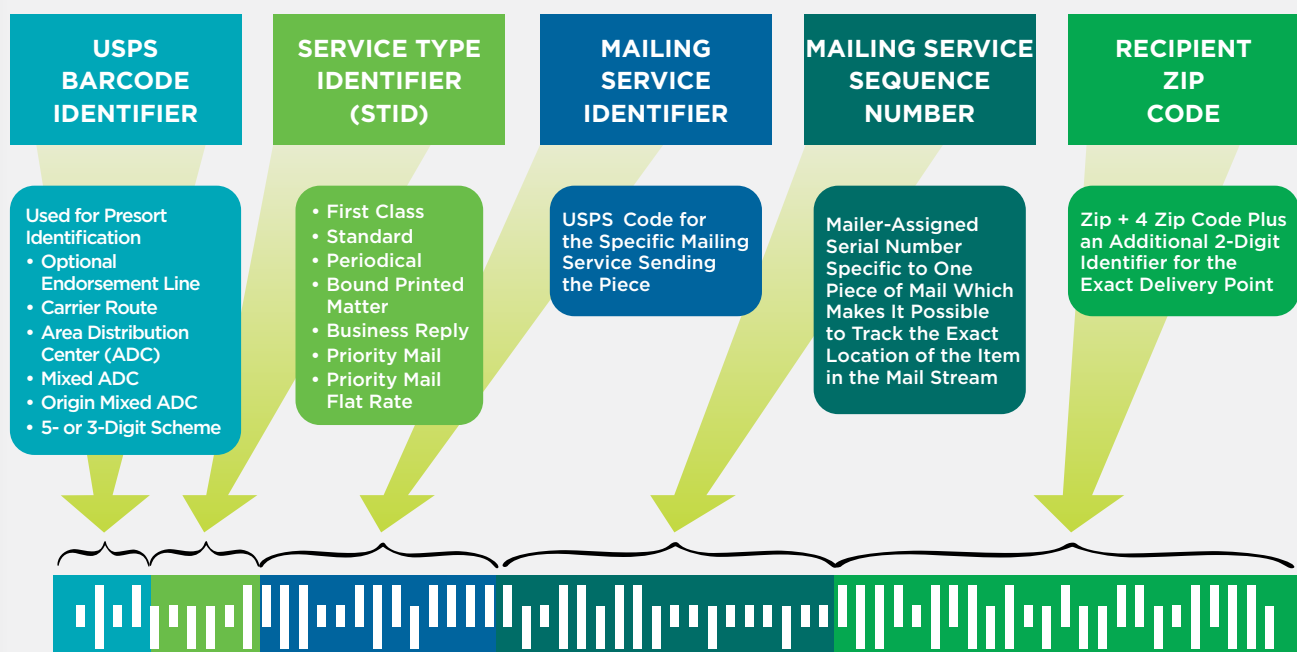
equipment, like software, as well as an in-house “expert” to be the USPS liaison and become knowledgeable about the process and changes that the postal service makes in bulk mail rates and rules.

To give you a better idea of the steps involved in preparing bulk mail, here is a list of the various certifications, assessments, and processes that a bulk mailing must go through before it arrives at the post office:

## CASS Certification

CASS (Coding Accuracy Support System) certification reviews all of the addresses you are mailing to and ensures they

## THE BARCODE DECODED...





# Guidelines for Bulk Mail (Plus, Tips for Preparation) (cont.)

are accurate. It fixes street and city misspellings, confirms carrier routes, checks zip codes and creates an accurate barcode for the delivery point. A third party can do this for you, or you can buy CASS-certified software to do the review in-house. The USPS requires that the address data be CASS-certified within 180 days of the mailing date.

## **National Change of Address checkup**

Within 90 days of mailing, addresses must be checked against the USPS's National Change of Address (NCOA) database. It's a good safeguard as so many Americans move each year. The NCOA updates addresses for those who have moved recently. A third party can easily check your mail list for you, otherwise you would need to invest in software to do it.

## **Zipcode presort**

Mailings must be presorted by zip code. Software can organize lists for you, or you can have a third-party direct mail company handle it.

## **Delivery to the post office**

After the mail has gone through all the needed checks and updates and has been sorted into bins that the post office provides, the bins and required paperwork are delivered to the post office. The post office processes it. When a third-party

handles bulk mail for you, it will either arrange to pick up the mailing or, if you prefer, arrange for you to drop it off at their offices.

## **Bulk mail might not be a DIY kind of project**

There's no doubt that bulk mail is a great way to save money, especially if you do a lot of marketing mail. But because the time it takes to prepare this mail isn't time every business has, it's often best to have a pro do it for you. Your business will still enjoy a good portion of the discounted savings, without having to spend the time to process and prepare the bulk mailing

Give us a call to discuss bulk mail in more detail. We can help you calculate whether it makes sense to hire a direct mail processing professional like Bluegrass to handle the job for you. We can calculate how much you would save through discounted bulk mail rates based on past mailings or on your plans for this year's marketing campaign.



# Saturation Mailing Versus Targeted Mailing

Think of targeted mailings as butterfly nets and saturation mailings as fishing nets. Both are useful; but your choice will depend on your use-case. Targeted mailing can potentially save you money by decreasing the amount of mail you send because the mail you send will be more relevant and focused to your recipients. On the other hand, saturation mailing typically targets “current resident,” so you send more mail to people that may not be interested. However, depending on your message, demographic and type of business you are marketing for, it may be more cost-effective and cheaper to use saturation mailing if your efforts are a fit for this wide fishing net approach.



# Saturation Mailing Versus Targeted Mailing (cont.)

## When Should You Use Saturation Mailing?

Saturation mailings are a great fit for any of our clients that have a general product or service offering such as restaurants, lawn service or dry cleaners. We help clients narrow down the most advantageous postal routes and zip codes and let a saturation mailing do the rest.

## Be the Right Fit

While I'm a proponent of saturation mailing it has to be the right fit for your type of business. The clients that get the best ROI out of saturation mailing are typically businesses that appeal to the masses. These are places that provide services that almost everyone in a region needs, for example, churches, dry cleaners, and restaurants. No, you might not want to saturate neighborhoods with your taxidermy services. Yet, if you're advertising something like pest control, then that's something almost everyone can align with and respond to.

## Weigh the Consequences of Cost-Effectiveness

Because the USPS will be delivering your mail piece to every household on the postal route(s) you no longer go through the process of sorting your direct mail by the USPS (remember; no names are

on the mail) that means you're saving a considerable cost. I see most postage rates ranging from \$0.168-0.191 (yes, USPS loves to go down to three decimals). That's almost 1.5 times less than those of a targeted mailing.

It's still important to factor in the impersonal address on saturation mailings. Some people may not respond well to "Current Resident of" instead of seeing their actual names. However, the volume of mail sent will often make up for it.

## How Can You Get Started with Saturation Mailing?

Saturation mailing is easy to implement if you know how to navigate the standard process of a USPS mailing campaign. We break the steps into a simple, high-level process for our clients. We don't want to overwhelm them with the details but it is almost as simple as it looks.

### Define a Location

We work with clients to focus and develop a geographical strategy that includes postal routes as well as zip codes. It's great to start with zip codes that the client recognizes and feels receptive to. From there, we find the USPS routes and develop a saturation mailing campaign that will hit those areas.

# Saturation Mailing Versus Targeted Mailing (cont.)

## Run a List Count

Once we know our locations it's important to know how many residences are on each postal route. That will ultimately inform the cost of postage as well as the cost of printing the mailers.

## Quote the Campaign & Get Started

Once it's time to quote, we have an incredibly accurate figure to give the client. If they give us the thumbs up, then we start the campaign.

## Saturation Mailing is Wide & Narrow Marketing

Saturation mailing isn't just about bulk mail. We tell clients that we start with everything we can possibly know about their demographic as well as their geographic location. From there, we develop personal and engaging direct mail that will drive engagement. We think of saturation mailing as "wide and narrow." Yes, it's deployed at a large scale but with enough research, it should be arriving in the mailboxes that really matter. At Bluegrass, that's our commitment.





# Are Catalogs Still A Thing?

Imagine a lazy Sunday afternoon, lying on your couch, flipping through your favorite store catalog. Whether you're searching the IKEA catalog for a new coffee table or the L.L. Bean catalog for hiking boots, it's a relaxing, stress-free way to shop – or browse.



# Are Catalogs Still A Thing? (cont.)

## Why Catalogs?

That 4-inch-thick catalog Sears published every Christmas has gone the way of the Sony Walkman, but guess what? Just as portable music players have stuck around and evolved, so has the catalog. Catalogs are a powerful marketing tool that can help businesses to reach a wide range of consumers. By featuring products in an eye-catching and easily accessible format, catalogs can generate interest and drive sales. In addition, catalogs offer businesses the opportunity to present a large amount of information in a concise and organized manner. This makes catalogs an ideal way to highlight new products, special promotions, and company news. With their broad appeal and ability to generate results, catalogs are still widely used by businesses of all sizes.

## Catalogs Create a Connection

Catalogs are filled with vibrant colors, and curated images, and give readers the sense that if they had these products they could be a part of the story. Take the Pottery Barn catalog, for example. The images of rooms that are perfectly designed, showcasing all Pottery Barn furniture and décor are quite convincing. Of course, you will want to relax by the fireplace on a soft Pottery Barn chair, wrapped in a fur blanket – who wouldn't?

The Amazon toy catalog that is released during the holiday season is another popular catalog. It often has actual children's stories written inside, as well as activities and games. The 2019 version's opening page says, "Once you turn this page, you'll enter a world where holiday dreams are made." I don't know about you, but when I was a kid, that's a marketing hook that would've reeled me in. The longer kids are entertained by the catalog, the more time they will spend checking out all of the toys that fill the pages. Toys that will inevitably end up on their wish list.

## Catalogs Are Tangible

Studies show that most people enjoy physical mail - especially millennials. A generation raised on the Internet actually likes to get ink on their fingers. This could be because it is such a different tactile experience for them. Also, the average piece of direct mail stays in the home for around 17 days. This means customers can access catalogs easily, multiple times - folding down the corners of the pages they want to come back to or even circling the items they are considering purchasing. Clipping through a catalog is a leisurely activity that consumers seem to enjoy.

Physical advertisements also create stronger brand recognition which in turn

# Are Catalogs Still A Thing? (cont.)

creates a long-lasting impact that will influence future purchasing decisions.

## Catalogs Provide Measurable Results

Return on investment is important when launching a new marketing campaign. Especially when it involves catalogs, as they can become quite costly to mail. In fact, postage makes up nearly 50% of the expenses associated with catalogs. This means catalogs incorporated into an omnichannel marketing campaign will have the highest ROI. According to the United State Postal Service, 60% of catalog recipients will visit the company's website.

Most purchases are made after the eighth touch, so exposing customers to your products and your message multiple times in various ways will increase the likelihood of a purchase being made.

In order to track the responses from your catalog, you could include a QR code that will direct readers to a landing page or even add a response code that the customer will enter when they make a purchase. A lot of customers will prefer reaching your business by phone, so be sure you are using a specific phone number to track and ideally, record the phone calls. And the most popular method of measuring the results from your catalog is by including a special offer or coupon that is only found in the catalog.

## Catalogs Live On, But They Are Different.

Catalogs aren't dead, but the days of packing everything you sell into one catalog are. Today's catalogs are more than that. They are:

**Teasers** – Visually driven, paper appetizers designed to pique buyers' interests.

Often designed to entertain and engage consumers, while showcasing products.

**Targeted** – They aim for niche audiences.

For example, an outdoor outfitter might send individuals who have bought camping gear in the past a catalog



# Are Catalogs Still A Thing? (cont.)

showcasing tents and sleeping bags in the spring, before they head off to the woods for summer campouts.

**Provide Brand Reinforcement** – Similar to a website, a catalog can and should reinforce a company's brand, delivering the same messages in ways that are quickly recognized.

## Catalogs Can Be Scaled for Large or Small Businesses

In the past, large retail businesses (cue Sears) have mailed out thick books containing most, or all, of their products. Today, fewer businesses do this for a variety of reasons. One of which is the internet, where a business' website can act as a digital catalog. The other lies in the cost factor, as mentioned before. Many of these retailers are turning to magazine production instead to promote their products as well as entertain their audience.

As for small businesses, a limited catalog sent to a carefully selected audience can

help capture new customers. You can create a small catalog that showcases your best sellers and send it to a list of potential customers by purchasing a mailing list based on specific demographics or geographic areas.

## Catalogs Are Here to Stay

I can't think of anything that engages customers quite like a print catalog. That is partly because people choose to pick up a catalog and flip through it whereas digital ads are thrown in front of you whether you wanted to see them or not. Catalogs can be a key part of building customer loyalty because when customers latch on, (and they do) their love for this type of shopping experience becomes strong. Something about the glossy pages and physical beauty inspires buyers in ways email or online media doesn't live up to.

Want to talk about creating a catalog, or about how to better target an audience for yours? Give us a call. We would love to chat with you.





# Types of Direct Mail Pieces for Your Marketing Campaign

Every piece of direct mail has its own list of benefits. Your choice (and our guidance) in selecting what type of direct mail to send out depends on your audience, your goals, and your budget. Together, these factors will drive your direct mailing campaign, regardless of the economic situation.

# Types of Direct Mail Pieces for Your Marketing Campaign (cont.)

Don't worry – we provide plenty of guidance to our customers when it comes to choosing their direct mail pieces. We may choose only one or we may use a few types of direct mail pieces in your direct marketing efforts. However, the choices may make your head spin if you're not prepared. Let's look at each of the types of direct mail to get an idea of what it looks like and how to best use it in your direct mailing campaign.

## Postcards

Short and sweet; that's how I'd describe a postcard. To me, they evoke a certain sense of eccentricity. You can take advantage of that twinge of nostalgia from the good old days when you would receive a postcard from a friend or family member on vacation. Your direct mail postcard might look different than those, but it will still feel familiar to the recipient.



Postcards have one of the highest engagement rates of any of the types of direct mail pieces. As a direct mailing piece, they allow the most visibility at first glance, with all your marketing material in view. A 5" X 9" postcard will give you plenty of flexibility when it comes to design and messaging. They're also inexpensive and versatile. We go deeper into postcards and how to take advantage of them in our postcard marketing guide.

## Self-Mailers

Self-mailers, in my eyes, are somewhere between a catalog and a postcard in the direct mailing world. They're meant to be colorful, and beautiful, and to highlight your business. When you think of self-mailers, think of a brochure or a pamphlet. They can be modest and professional or bright and whimsical. They are largely informational and meant to captivate your



# Types of Direct Mail Pieces for Your Marketing Campaign (cont.)

audience. I often recommend self-mailers to feature new products or services and bridge the gap between a postcard and a full-fledged catalog.

Take a look at our guide to choosing the ideal self-mailer for your needs and learn a bit more about the sizing guidelines.

## Letters

Are you looking to impress a sophisticated client base, while adding a sense of formality and privacy to your direct mailing outreach? Letters are the way to go. Calling them “letters” may be a bit vague. Letters, for lack of a better word, describe any direct mail that arrives at a person’s door in an envelope. For marketing and direct mailing, we often refer to these letters as “lead letters”, since they’re meant to generate engagement, find leads (potential customers), and drive revenue.

Letters can be colorful, highly styled, and contain several pieces within one envelope. Letters are a great way to drive donations for nonprofits, connect with current, valued customers, or explain in detail a complex problem your product or service will solve. Sincerity and personalization will always win with letters.

## Catalogs

We all remember the Sears catalog, right? Many of our childhood holidays revolved around the crumpled pages of the toy section within that catalog. While we may not see catalogs quite as often these days, they are still an important part of many businesses marketing strategies. Assuming you’re sending them to the right people, catalogs still create excitement for the reader. When designed to include targeted content for your audience, catalogs can be the premier





# Types of Direct Mail Pieces for Your Marketing Campaign (cont.)

choice for your direct mail piece.

Catalogs are big, colorful, and unfortunately, expensive to print. However, when used in conjunction with a solid product lineup, they are still what drives sales, especially in industries that are always on the lookout for new technology. Let me put it this way; if you're an electrician, then you're still getting excited by the latest Fluke catalog when it shows up at your door. That's not to mention the resurgence of business-to-consumer retail catalogs in direct marketing. There's a lot we can still say about the surprising effectiveness of the modern catalog; read about it here.

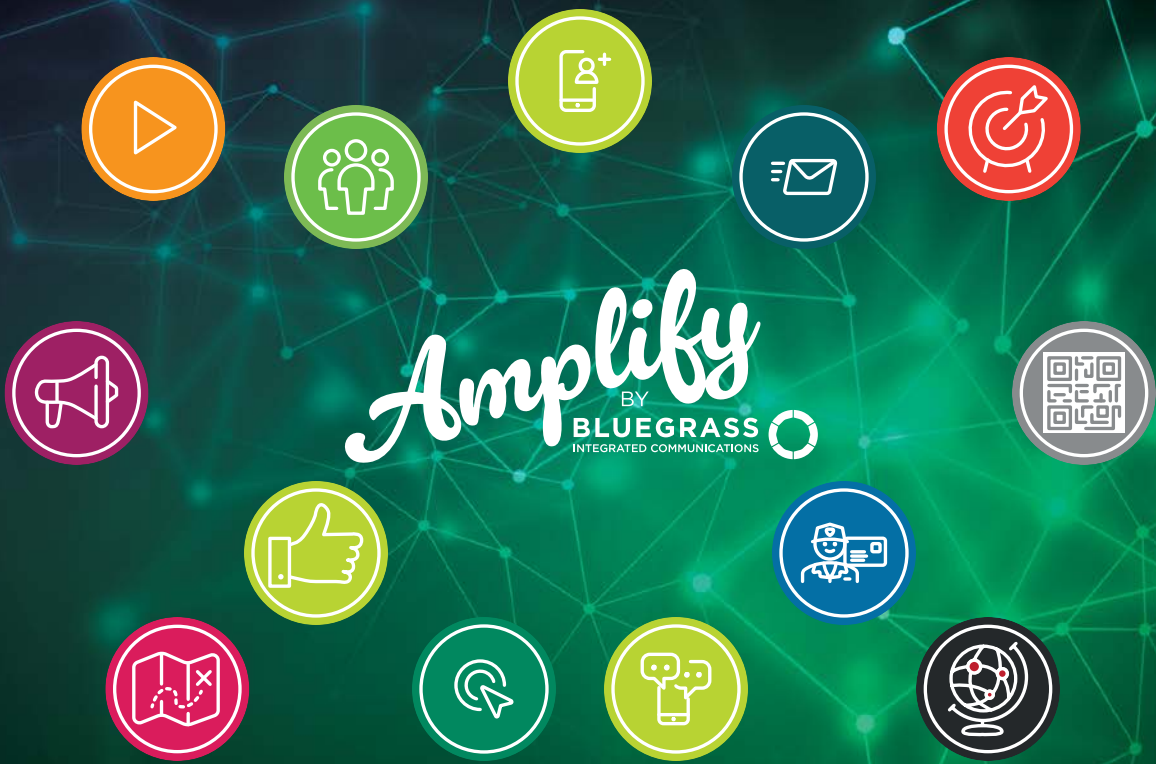
## **Direct Mail: All Pieces to the Same Puzzle**

Your direct mail strategy should be flowing and flexible. I always tell clients that to really communicate with their audience

they need to evolve the way they use direct mail. Different types of direct mail pieces – Postcards, self-mailers, letters, and catalogs are all pieces of a larger direct mailing puzzle. Knowing how they fit into your brand is the challenging part and it's what we help you with at Bluegrass. It's time to rethink your direct marketing strategy; we'll work with what's effective, find new ways to engage your audience, and use the power of direct mail to its fullest.

If you are new to direct marketing and curious about how this all works behind the scenes, we have laid out some guidelines for preparation and timing.

As your partner in all things direct marketing, we have both your direct mailing creative and direct mailing services covered when it comes to selecting your types of direct mail pieces.



# Omnichannel Marketing by Amplify

Increase conversions with maximum exposure! In addition to sending out your direct mail campaign, Amplify utilizes cutting-edge technology to create an omnichannel experience for your customer. This connectivity increases your return on investment by serving your target audience the same message, on multiple channels, simultaneously.

# Omnichannel Marketing by Amplify (cont.)



## Mail Tracking

Be prepared for new calls and online leads by knowing exactly when your mailing campaign is hitting mailboxes.



## Informed Delivery

With Informed Delivery® integration, your mailing piece will be accompanied by a full color, clickable ad within the grayscale email preview sent by the USPS. You will also be able to track where Informed Delivery® emails have been opened (geographically)!



## Call & Text Tracking

Get access to live updates and recordings of every call you've received as a result of your direct mail campaign. Capture demographics like the name, address, phone number, gender, and more information to use for your next campaign. You can also engage with prospects and drive conversions by delivering coupons

and URLs by text from the same call tracking number.



## Online Follow-Up

If a prospect leaves your website without taking action, your ads will show up throughout the Google® Network directing them back to your website. Works with EDDM too!



## Social Media Follow-Up

Keep your follow-up ads in front of your prospects even when they're scrolling through their newsfeed on Facebook® and Instagram®. Works with EDDM too!



## SocialMatch

Match your mailing list with your Facebook® and Instagram® user accounts. Your target market will not only receive the mailing, but will be delivered the SAME message on their social feeds, even before they visit your website online. Works with EDDM too!



# Omnichannel Marketing by Amplify (cont.)



## LeadMatch

Receive a list of who came to your website from the mailing list and what actions they took. With LeadMatch, you can mail to unique visitors who visited your website, even if they weren't on the mailing list! Finally, true attribution for a direct mail campaign!



## YouTube Ads \*Amplify Plus

Capture attention with dynamic in-stream video ads to engage your audience.



## Discovery Ads \*Amplify Plus

Use the power of discovery by displaying your ads across the entire Google network. Your ads will be shown based on interests, history, and device information while targeting users who are primed to take action.



## Google Geotargeting \*Amplify Plus

Locations are selected and ads are shown to qualified prospects in that area.



## Social Media Geotargeting \*Amplify Plus

Expand your reach by serving your offer to qualified prospects via Facebook and Instagram.



## Addressable Geo \*Amplify Plus

Reach potential customers within a certain geographic radius with hyper-targeted, location-based marketing. Geofence the residential or business address of mail recipients to serve ads through the display network to all devices at the address. Track website visitors with our pixel technology or track in-person visitors by pinging their devices.

# Omnichannel Marketing by Amplify (cont.)



## QR Code \*Amplify Plus

Boost engagement with static or dynamic QR Codes. Track responses through our custom reporting dashboard to see various types of information including who scanned it.

## A Complete Omnichannel Marketing Campaign

### How Does It Work?

After your direct mail marketing piece has been sent, your campaign message and graphics are shown to your target audience across a variety of digital platforms. From your custom campaign dashboard, you can then view all of the tracked data from your campaign. Having this information provides invaluable insight for your next Amplify campaign!

### Pre-Delivery:

- Social ads are delivered to your target audience before your mailing piece is

delivered, priming your audience for marketing.

- Informed Delivery full-color campaign graphic displays in the recipient's USPS daily email, providing a digital touchpoint for recipients.

### Upon Delivery:

- Mail tracking begins recording exactly when your piece hits mailboxes.
- Social ads continue to run as follow-up ads, reminding recipients of your campaign.
- Call tracking provides real-time updates, linking your campaign to results, verified leads and even recordings of calls.
- Digital ads begin to deliver through Google Display Network to prospects who have visited your site, prompting them to revisit.
- Leads are matched, tracked, and recorded. Website visitors interested in your campaign – whether they are visitors from your mailing list to organic visitors – are available for remarketing campaigns. digitally and in future mailing campaigns.



## Direct Marketing Experts

With nearly 50 years of experience, our team understands your goals and unique business needs, and applies our knowledge in messaging, digital printing techniques and data mining to design and implement an effective strategy with a high ROI for your business. Together, we can achieve and exceed your goals.

## Our Commitment

As the needs of businesses have evolved, Bluegrass has adopted new technologies and solutions. We continue to meet our clients' growing needs by adding crucial services, from the physical processing of mail to highly interactive campaigns.

# Let's Work Together.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT:

**WEAREBLUEGRASS.COM**

OR CALL:

**800.928.6245**

FEBRUARY 2023

