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## MORE MARKETING DOPE

Direct marketing can make you very successful, but you've got to understand the basics. Here are some more gems of the industry that can take you from being a diamond in the rough to the luminous bling-bling.

When advertising your product or service, honesty is not only the legal and ethical path, but also the path to the highest amount of repeat business.

Many times companies fall into the trap of trying to "lure" customers in to their store. They make claims that are technically true but are worded in a way that make them sound better than they actually are. The company may not be consciously trying to deceive their customer, but none the less if exactly what is advertised is not delivered the customer will feel deceived. This customer is not likely to do business with this company no matter what their advertising offers in the future. List the benefits of your product factually and deliver what is promised and your customers will keep coming back.

When advertising, it is best to outline the benefits of your product or service. Simply naming the features that it has may not show what it can actually do for your customer.

Example: A car company releases a new model of car that features "new indestructible porcelain brakes". This fact is touted in all of their commercials but the cars aren't flying off the lot. It is very likely that the customers in their target market, mostly families that are concerned about safety, have no idea what difference these brakes make in the performance of the vehicle. If they had instead advertised the benefit that the car is "equipped with brakes that can stop your car three times faster" it would have given the customer a compelling reason to be interested.

Think about what the benefit of your product or service is and focus on that. If you are a computer maintenance company your product may be "server management and database maintenance" but you will be better off saying that you can help "increase office productivity by allowing easier access to client files". Many times your customers don't understand your business. That is why they have to hire you. Make sure to explain to them not only what you do, but how it can help them.

When a customer gives you their email address you have one more way to get your message to them.

One of the best ways to supplement Direct Mail Marketing is Direct Email Marketing. However, unlike direct mail marketing, unsolicited email marketing is illegal. You can't just go out and buy a list of email addresses and start sending to them. There is one way to purchase lists for emailing called "opt in" lists but this method is not recommended because the rate of people on the list that actually "opt in" to receiving your promo is very low. This is why you should always collect customers' email addresses as you are getting their physical addresses.

Also be sure not to slam your customers with too much email promotion. I recommend not sending more than one email per week to each client. Not only will this keep you from angering your customers, it will also keep up the interest level and keep your emails from getting deleted before they are even opened.

If your company is planning on emailing specials or a Monthly Email Newsletter you will need to have this list for them to be effective. If you are not planning on contacting customers and prospects via email, you should be!

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