

Good Response Management – a check list.

Number One – Do you deliver your promises.

Whether you have outsourced your response management, or do this in-house, either way ensure you make a mystery-request on your web site, or call centre, at least every month. Experience what it is like to be a prospect and if your web site delivers its promises.

DMA Research showed 19% of companies tested who offered to send literature FAILED to respond at all.

Number Two -

Brochure/Catalogue/Information pack – if you OFFER a free hardcopy, make sure your request form it is easy to navigate and user friendly. Do you have the Post office address finder on your web site? It not only makes it easier for the user, it will regulate your data for subsequent use. For personalisation you will need titles – and better as drop down options.

Of those companies tested a healthy 98% had a website enquiry form, but only 46% used an address finder.

Number Three –

Does your web site acknowledge the literature request? Does it manage their expectations by advising how long they can expect to wait before receiving it?

The DMA research recorded only 38.5% of companies tested sent an email acknowledgment (and/or upsell) as part of their web site response.

Number Four - re use of data

Of course, ensuring you observe data options to deny further contact, you will want to communicate to your prospect. But ensure it is relevant, timely and carefully managed.

Oddly enough the survey (taken over a period of 6 weeks) reported only 22.5% send a further email message, and only 12.5% followed up with direct mail.

*However take care not to overkill the process as one Company in the survey sent a total of **44 emails in 6 weeks.***

Number Five – Personalised letter

It has become an established fact that mail addressed personally to your prospect has a higher rate of response. Check out if your response is personalised. How does it compare with your competition? Can it be improved cost effectively?

53.1% of those surveyed used personalisation in their response pack. This is a massive increase from 2009 survey when only 34% used a personalised mail piece.

Number Six – the BIG one.

Speed of response. Test it for yourself and see if acceptable to your Company's strategy. Has your prospect bought from elsewhere because your response was too late?

The DMA survey on response management reported a mean average of 4.7% days from enquiry to receipt (that's ignoring those who DID NOT respond). Previous survey average was 3.6 days. This may be down to your budget and the use of second class post. Some Companies waited to accumulate mail so they could gain mailsort discounts on higher volumes. But consider a) is this a false economy, and b) what did you promise. Strangely the Clothing sector took on average 9 days. Concerning when we know this sector may be fickle by nature.

Number Seven - presentation.

Is it good enough? Does it reflect your brand? You may be judged by your presentation.

Common sins in the survey were:-

Duplicated responses

Scruffy brown envelopes

Handwritten envelopes

Envelopes wrong size, crooked labels, brochures upside down

When personalised wrong matched in fonts, wrong salutations (could be your web form), and general incorrect addressing.

Overall rule must be – check it out.

If you would like to learn more about the DMA survey and its findings please give me a call.

Sally Hollis, Managing Director Arden Direct.

DMA Response Management Council Chair. 01455 852242