

17 SECRETS TO DIRECT MAIL FUNDRAISING

Other direct mail gurus will "sell you the sizzle" when it comes to direct mail tips...but I'm about to serve up the steak! So...let's bypass the pleasantries and get right down to business.

Whether you're trying to raise millions for a congressional or gubernatorial campaign ... or just a few thousand for a local race ... direct mail can and should be a key component of your fundraising plan. Done correctly, it can generate all the money you need to fund certain projects.

But...done poorly it can bankrupt you in a heartbeat!

A well-written and designed direct mail piece can sometimes do well even when mailed to a mediocre list of potential donors - but a lousy direct mail piece will flop, even to the greatest list on earth. With that said, here are 17 suggestions which will help dramatically improve your direct mail fundraising success.

Bear in mind, unlike the Ten Commandments, these suggestions aren't carved in stone. There are exceptions to every rule. But for the most part, sticking to the basics as outlined herein will serve you very well.

TIP #1: SELECTING YOUR LIST

Who you mail to will be the greatest determining factor in the success of your direct mail project. Mailing to people who have already given to you before - your "house file" - or, at least, to a cause, campaign or candidate similar to yours - will net a far better response rate than, say, mailing randomly to a voter file. While it is unlawful to use the contributor lists compiled by the Federal Elections Commission (FEC) for congressional and presidential candidates, many states allow you to mail fundraising letters to contributors to other state and local candidates. You might, for example, try mailing to people from your district or county who gave to your party's gubernatorial candidate - or other statewide candidates - in the last election. But check your local laws carefully before using such lists.