

Altman Dedicated Direct

STRATEGY... TACTICS... RESULTS

Column: **"After the Phone Rings ..."**

Month: **October 2005**

Topic: **Acquiring New Customers with Package Inserts & Statement Stuffers**

DRTV and DR Radio are great ways to acquire customers, but what if you want to reach prospects that won't order from TV or radio? Package Inserts and Statement Stuffer Inserts may be just the way to do it.

Package inserts allow your offer to ride along with a product shipment. Most commonly, the product was purchased from a mail-order catalog or large continuity program with a loyal customer base. In some cases the product being delivered is a premium that was offered for a magazine subscription purchase.

Whichever circumstance caused the product delivery, receiving the package is a happy occasion. Think how you feel when an item you've ordered arrives in the mail at home; even when you bought the item yourself, it feels a little like "Christmas" opening that box. That happy feeling positively impact inserts inside.

You also reach very "hot" (very recent) buyers with a package insert. "Hot" buyers are generally more responsive than other prospects. In addition, there are usually no more than 6-10 inserts so yours will likely get at least a cursory look. However, it is critical that the front of your insert be compelling enough to make the prospect want to look inside. Inserts are reviewed by prospects quickly, and insert creative is not a time for subtlety.

Package inserts offer more space than you might imagine for showcasing your product/offer. While most programs limit outer dimensions to 5.5" x 8.5", inserts can unfold multiple times and even mini-catalogs up to 16 pages can be inserted. Higher fees may be assessed due to weight exceeding maximums of .25 oz., so be certain to verify pricing for the specific format you plan to develop. But, even with higher fees, package inserts can still very cost-effective promotions.

Statement stuffer inserts ride along in envelopes with statements from credit cards and utilities such as cable and telephone. It might seem on the face of it a negative experience (who enjoys receiving credit card or utility statements?) but you are reaching buyers in an environment that cannot be ignored – these envelopes get opened! In addition, statement envelopes generally include only 1-2 inserts so this gives your insert more attention by recipients.

Statement stuffer inserts have more restrictive size and weight limitations than package inserts and usually can't exceed 3.5" x 6.5" and .15 oz. And these programs likely charge higher "over maximum" fees if they accept something larger because increased weight impacts their postage rate.



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For both package inserts and statement stuffers, the program owner will have minimum quantity requirements and will need to approve your offer and creative execution as being appropriate for their audience. Competitive offers usually will be rejected and you can request category exclusivity for the packages and statements you insert into.

How do you maximize insert results? Besides a great offer and compelling creative presentation, make sure you are reaching the best target audience. For package inserts ensure the programs are well matched to your product demographic; for statement programs choose based on zip codes.

Whatever other actions you take to improve your odds of insert success, be sure to work with an experienced inset list broker. A good insert broker will help you develop an overall insert program strategy, ensure that you make good program choices and will help shepherd your project through the process. Experienced insert brokers are invaluable in providing you insights to help avoid costly mistakes and maximize effectiveness and efficiency of your insert efforts.

Have a question? Email me: SAltman@AltmanDedicatedDirect.com Next month we'll consider how loyalty clubs can help both acquire and retain customers.

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