



10 Ways to Get Leads for Your **Real Estate, Insurance, Mortgage or Home Improvement Business**

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1

DIRECT MAIL

SALES DATA SHOWS THAT DIRECT MAIL IS STILL RELEVANT IN OUR DIGITAL AGE



By John Watts, Executive Vice President

An average response rate for direct mail is **3.7%** with an in-house list and **1%** when mailing new leads. When done well, direct mail averages a **15-17%** return on marketing investment.

Is direct mail still relevant in the digital age? Absolutely. When done right, direct mail averages a 15-17% return on investment. Even better, the average response rate for direct mail is 3.7% with an in-house list and 1% when mailing new leads.

It doesn't matter if your industry is real estate, insurance, mortgages, or HVAC services. Direct mail can help. Direct mail can help you reach out to homeowners two months before their policies expire. Direct mail can connect you to HVAC customers in the spring or fall, right before the extreme weather hits.

With a little bit of intelligent planning, and the right drop date, Direct Mail can be one of the most effective ways to reach out to clients and leads alike. So let's talk about what you should expect when you get started.

Who Receives Your Mail?

You should start off with two basic lists: your In-House List and your New Leads list. In-house lists will naturally receive a higher response rate than fresh leads, especially in real estate. But new leads are crucial when you're looking to build good word of mouth and find the next generation of long-term customers.

It's important to build and cultivate both lists, but finding different groups of people will require different methods. For instance, if you wanted to find homeowners who might be interested in selling, you could use information databases to find a list of recent divorces and inheritances.

Choose an Eye-Catching format



Oversized or unusual envelopes garner the highest response rate at 5.0%



Postcards elicit a 4.25% response rate



Catalogs enjoy a 3.9% response rate



Traditional sized envelopes come in with a 3.5% response rate

If you want your mailing to stand out, you can't use a traditional envelope. Investing the extra money in an unusual paper stock or format can really make a difference. Oversized or unusual envelopes garner the highest response rate at 5.0%. Postcards elicit a 4.25% response rate and catalogs enjoy a 3.9% response rate. But traditional sized envelopes only get a 3.5% response rate.

Know When to Mail

Some direct mail campaigns will only send out one piece of a mail per month, while others are successful on a quarterly schedule. If you track how each mailing does, you'll get a better indication of what kind of schedule you need. But be sure to check and update your records before each mailing. Clients who bought a service from you last month won't need a postcard this week.



2

Email Marketing



By Jessica Desarro, Sales Executive

Most people say that promotional emails are annoying, ineffective, and that they never convince people to buy. But the E-Mail Marketing Census by E-consultancy proved that isn't true.

The census found that 44% of people who were on promotional email mailing lists made at least one purchase last year because of a promotional email. The census also found that 42% of overall businesses list email as their top lead generation channel. If you don't reach out to your customers through email, you're leaving money on the table.

HOW DO YOU CREATE A SUCCESSFUL EMAIL MARKETING CAMPAIGN?

Get Permission or Use an Opt-In List

Don't disrespect your leads by buying their information. Instead, ask them to opt in to your mailing list through an online Contact Form. Then give people a reason to opt in, like offering free quotes for services or a prize drawing. When you meet leads offline, you can also use a simple hardcopy form to get their contact info.

Use an Email Service Provider (ESP)

Avoid using Gmail or Outlook for your email marketing. Instead, take advantage of the services an Email Service Provider (ESP) offers. Most ESPs allow you to track how many of your emails are opened and who clicked on your emailed links. For companies with large lists, bulk ESPs like MailGet or Mail Marketer have the right analytics to handle a bigger crowd.

Attract Subscribers by Providing Useful (Not Promotional) Information

Promotional emails from retailers like Amazon or Overstock can talk about a new sale or a hot product immediately. But your leads will need a softer touch. You can make your firm stand out by providing an educational email or a newsletter update.

Share trends and tips that buyers, sellers, and homeowners alike can get interested in. For example, you could also send out an HVAC-centric newsletter about different kinds of ventilation. Leads that forget a sales pitch will remember you, and the useful, relevant information you gave them.

Comply with the Federal CAN-SPAM Act

Above all else, you should know what you can and cannot do when it comes to email marketing. [The Federal Trade Commission](#) spells this out, but the basic guidelines are simple: Don't mislead your email recipients. Make it easy for them to opt out. And, above all, keep each message honest and respectful.



3

Cold Calling



By Sheryl Ricker, New Client Development

THE ART OF THE COLD CALL

Cold calling is a vital, yet misunderstood, part of your marketing plan. Let's talk about the right way and wrong way to incorporate it into your marketing strategy.

Data-Based Conversion Goals

Let's rely on data to set our goals for cold calls.

According to the TeleNet and Ovation Sales Group, in 2007 it took an average of 3.68 cold call attempts to reach a prospect. Today it takes 8 attempts per prospect.

These numbers don't mean that cold calls aren't worth the time investment. Some studies have found that up to 78% of attendees of a seminar or other sales event were there because of a cold call.

The Art of the Cold Call

According to the TeleNet and Ovation Sales Group, it took an average of 3.68 cold call attempts to reach a prospect in 2007. Today it can take up to eight attempts per prospect; but that doesn't mean that cold calls aren't worth the time! Some sales polls have found that up to 78% of people attend seminars and sales event because of a cold call. But you must set realistic goals of how many calls should be made in a day, and what your average ideal conversion rates are.

A good conversion rate to aim for is an average of 2%. That means 2% of all cold calls made should result in an appointment.

This might seem low, but a 2% percent conversion rate is significant! According to SmartInsights the conversion rates across other forms of media are:

.05% to .01% on banner ads

.05% to .01% for LinkedIn or Facebook ads

.5% to 2% for Paid Search

.1% to 1% for e-newsletter

1% to 10% for emails to existing lead list

Bear in mind that these rates are averages, and your own results may vary. The top sales performers of 2014 got an average of 6 in-person meetings for every 62 calls they placed, but that is a rate that very few people are able to reach. If you set your benchmarks too high, you'll be attempting the near impossible straight out the gate.

Response Rate and Return on Investment Benchmarks

To make sure you have the best Return on Investment (ROI) for your cold calls, you should know your Cost-Per-Acquisition (CPA). Here's how your numbers should break down.

In general, and across marketing platforms, house lists generate higher response rates and ROI than prospective lists. An overall phone marketing response rate may look like 9-10%, but when broken down, house lists have higher response (13 or 14%) compared to cold calls (7 or 8%).

Another rule of thumb may be for an ROI of 25% on phone marketing, with a CPA average of \$17 or \$18.

Telephone marketing is also more commonly utilized for business-to-business sales. You might get more use out of telephone marketing if you're an HVAC company trying to sell A/C units to retailers, for example.



4

Word of Mouth



By John Tabita, Director of Marketing

Do you think great customer service alone will get customers talking about you? Think again. Word-of-mouth can be one of the best forms of marketing, but only when it's deliberate and intentional, not passive.

"... good customer service is critical for the success of any business, but if you expect happy customers to talk about you a lot, think again."

- Ivan Misner, Founder of BNI and best-selling author of 20 books on word-of-mouth marketing

Word-Of-Mouth Doesn't Just "Happen"

Unfortunately, you can't rely on others to praise you and send new customers your way. As Dave Balter, author of *The Word of Mouth Manual*, says "Word of mouth doesn't replace great advertising, it just helps great advertising perform better."

The good news is that active, intentional, and deliberate word-of-mouth marketing – combined with online marketing and traditional advertising – can really pay off for your business. Here's two ways to make that happen.

1. Join a Lead-Sharing Group

It's not unusual for a happy client to give you a lead to your next job—but it's not something you can count on. As author Georgina Laidlaw stated, in SitePoint.com's article *The Truth about Word-of-Mouth Referrals*, "if you want to be able to rely on a means of attracting clients continuously, you'll need a network of people."

"It's not impossible for you to do a good job for a client, and receive a lead for another job as a consequence—but it's not likely, either. What you really need, if you're going to be able to actually rely on this as a means of attracting clients continuously, is a network of people."

- The Truth About Word-of-Mouth Referrals, SitePoint.com

You probably already understand the benefits of joining networking groups and the Chamber of Commerce. But the real driving force for continuous referrals are lead-sharing groups. A lead-sharing group requires that you bring in regular leads to share with other members. These groups only allow one person from each type of business to join, so your expertise will always be in demand.

Laidlaw goes on to say that you ought to find a close-knit group that's "willing to collaborate to pass on referrals." Networking groups and your local Chamber of Commerce might provide an environment for networking and word-of-mouth to occur, but they do nothing to guarantee it.

2. Start Your Own Lead-Sharing Group

You can join an existing organization, like BNI, but why not start your own? Starting your own group means you can grow your reputation as a business leader along with your business contacts.

The group can be as informal as a handful of like-minded business people; but you'll get better results if you set expectations from the beginning. Creating rules on attendance and the number of leads each member is expected to bring helps everyone in the group. These guidelines make the group more efficient and will help everyone get connected faster.

To learn more about starting your own group, [download our free ebook](#).

5



Inbound Marketing

ATTRACT CUSTOMERS WITH INBOUND MARKETING



By Ashley Williams, President/CEO

Leads will not come to you on their own; you have to give them a reason to be interested.

That's why inbound marketing is so valuable. It builds a path that attracts potential clients, earns their attention, and converts that attention into sales.

The process starts when you create interesting and informative content. Your content can take the form of blog posts, e-books, webinars, videos, and more—but it must be compelling and answer basic client questions. If you gain the client's trust by answering their initial question, they will come back when they want to know more. Eventually they will be ready to make a purchase, and you can use that trust to guide them into your sales cycle.

Barriers to Conversion

Inbound marketing gives you the opportunity to prove your expertise to customers and leads alike. But you can't just write regular blog posts or offer them a 'free quote' – you must convince your readers that you're an expert. So you'll need to give them brilliant content that proves working with your company is the smartest choice they can make.

You can do this by providing a free gift, like an informational guide or e-book. These should answer frequently asked questions while showing the worth of the paid services you offer. Make sure that people fill out a contact form in order to get your offer so that you can follow up with them.

How To Follow Up with an Inbound Lead

Once you have names and contact details, it's time to get your lead on the phone and start closing sales. But unlike a sales inquiry, an inbound lead isn't asking or expecting to be contacted. So pitching products or trying to schedule an appointment right away isn't going to work.

Instead, engage the person to see if a conversation is to be had.

Introduce Yourself

"Hi Mr. Prospect. It's Tom from XYZ Insurance Agency."
<listen for recognition of your company's name>

State the Purpose of the Call

"Mr. Prospect, I'm calling because you downloaded our ebook, The Complete Guide to Purchasing Life Insurance, from our website this morning. <pause for recognition> Does that ring a bell? <pause> I was calling to follow up and see how I can be of assistance."

Start a Dialogue

<They will likely say something like, "I haven't had a chance to go through it yet."> "That's okay. Can I ask, what were you looking for help with when you downloaded it?"

The magic question here is, "what were you looking for help with?" They were looking for something, otherwise they wouldn't have been on your website. Asking this question opens up the conversation.

Demonstrate Your Expertise

Just because buyers have access to more information (via the internet) doesn't mean they are more decisive or making better decisions. What buyers don't have—and desperately need—is insight. Be sure to provide it before trying to close a sale.

Call Sooner Rather Than Later

Try to call within a few hours or (at most) a day after they downloaded your ebook. Otherwise, they might not remember being on your site, or what they were searching for may no longer be as urgent.

WEBINAR

6

Webinars/Seminars



By Pete Forbes, Director of Sales and Product Training

If you're looking for a way to showcase your expertise while gaining the trust of potential clients, you should also look into seminars and webinars.

Both seminars and webinars are based around a presentation that allows you to interface with possible clients. They both have a huge advantage over cold calls or direct mail, because you can talk directly to your leads.

Seminars are in-person events where you can meet leads face-to-face. These allow you to use body language or word choice and get a better reading of your leads' interest levels and needs.

Webinars are seminars which are conducted over the internet. These allow you to integrate live audio, video feeds, and video chat to interact one-on-one with potential prospects.

No matter if you prefer to run seminars or webinars, you'll attract more leads by using interesting presentation topics. Be sure to stay on top of trends in your area, and the niche markets you have an expertise in. For example, if you're in an area that's prone to natural disasters, you could present information about disaster preparedness and getting a home insurance plan that'll cover you in the event of a disaster.

16 STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL WEBINAR

ONE MONTH PRIOR

Step 1: Determine a topic for your webinar

Step 2: Pick a webinar date and time

Step 3: Select a webinar platform (e.g., Join.me, GoToMeeting)

Step 4: Setup a webinar registration page on your website

Step 5: Create an outline of the webinar

TWO WEEKS PRIOR

Step 6: Create your presentation in PowerPoint or similar program

Step 7: Send an email to promote the webinar to your current contacts

ONE WEEK PRIOR

Step 8: Promote your webinar on social media

Step 9: Complete a dry run of the webinar

Step 10: Send reminder email to registrants

Step 11: Send a second announcement webinar to contacts that didn't register

ONE OR TWO DAYS PRIOR

Step 12: Send follow-up email to attendees

Step 13: Send reminder email to registrants

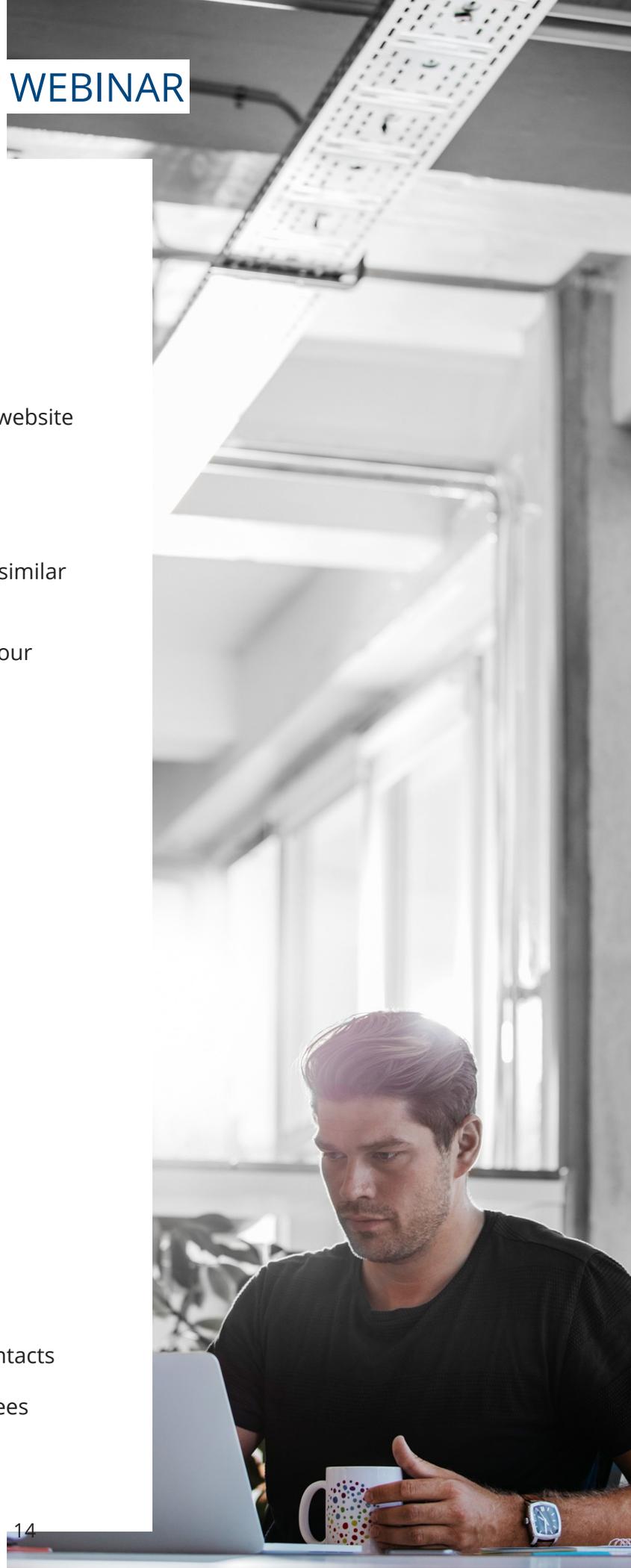
ONE HOUR PRIOR

Step 14: Get setup for the live webinar

ONE DAY AFTER

Step 15: Send link to webinar recording to your contacts

Step 16: Send follow-up thank you email to attendees





PPC



7

PPC Advertising



By Terry Pacelli, Vice President of Haines Local Search

With Search Advertising, you create ads using keywords (what you do) and your location (where you do it). Then popular search engines display those ads whenever people search for your type of business.

If a potential client searches Google for “single family homes for sale in boulder,” and you have “homes for sale” and “Boulder” in your keywords, they will be shown an ad that takes them directly to your site or contact form.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIES WHEN UTILIZING SEARCH ADVERTISING:

Use Google AdWords: This program allows you to pay for your ads based on the number of people who have clicked them. This program can be extremely useful, but the keywords affiliated with your ad must be well-thought-out and relevant.



Set a Realistic Budget: Paying for clicks can be a great way to drum up new business, but only if you set aside the appropriate budget for it. After all, clicks don't guarantee sales.



Hone Your Keywords: If you're a local real estate agent, you need to make sure your ads focus on local customers. If your company's ad shows up every time people search for "buying a home," you'll waste ad impressions on people outside your market. Tailor your keywords around accurate and relevant information, like geography and niche markets.



Consider Outsourcing: Running a Search Advertising campaign is complicated, so consider outsourcing its management to a marketing firm. Marketing experts can help you avoid the pitfalls of this platform and make sure your paid clicks give you the maximum return on your investment.





Facebook Ads



By Katie Chambers, Digital Production Manager

According to the Pew Research Center, 162 million Facebook users alone are from the US, and 70% of these users log in once a day. More than half of these users log in more than once a day. They represent a huge population segment, filled with leads for you to contact.

Facebook is an unusual source for lead generation because users log on to connect with friends and socialize, not to shop. Still, placing ads on Facebook is a great way to build brand awareness, and generate leads.

Unlike search engine optimization, Facebook ads generate demand for your services, instead of returning results when users search for your services.

FACEBOOK ADS

Facebook ads are a great way to build brand awareness and generate leads. According to the Pew Research Center, 113 million US Facebook users log in to their accounts once a day.

Most Facebook users who land on your website clicked your ads out of curiosity, and may not know their exact needs. So don't try and close a sale. Encountering an up-front sales pitch will scare off these users. Instead, use Facebook ads to generate demand for your services and develop your email lists. Encourage users to fill out a short form – asking only for their name and e-mail address – so you can contact them with a sales proposition later.

You can get amazing leads through Facebook, but you must understand the rules. Here are some key things you should know:

Facebook ads are targeted by location, demographic, and other categories:

- **Location:** Target ads by country, state, zip code or even the area around your business.
- **Demographics:** Target audiences by age, gender, interests, and languages.
- **Income:** Target people by net worth, home ownership status, or household composition.
- **Housing:** Target homeowners, renters, and first-time home buyers. You can also target home value, property size, square footage, or year a property was built.
- **Interests:** Target users by their profile interests – categories like music, movies, sports, games, or shopping.
- **Behaviors:** Find customers based on the things they do—everything from their buying behavior to their interest in home ownership.

Facebook Offers

Take advantage of the unique targeting options that Facebook offers.

- **Connections:** Connections lets you target people (and their friends) who already like your Page.
- **Custom Audiences:** Custom Audiences lets you target your existing customers or website visitors. You can create a Custom Audience using a customer contact list, your website traffic, or activity in your app. (Please note that you may also exclude your existing customer list from online ads, if you believe this the best way to manage your marketing campaign.)
- **Lookalike Audiences:** Lookalike Audiences finds more people who'll love your products and services by targeting people similar to your best customers.

Types of Ads You Can Run

Offer Claims:

Create special offers, like free insurance estimates or a discount on heaters.



Jasper's Market shared an offer.
Sponsored

Enjoy fresh produce before the season ends!



20% Off Fresh Produce
Expires Sep 2, 2017 • In-store only

BE THE FIRST TO GET THIS OFFER [Get Offer](#)

1 Like

[Like](#) [Comment](#) [Share](#)

Local Awareness:

Reach out to people and businesses in the area who might be interested in your services.



Jasper's Market [Like Page](#)
Sponsored

Jasper's is a unique community destination for fresh, ultra-premium prepared food.



Jasper's Market
Stop by to today to check out our daily specials

[Get Directions](#)

3 Reactions

[Like](#) [Comment](#) [Share](#)

Lead Ads:

Once customers to sign up for what you're offering, get their contact info and follow up with them.



Jasper's Market [Like Page](#)
Sponsored

Sign up for our newsletter for 20% off and get deals and new recipes delivered to your inbox every week.

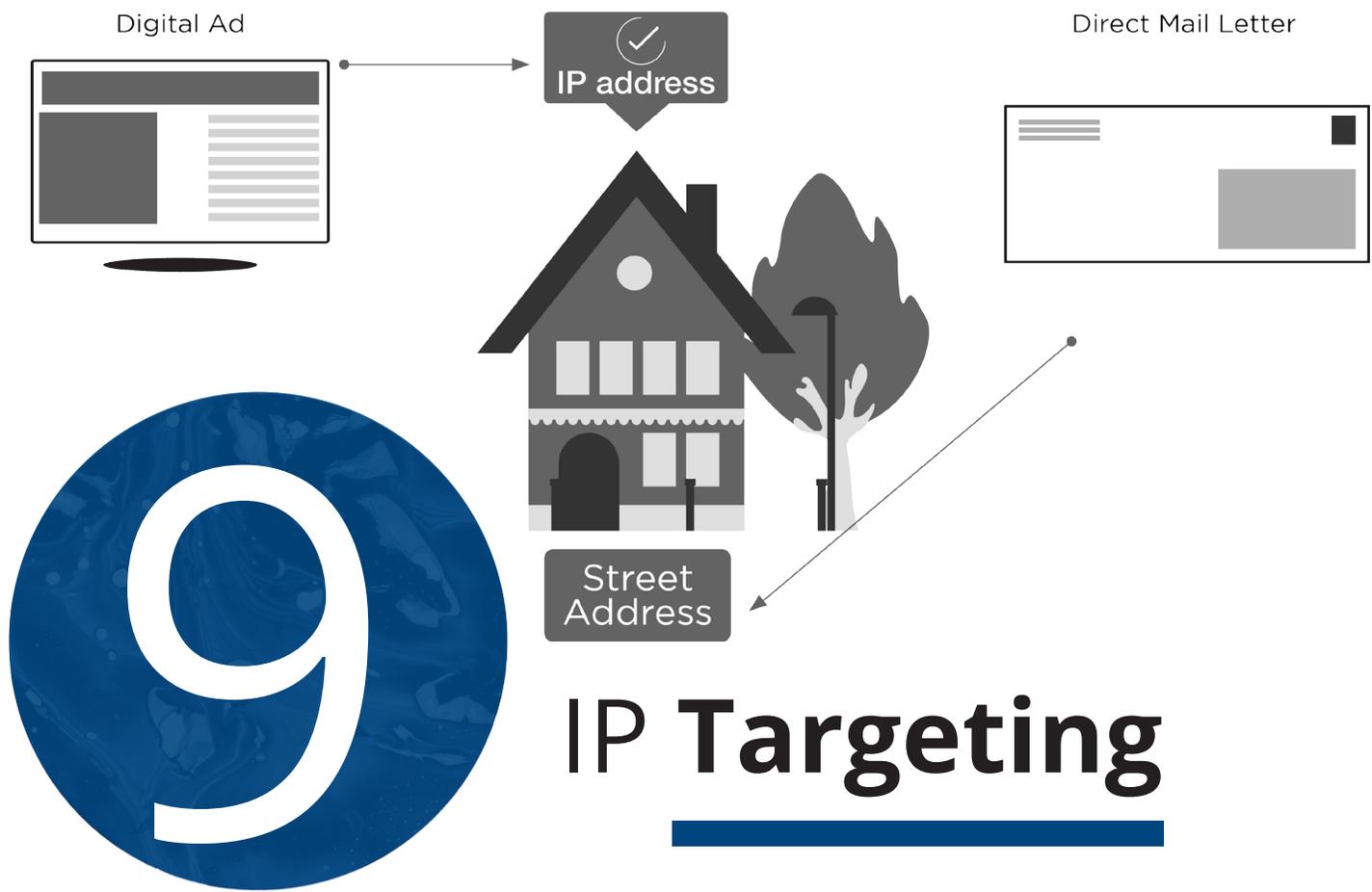


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3 Likes

[Like](#) [Comment](#) [Share](#)



USING IP TARGETING TO COMPLEMENT DIRECT MAIL



By James Craven, Director of New Client Development

Recent platform advancements make it possible to send an online banner ad and a direct mail piece to the same person.

How IP Targeting works:

Contacting a lead or prospect once can only go so far. No matter what their level of actual interest is, up to 98% of prospects will throw away your mailer. That's where IP Targeting comes in. IP targeting lets you send an online banner and a direct mail piece to the same household.

Physical addresses on your mailing list can be matched to the household IP addresses, so online ads can be sent to the computers at those physical addresses. Potential customers will see your ads when they browse online and also receive your postcard in the mail.

Why do this? Because IP Targeting campaigns are 50 to 100 times more targeted than television. They increase the efficacy of online ads tenfold and boast a click-through rate three times higher than industry averages.

USE IP TARGETING TO COMPLEMENT DIRECT MAIL

Calculating Return on Investment

Not knowing your advertising's return on investment (ROI) is a concern for most businesses. But with IP-based display campaigns, that's no longer a problem. That's because you're targeting real people in real households, so you can prove return on investment. Here's how.

Once your campaign is over, you "match back" the list of people who responded to your mailing against the IP addresses that were targeted. By comparing the two, you'll know exactly how many responses and sales you received as a result of the campaign.

This isn't possible with traditional display advertising, because you have no way of knowing who saw your ad. IP Targeting takes a different approach to analytics. Success is measured by actual responses and sales, not impressions and clicks.



10

Haines V4i Property Database



By Mike Blair, National Director of Sales and Technology

Whether you are a real estate professional, mortgage lender, insurance agent, or home improvement contractor, Haines V4i helps you find leads that translate into quicker sales.

Haines V4i is cloud-based software that contains detailed property information about every residential and commercial property in your market. With a few clicks, you can perform searches, export records, print labels, lists, postcards, and reports that enable you to target prospects, generate leads, and close sales.

Real Estate Agents:

- Find comparable properties and produce a customized report.
- Target upscale renters who are likely to become future homeowners.
- View and print search results on MapQuest.

Mortgage Lenders

- Target property owners based on mortgage types, interest rate, and first and second mortgage date.
- Identify properties with first and/or second mortgages, and find first or second mortgage lender names.
- Perform searches based on loan to value.

Insurance Agents

- Find homeowners with expiring home insurance policies.
- Find detailed property information on every residential and commercial property in your market.
- Target recently moved homeowners for life or auto insurance.

Home Improvement Contractors

Perform searches targeting homes based on year built, type of roof, type of heating, exterior construction, number of bathrooms, or market values of \$150,000 and higher.

- **Painters:** Mail only to homes with wood exterior.
- **Roofers:** Target homes built 20 years ago with shingle roofs.
- **Landscapers:** Reach homes with a certain lot square footage, or use the list to quote service estimates over the phone.
- **Lawn Care Professionals:** Identify owner occupied properties and create estimates based on the lot size.

V4i coverage areas include hundreds of counties in California, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Washington D.C./Virginia.

Includes Email Addresses and Cell Phone Numbers

Create email marketing lists and telemarketing lists that comply with Federal Do Not Call laws.

About Haines & Company

Thousands of businesses, government entities, and nonprofits nationwide depend on Haines products for researching, prospecting, fundraising, and marketing.



Criss+Cross Directory

The indispensable research, business and marketing tool



Data and Lists

Accurate, up-to-date residential or business mailing lists



V4i Property Database

Direct marketing right from your desktop or laptop



Target Neighbors

Target homes around a jobsite with personalized postcards

call today

800-843-8452



Haines & Company, Inc.

www.haines.com

About Haines Local Search

Over 4,000 small business clients turn to Haines Local Search for their local marketing needs.



Get Online

We'll build you a website that persuades visitors to contact you



Get Local

We'll optimize your presence on hundreds of local online directories



Get Found

We'll help you get found on Google and the other search engines



Get Customers

Need more phone calls, website visits and walk-in customers?

call today

800-255-5509

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