

Rules of Thumb for Non Profit Direct Mail

The best months to mail:

1. October
2. September
3. November/December
4. January/August
5. February/March/April/May
6. June/July

Success determinants of your direct mail package:

List	40%
Offer	20%
Timing	20%
Package	10%
Copy	10%

Generic Direct Mail Donor Profile:

- Age 55+
- Most likely female
- Subscribes to magazines
- Purchases items through the mail (catalogs)
- Gives to multiple organizations through the mail

Important points to remember.

- Run your entire list through NCOA (National Change of Address) update service each year. Keep your data clean.
- You have 3 seconds to get the recipients attention and get the envelope opened.
- The donor will make a decision whether or not to donate in 10 seconds.
- Copy must convince the reader to “act”. Keep sentences short and use a conversational tone. Be as emotional as possible. Start with a human interest story.
- Always segment the donor list (<\$50, \$50+) and base the ask on their last gift amount.
- Always include the donor record number on the reply form to make record keeping easier.
- Odd numbers are more believable (i.e., it costs \$1.17 to feed a family, not \$1.50).
- Tie offers with tangibles (\$50 will buy enough bags of food to feed xx families).
- Donors typically give to 3 to 5 charities. They typically give the same amount to each charity.
- Keep a sample file of pieces from other organizations.
- Adults get 50-60% of information they possess about a charity through direct mail.

