

2024 direct marketing budget checklist

As mentioned in our recent Insider Intelligence / eMarketer Webinar on cost optimization, this handy checklist can help you master your DM budget in 2024.



1. Reduce postal costs by bypassing specific mail processing locations

Partnering with vendors that have significant scale allows marketers to benefit from logistics operations that can reduce processing steps, delivering greater postal savings — and speed.

2. Select direct mail formats and designs that are optimized for postal savings

New direct mail formats can offer postal savings based on size, weight and the availability of streamlined distribution. And specific designs, offers and promotions can benefit from rate reductions, based on the USPS promotions calendar.

3. Know your pre- & post-production commingling options

Commingling saves money by bypassing the mail-sorting step. Ask your DM printing vendor about commingling your data files ahead of production for a direct — and less expensive — print-to-carrier solution.

4. Maximize rates through list optimization

Go beyond basic list hygiene and adopt advanced optimization techniques. Are you strategically removing and adding names of customers and prospects? Are you using advanced matching techniques for your merge/purge process? Are you using other data sources for change of address beyond NCOA?

5. Streamline production into one production stream

Digital inline printers with advanced personalization capabilities can take dozens of different DM programs (with various formats, designs and messaging, depending on audience segments) and integrate them into one print stream while maintaining program diversity and cutting costs.

6. Use modern pre-launch testing techniques

By testing creative virtually, or by using AI, in-market testing can be avoided or significantly reduced, bringing tremendous savings to your bottom line. Waiting months for in-market testing costs time and money. Virtual testing has been proven to boost response rates and beat controls.

7. Measure more, save more

Determine incremental return on ad spend by strategically holding out part of your program (up to 10%). Holdouts can provide major savings while baselining what your program is truly worth.

8. Reduce expenses by reducing handoffs

Every program, every touchpoint, every step (creative, production, delivery) can require handoffs from separate teams and providers. Every handoff is an incremental “tax” paid by the brand. Integrate — and save time and money — by choosing vendors that can execute on more marketing steps and deliver on more touchpoints while improving brand consistency.

9. Use your data to find incremental savings

Try modeling your audiences to predict the optimal contact strategy. You may be able to reduce the frequency of your touches, saving money across the board, while more precise targeting can reduce your customer acquisition costs. Finding optimal distribution profiles can maximize reach across channels, formats and delivery vehicles.

10. Track mail the same way that you track digital

Mail tracking and list intelligence are more automated than ever. With greater visibility into mail performance and list management, marketers can save by eliminating waste and improving delivery times, while improving multichannel coordination and call center management.

About Quad

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