

irect Mail

When direct mail is at its worst, it consists of a cold mailing to a list of names and addresses with the hope of hitting a 1 to 2 percent response. The response is low because the message doesn't go to people with a need for the product or arrive at the time they need it. Hence the term "junk mail."

When direct mail is refined, the company segments the list, finds the best prospects, and limits the mailing to them. In this way, the company saves money with a smaller mailing and achieves a higher response rate.

Most mailings focus on achieving a single sale. They lack anything related to building a customer relationship and an emotional bond.

The best case is where the company's offers satisfy the customers and where the company mails neither too frequently nor too infrequently and becomes a respected supplier of a certain set of satisfying products and services.

What I can't understand is why I receive the same catalogs over and over even though I never buy anything. Don't they notice this? Why don't they send an e-mail asking whether I want to continue receiving their catalog? This is the essence of permission marketing, and it would save these catalog companies a lot of money.