

STARTING A PROFITABLE "BIG MAIL" SERVICE

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When you've been running a mail order business for a while, if you're doing it right, you should have a bunch of your own offers, plus other dealer's offers and co-published ad sheets to send out. What's the best way to get these to your customers? In a "big mail."

What's a "big mail"? Just like it sounds, it's an envelope stuffed with offers, ad sheets, freebie reports, etc. It's big, hence the name. You will get better results from your mailings if you mail this way. Also, your expenses will be lower.

Here's an analogy: Sending out one flyer in an envelope is like shooting with a rifle. You have one chance to hit that customer with something he or she will want.

Sending a big mail is like shooting with a shotgun. You shoot multiple shots at once. If your customer doesn't like the first offer, they'll go on to the next one.

Think about it, if you get a thick envelope in the mail, full of different things to look through, isn't it more interesting than that thin envelope with one measly offer in it? You bet!

Assembling offers for a big mail should be easy for you by now. You should be co-publishing ad sheets, you should have commission circulars, plus offers you've developed on your own (remember, that's where the real money is). The question is, what is the most cost-effective way to get your offers to your customers?

Here's a way to get customers who want your offers, and, at the same time, send out your big mail FREE!

Advertise your big mail in ad sheets and mail order publications. Especially note the size or weight of your big mail. If you're sending them in a big envelope, say something like "Huge 8 1/2 x 11 Big Mail!". Or, how about "Incredible Half-Pound Big Mail!". I guarantee, this will draw orders!

Then, include either of these in your ad: "Send \$1.00 to: (Your name and address)" or "Send three first-class stamps to: (Your name and address)". I would recommend the postage method.

This way, you can use the all-powerful "FREE" in your ad. You will get more orders this way. Just find out how much it will cost in postage to send your big mail out, and put that in your ad. Remember, asking for postage will work better than asking for payment.

So, here's a sample ad for your big mail:

"Huge FREE half-pound big mail packed full of ad sheets, special offers

and more! Send three first class stamps to: (your name and address)."

This can be used as a classified ad or as a typeset one-inch display ad.

Note: A half-pound big mail would probably take five first class stamps. I put three, because that seems to be the boundary for a lot of people. Some people wouldn't send more than three stamps for an offer, so splitting the difference will get more orders and still save a lot of expense for you. But, try both ways, you may get different results. If you are going to ask for full postage, be sure to use really exciting words in your ad, to convince people to send for it.

When you look through ad sheets, you will also see lists of people who have paid to be listed as wanting big mails. If you want to pump up your circulation, these would probably be OK to mail to.

However, you should keep in mind that you will be paying the full postage to send to them. This makes getting an order from them more crucial, because of the higher costs.

Also, these lists seem to produce less orders than people who request YOUR big mail specifically. Most of these people are curiosity seekers who just like getting a bunch of mail. So, think about this before you send to a list like that. That's not to say you should avoid them completely, just be careful.

By using a big mail system, you turn your set of offers and ad sheets into an offer itself. People will send you postage so you can send your offers to them. This makes them a receptive audience. Be sure to put your best offers and ad sheets in your big mail, and you will find this to be a great way to expand your business!