

DMA Advice for Protecting the Environment & Your Bottom Line

– Mailing List Management: A Key to Waste Reduction –

This fact sheet provides a list of environmental action steps that you can take today to minimize defective addresses, duplicate addresses, unwanted mail and undeliverable mail. List hygiene and data management offer win-win opportunities for direct marketers to practice environmental stewardship and reduce waste, while improving the deliverability of their mail.

SIMPLE STRATEGIES TO REDUCE WASTED MAIL

- ❑ **Maintain a do-not-rent list** for customers who wish to keep their names private.
- ❑ **Maintain a do-not-mail list** for consumers and former customers who do not wish to receive future solicitations, as well as current customers who prefer electronic communications to receiving direct mail.
- ❑ **Subscribe to DMA's Mail Preference Service (MPS).** MPS is a file of consumers who have notified The DMA of their desire to receive less advertising mail. All DMA members are required to run their lists of prospective customers against MPS, and to remove these individuals from their prospective mailing campaigns. You can utilize MPS as a mailer, or indirectly through your service bureau. The DMA encourages you to:
 - ❑ Add MPS matches on house lists to your company's do-not-rent list.
 - ❑ Specify that companies that rent your list must screen names through MPS and maintain their own do-not-rent and do-not-mail in-house name suppression lists.
 - **Mail Preference Service (MPS) Subscriber Information**
<http://preference.the-dma.org/products/mpssubscription.shtml>
- ❑ **Use the Foreign Mail Preference Service** when mailing to the UK, Belgium or Germany.
 - **Foreign Mail Preference Service (FMPS) Subscriber Information**
<http://preference.the-dma.org/products/fmpssubscription.shtml>
- ❑ **Merge/Purge** thoroughly.
 - ❑ Match outside lists against each other, The DMA's MPS house lists and suppression files.
 - ❑ Use match definitions in merge/purge that minimize duplicates.
 - ❑ Use "deceased" lists to eliminate names of deceased persons from mailings.
- ❑ **Maintain a more detailed suppression file** that enables customers and prospects to opt off of your company's mailing lists on a selective basis, such as by frequency or by category.

- ❑ **Clearly disclose customer options.** Provide periodic opportunities each year for them to decide on these options.
- ❑ **Provide customer incentives** (such as a discount on their next purchase) to notify the company of duplicate mailings and incorrect addresses.
- ❑ **Ensure accuracy of all incoming names.** To maintain clean, deliverable files use:
 - **Zip Code correction** – confirms or corrects a Zip Code against the USPS’s extensive address and city/state files.
 - **Address standardization** - arranges names, titles, company names and street address components according to USPS standards
 - **National Change of Address (NCOA)** – reflects the most recent 48 months of new change-of-address information. NCOA makes it possible to correct addresses before a mailing.
 - **USPS Address Change Service (ACS)** – corrects addresses, after a mailing.
- ❑ **Clean the lists.** Subject outside lists to the same list hygiene standards as a house list.
- ❑ **Target and mail efficiently.** Use segmentation and modeling to select with care the names to be mailed.
- ❑ **Consider personalization techniques** to best target your messages. Take advantage of advances in digital printing and other technologies to help target mailings more efficiently.
- ❑ **Test a sample** of a list before mailing to the entire list. Consider testing different versions of catalogs.

For more information, please visit:

- ❑ www.usps.gov – The USPS Office of Address Management offers online guides for maintaining address databases.
- ❑ <http://preference.the-dma.org/> – DMA Preference Services
- ❑ www.the-dma.org/guidelines/ethicalguidelines.shtml – DMA Guidelines