

# How To Make Your Print Advertising Successful (part 3)

In part one we looked at why advertising should have a clear message. In part two we looked at simple copywriting techniques to help communication. We also looked at using direct response mechanisms to maintain control.

But what more can we do to improve the response of our mailings?

**Targeting the right audience is key to successful marketing.** Part of the targeting process involves collecting, storing and manipulating customer data.

Take for example the use of retail 'loyalty cards'. Nectar, Tesco, Sainsbury's, Boots ... the list goes on and on. All these cards are designed to collect information from you in order to target you with more relevant offers, relevant advertising and incentives.



But do loyalty cards justify their expense?

In recent years Tesco has had an "explosion in growth"<sup>1</sup> largely due to the success of its Tesco Clubcard. Using Clubcard data, Tesco has managed to segment mailings into more than 3,000 distinct groups.<sup>2</sup> Offers are regularly sent out by direct mail to Clubcard members, producing over **150,000 variations** within a single print run. Tesco has pushed the boundaries of direct marketing, moving closer to the idealism of "one-to-one marketing."

But what do you do if you can't afford a sophisticated database system?

Here's a simple idea.

I'm quite a hardened cynic when direct mail drops through my door. In fairness, a lot of what I see is badly targeted and designed. But even I couldn't help be impressed by these two mailings sent to me by the Institute of Direct Marketing. Have a look at these...



Inflating my ego? Sure! What man wouldn't be impressed by their own name tattooed on a ladies back?

In a market research test in the USA, 500 College girls were given a fountain pen and asked to jot something down.<sup>3</sup>

What do you think they wrote? Random words? Poetry? Shopping lists?

The answer... 96% wrote their own name!

The illustrations above use modern digital printing presses, otherwise called Variable Colour Printing.<sup>4</sup> Today, these mailings are not only possible but affordable too. Research in 2005 found that 32% of direct mail in the UK uses Variable Colour Printing, only two years since it became affordable for most mailers.<sup>5</sup>

Anniversaries, renewals, house moving and birthdays are some of the ideal timings to take advantage of Variable Colour Printing.

The supermarket company Sainsbury's is using colour variable printing on some of its customers already. Have a look at this birthday card sent by Sainsbury's to a friend of mine.



It certainly got his attention (and yes, his name was Ronald)! So why not use this technology to your advantage? In a few years time the novelty may have worn off and the response rates won't be so high.

Just a thought.

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1. The Times, October 18, 2004 'Revealed: the secret of Tesco's success'
2. The IDM, 2002, 'Segmentation in Action Course Notes', Mathew Housden
3. The Abraham group, 100 greatest headlines
4. For more information and examples on HP direct print visit [www.primelitho.co.uk/direct-smile.htm](http://www.primelitho.co.uk/direct-smile.htm)
5. Research by the Lloyd James Group among Direct marketers among the top 1,000 UK companies