

Proven Practices in Fundraising

THE FORGOTTEN FACTORS OF ACQUISITION MAIL

Fishing in the Wrong Lakes

Take a look at your donors by ZIP Code

Make it meaningful by calculating a donor penetration percentage (donors / households) in each ZIP Code

Identify which ZIP Codes have been part of your mail plan

Fishing in the Wrong Lakes

Mailed ZIP Codes should reflect those efforts (should be among your heaviest penetrations).

If they're not, drop them.

Non mailed ZIP Codes with decent penetrations will likely produce new donors once you actually start placing mail there.

Fish where the fish are...

Missed opportunities

ZIP Codes with tremendous potential that are not being mailed

Low hanging fruit left hanging low

Untapped market potential: a source of new donors

Wasted money

Unproductive zips that continue to be mailed

Proverbial spaghetti against the wall

Mis-used fundraising dollars

Shooting Oneself in the Foot

Acquisition mail is co\$tly!

You work hard to find good sources of prospects.

So don't suppress some of your very best prospects prior to mailing!

Shooting Oneself in the Foot

Continually suppressing people who were once affiliated with your organization robs them of the opportunity to hear from you -- ever again.

Your prospect pool continues to shrink.

Response rates decline.

Shooting Oneself in the Foot

How to produce a correct suppression file:

If.....

- ...they aren't giving to you now
- ...you're not actively trying to get them to give again
- ...they haven't asked you to please not mail them

then DO NOT SUPPRESS them from your acquisition mail efforts.

Shooting Oneself in the Foot

Case in point:

Large market station was significantly over-suppressing.

When correct suppression started,

- name retention rate in the merge went from 39% to 58%
- the station saved 60% in list rental costs!
- response rates increased 51%!!

Following the Wrong Metrics

A response rate without context can be meaningless.

A list that responds at .75% is a success if the entire campaign achieved a .50%

That same list that responds at a .75% is a failure if the entire campaign achieved a 1%

Context matters. Indexing levels the playing field.

In summary....

Fish where the fish are.

Do not shoot yourself in the foot.

Focus on the right metrics.