

## How to Specify Cost Effective Data

Data is the life blood of any B2B direct marketing activity. It is usually only a small part of your overall campaign cost (10-15%) but it is 100% important – select the wrong data, and the rest of your investment on design, print, postage, email costs and sales follow up is wasted.

With B2B data changing data around 30% per annum (mostly the decision maker) it's essential that your data is as up to date as possible – what does it say about your company if you are communicating with somebody who left three years ago?

Two options are open to you – create your own database which exactly meets your needs or source accurate data from a reputable supplier. The first option is ideal if you have the resource and on-going commitment to maintain the information – few companies have, and it's no good saying our sales reps will maintain it - they never do! The second option is a more cost effective route where the cost of data maintenance is being shared by a number of different companies through list rental.

As in all walks of life, there are suppliers of quality data and those where accuracy leaves something to be desired so here is a check list of questions to ask a prospective list supplier to help you obtain the most accurate data around:

- How was the data originally created? Beware of data from directories and subscription lists as these can be quite old.
- How is the data maintained? Telephone research is best at least on an annual basis and preferably every six months.
- What named contacts are available? Many list owners only supply the senior decision maker eg Managing Director but you may not want to go so high.
- Unnamed data is not ideal – response rates sent to a generic title do not score so well.
- Do you have the ability to drill down with profile information? For example, if you supply water filtration plant for swimming pools, renting a list of leisure centres is not ideal, if only 60% of these offer wet facilities!
- Small is beautiful when it comes to data – a concise well profiled list will generate a much better response for you
- What is the guarantee? Some list owners will only offer a like for like refund (usually in kind) in excess of 2% of goneaways but why should you be paying for inaccurate data in the first place?
- Do they supply sample data?
- What is the minimum order? It should not prohibit testing the data before you consider a larger campaign – roll out on a proven performance basis but not just your initial response but business generated.
- Beware of lists that are available for outright purchase at very low prices – they rarely do what they say they will do on the tin! As in all walks of life you get what you pay for.
- If you already have an up to date database of your own, is the list owner prepared to deduplicate one against the other so you only take unique new records?
- Analyse your existing customer base and find out where you have most success and then source more data of a similar profile.
- Beware of additional charges for profiling that can add up and check whether an annual lease arrangement would provide better value for you.

**FREE OFFER – want to see what new decision makers in the leisure market are available to you – we'll deduplicate your data against ours at no cost.**

**Call 01787 311367 for further details or email [john@leisurelists.co.uk](mailto:john@leisurelists.co.uk)**

## Best Practice Guides from John Turner Leisure Marketing

These six guides to good direct marketing practice are not designed to be the definitive work on the subject. Instead, they aim to provide easy to digest pointers that can dramatically improve your direct marketing skills without having to spend many hours trawling over the latest text book, attending conferences or employing external resource.

John Turner has over thirty years experience of the UK leisure industry, the vast majority of which has concentrated on the direct marketing sector, so do take advantage of this free resource and surprise yourself with the results you can achieve.

### The six topics covered are:

- Specifying Data
- Saving £££' on Postage
- Successful Email Campaigns
- Making Telemarketing Work
- Direct Mail Letters that Work
- How to Maximise Response

