

About the Author
Walt Denny is the president of Walt Denny, Inc., an advertising/public relations firm that focuses primarily on home products clients such as Whirlpool Corp., KitchenAid, Amerock Corp., and L.E. Johnson Products, Inc. Walt Denny, Inc., The Home Products Agency, was established in 1989. For more information visit www.waltdenny.com.



By Walt Denny

Direct Mail Delivers

Dollar for dollar, few advertising methods deliver as effectively as direct mail. With a direct mail campaign, you enjoy targetability, creativity and measurability—all at optimal cost.

Because direct mail uses prequalified lists, your advertising targets only those potential customers you want to reach. In other words, every dollar you spend goes to reach your best prospects—not

CultureWorx' Web-based Human Performance Software and educate them about employee relationship management. The campaign used prequalified lists to target 300 presidents of Fortune 500 companies. The second mailing in the series also was sent to top executives of these firms, spurring them to talk about the mailings among themselves before meeting with their companies' presidents to determine whether to respond.

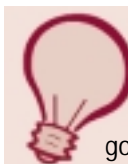
interest the target in opening the package and reading it," says Jana Rhodes, account executive at Hinsdale, Ill., advertising/PR firm, Walt Denny, Inc.

Developing a series of direct mail pieces tied together by a common theme or concept is one way to build on the creativity. As elements of the campaign arrive in waves over a period of days or weeks, repetition drives the company's name to the forefront of recipients' consciousness.

The CultureWorx campaign had to cut through the clutter, recalls Eric Webb, the company's vice-president of marketing. "We felt we needed to stand out," he says. "Fortune 500 companies are being hit with dozens of other companies trying to sell them something. We needed something that really grabbed their attention, got them to remember our name and was clear enough for them to understand who we are and what we do."

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The solution was a series of four "dimensional" mailings, which poked lighthearted fun at the way employees once were managed. One boxed mailing, with a headline discussing the way employees were once kept in line, contained a whip. Another referred to intimidation and held a scary mask. Accompanying literature delivered the message that there's a better way to manage employees. The dimensionality of the pieces commanded attention from recipients, and the size and bright colors of the mailings complemented the concept and creativity of the series.

Finally, perhaps no other advertising approach is more measurable. Mail pieces can include postcards, coupons, toll-free numbers and other response mechanisms that allow the sender to quickly and easily measure the success of any campaign. And they can be followed by sales calls that capitalize on the interest generated by the direct mail and monitor its effectiveness.

The CultureWorx campaign, for instance, included response cards with the first of the four dimensional mailings. Follow-up calls from the sales force proved of additional assistance in determining that the campaign's response rate was an impressive 7.5 percent, a rate dwarfing the one percent average response rate of typical direct mail campaigns.

"I think the direct mail program did its job," Webb concludes. "It has generated awareness of us as a company, and it has opened doors." **WQP**

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Adrienne Miller
380 E. Northwest Hwy., Suite 200
Des Plaines, IL 60016
Fax 847-390-0408.
amiller@sgcmail.com

An advertiser has just three seconds to interest the targeted person and get him to open the mailing.

those unlikely to be interested or with no use for your product or service.

For instance, a recent direct mail campaign developed for CultureWorx, a suburban Chicago employee relationship software firm, sought to inform major corporations about

In addition, direct mail can and should be highly creative. Whether direct mail pieces are flat or three-dimensional ... whether they provide a giveaway or just a message, they must be attention-getting and memorable. "Studies have shown the advertiser has just a three-second window of opportunity to