



[Return to Home Page](#)

Direct Marketing Audit

The following questions deal with elements that impact the successful development, execution and performance of a direct marketing plan, program, or project. While some items may not apply the majority do, and will, have an affect on outcome.

1. Strategic Planning

- 1.1. Is a plan in place?
- 1.2. If so, is the plan part of the comprehensive marketing and advertising plan?
 - 1.2.1. Is the marketing plan part of the overall business plan?
 - 1.2.2. Is DM coordinated with other media, creative, etc.?
- 1.3. Are objectives specific or broad?
 - 1.3.1. If specific, are the goals quantifiable and measurable?
- 1.4. How have market demographics and targets been determined?
 - 1.4.1. If consumer, are all demo & socio-economic variables known?
 - 1.4.2. If B-T-B, has an SIC analysis been conducted?
- 1.5. What is the geographic distribution (Region, State, MSA, County, Zip, etc.)
- 1.6. Are there global implications or only domestic?
 - 1.6.1. If global, where – which continents, countries
 - 1.6.2. What languages
 - 1.6.3. If domestic, are there regional, MSA, DMA, or finer geographic breaks?



- 1.7. How does the plan correspond to, or incorporate, distribution?
- 1.8. Is budgeting “Zero-“ or “Task”-based?
- 1.9. How current is the competitive analysis?
 - 1.9.1. What is the geographic implication of competition?
- 1.10. Is there a system for monitoring governmental, economic, environmental and industry trends?
- 1.11. Has primary and secondary research been conducted against targets, users, channel, competitors, etc.?
- 1.12. Is DM a stand-alone function or integrated with adv/mkgt dept.?
- 1.13. Is DM planning reactionary or proactive?
- 1.14. Is there a customer/member database in place?
- 1.15. What platform and software is used to maintain the database?
- 1.16. Is the database dynamic?
 - 1.16.1. What is the update schedule?
- 1.17. Does it maintain transactional, demographic, comment data?
- 1.18. Is it accessible to marketing on a daily basis?
- 1.19. Is the DM effort supported by database or incorporate database marketing?
- 1.20. Is there a relationship component to the DM plan?
- 1.21. What percentage of the DM effort is retention, acquisition, channel development, user/consumer?



- 1.22. Has a segmentation or cluster analysis of the database been conducted?
 - 1.22.1. How long ago?
 - 1.22.2. Using what methodology?
 - 1.22.3. How comprehensive is the analysis from a geographic standpoint?
- 1.23. Has a value been placed on the database (inclusive of fixed costs, capital investment, personnel, maintenance, etc.)?
- 1.24. Has a RODBI (Return-On-DataBase- Investment) been calculated?
- 1.25. Has an ROI target been determined? Over what time period?
- 1.26. Has the LTV (Life Time Value) of the member/customer been determined?
- 1.27. Are mass media costs and cost of collateral (inc. POS, PSA, signage, etc.) included in the acquisition cost figure?
- 1.28. Has a 5-year trend analysis been conducted against all variables?

2. Execution

- 2.1. Is DM creative synergistic with overall creative?
- 2.2. What is the purpose of the DM creative: awareness, response, retention, communication, etc.
- 2.3. Are execution components done in-house or through suppliers, or a combination of both? By what percent?
- 2.4. Is a testing program in place?



- 2.5. Is the creative copy tested, focus grouped?
- 2.6. Have the print elements been subject to multiple bids?
- 2.7. Have all efficiencies been explored BEFORE execution has begun (postal, material, manufacturing, etc.)?
- 2.8. Is the list acquired or database?
- 2.9. If acquired, is a sample required before the mailing can occur?
 - 2.9.1. When the list last used? By whom?
 - 2.9.2. How was the list compiled? Over what timeframe?
 - 2.9.3. What is the update schedule?
 - 2.9.4. What selects are available? What are the up-charges?
 - 2.9.5. Is there a “net name” option?
- 2.10. If database, when was it last NCOA'd or CASS certified, de-duped and address standardized?
- 2.11. Are all the fields in the list separated for ease of use? Is the list genderized?
- 2.12. How many times will the existing list be used and for what purpose (acquisition, retention, appeal)?
- 2.13. Are any components to be personalized or versioned?
 - 2.13.1. Printed or lasered?
 - 2.13.2. Are versions linked to database fields (transactions, segmentation)?
- 2.14. Will postage be indicia, meter, live stamp? Have postage discounts been maximized?



- 2.15. Is there a premium offer?
 - 2.15.1. If so, have premiums been ordered and are held in inventory?
 - 2.15.2. Have premiums been tested?
 - 2.15.3. Has an ROI been calculated?
 - 2.15.4. Has a system for fulfillment been put in place?
 - 2.15.5. What is anticipated turn-around time? Has it been tested?
- 2.16. How many ways may a respondent reply?
 - 2.16.1. Mail?
 - 2.16.2. Internet?
 - 2.16.3. "800" number?
 - 2.16.4. Fax?
 - 2.16.5. Other?
 - 2.16.6. All of the above
- 2.17. Have response mechanisms been fully tested?
- 2.18. Are program elements intended to be one- or two-step?
- 2.19. Is there a telemarketing component?
 - 2.19.1. In-house or contracted?
 - 2.19.2. In-bound or out-bound?
 - 2.19.3. Have scripts been written & tested?
 - 2.19.4. Have the telemarketers been trained?
 - 2.19.4.1. Are there incentives?



- 2.19.5. Is a monitoring system in place?
- 2.19.6. What is type of reporting has been planned?
- 2.19.7. Has cost been calculated on a “per call” or “per conversion” basis?
- 2.19.8. Is a fulfillment mechanism in place?
 - 2.19.8.1. Is there a timeframe for fulfillment?
- 2.19.9. Working hours only or 24-hours a day, 7 days a week?
- 2.20. Is the direct response program supported by other media?
 - 2.20.1. On what time frame or cycle?
 - 2.20.2. Has a comprehensive GRP or TRP calculation been made, including total cost per point?

3. Performance

- 3.1. Have all materials been produced and delivered on time and in budget?
- 3.2. If inconsistencies exist, has cause been identified and corrected?
- 3.3. Are all package or program components of consistent quality?
- 3.4. Have all cost and production efficiencies been identified?
- 3.5. Has a budget and timeline reconciliation been conducted?
- 3.6. Were program objectives met?
 - 3.6.1. By how much?
 - 3.6.2. In relation to a control?
 - 3.6.3. By segment?



- 3.7. Has a plan been developed for modifying or fine-tuning the program based on results?
- 3.8. Has a comprehensive response analysis been conducted beyond package performance?
- 3.9. If the DM is a component of a comprehensive media effort, has a media-by-media performance analysis been conducted?
 - 3.9.1. Including creative?
 - 3.9.2. Target performance v. target reach?
 - 3.9.3. Geographic performance v. geographic reach?
- 3.10. Has a competitive marketing analysis been conducted for the program period and overlain?
- 3.11. Has a general market analysis been conducted to overlay with the program period to help explain program performance? (i.e., political, economic, societal conditions or factors).
- 3.12. Has a post-performance segmentation analysis been conducted to determine whether targeted segments performed as expected or whether new segments have been identified?
- 3.13. Has all documentation been complete (3602's) and verified?
- 3.14. Are reports provided and, if so, are they thorough and complete?

[Return to Home Page](#)