



**Jon**

**Montgomery**



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**Congratulations Jon!**

**Want to stand out from the crowd? Do something different? Send mail! To many, this might sound like a strange suggestion. After all, isn't the average household inundated with mail? Isn't all this unwanted mail why services like Catalog Choice (which allows consumers to opt out of unwanted catalogs) are so popular? Isn't it why, after more than a decade, the *Seinfeld* episode in which Kramer tries in vain to stop the mail, still strikes us as so relevant and funny?**

The truth is, according to the United States Postal Service, total mail volume to homes in the U.S. is down. Since 2001, it has slowed considerably.

## Smart Marketing in a Recovering Economy

**It's tempting to slash your print marketing budget as you scramble to make immediate, hard-dollar expense reductions in today's uncertain economy, but now is the time to do exactly the opposite.**

The more visible your company is, the more confident your customers and prospects are that you will be around in good times and bad. When you stop inviting them to do business with you, you open the door for

## Swim Upstream!

The explosion of mail growth in the early to mid-1990s is due to construction of massive, computerized databases and techniques for sorting large amounts of data. This, combined with low postal rates, created a fertile climate for direct mail marketing. At the same time, computerized financial systems facilitated and encouraged billing by mail.

Since that time, the mailing environment has changed. Postal rates have risen, e-mail has replaced "snail" mail for everyday communications, consumers have become more comfortable with electronic bill paying and the popularity of online sources of news and information has exploded. It's no wonder *continued on reverse*

your best customers to become your competitor's best prospects.

Even astute marketers who appreciate print marketing's role as a revenue-producing venture might face the reality of budget cuts during an economic slowdown. Delivering a value-driven message to high margin customers is a surefire way to reap returns from your marketing investment.

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## Coming Events

March 29 - April 3  
**ROYAL MANITOBA  
 WINTER FAIR**  
 Keystone Centre

April 9-11  
**BRANDON HOME &  
 LEISURE SHOW**  
 Keystone Centre

April 16-18  
**HORSE<sup>3</sup>**  
 Keystone Centre

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## Be Different — Send Mail

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we've seen a general increase in electronic diversion of the mail.

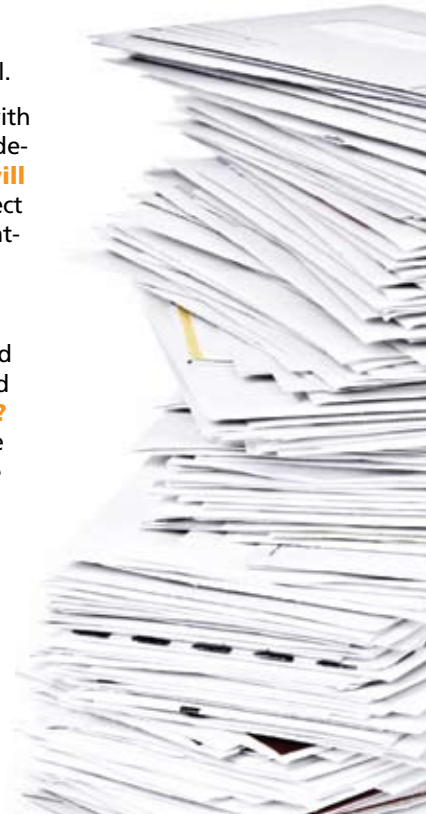
Does this mean it's time to slow your print budget in line with the trend? On the contrary, as the volume of household mail declines, **now is the time your printed communication will stand out the most.** Take advantage of it! Give that next direct mail piece some extra punch. Over-size it. Increase the brightness of the color. Personalize it.

### Blow Out the Competition

Beefing up your direct mail efforts at a time when household mail is declining seems counter-intuitive, but it follows the old marketing adage, **"When is the best time to advertise? When the economy is down!"** When your competitors are not advertising, your message becomes more effective because it has little competition. The same goes for print. As the print volume declines, well-designed print pieces command even more attention.

ROI studies on 1:1 print marketing have shown repeatedly that **smart, well-executed personalization can dramatically boost your response rates.** Done right, it can also decrease your cost per lead, increase the dollars spent per sale and otherwise increase your ROI.

Now, as the volume of unnecessary mail declines, your personalized direct mail dollar goes farther than ever before.




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## Smart Marketing in a Recovering Economy

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■ **Target your marketing campaign based on current customer data.** Clients who have purchased from you recently know who you are. They just need a simple reminder, such as a postcard or sell sheet, to give them a reason to buy from you again.

■ **Get inside your customers' minds.** Marketing must be meaningful and relevant to your target audience. You can only satisfy buyer motivations if you understand what your prospects love and hate—their hearts' true desires and what keeps them awake at night.

■ **Craft your message from a position of strength.** During rough economic times, people don't stop buying; they just become more selective. Establish yourself as a strategic business partner, who offers the most relevant products at the greatest value, based on quality and performance.

■ **Exploit the weaknesses of the competition.** Your best marketing campaign is

worthless if the competitor down the street is closing the sale. Design print materials to persuade prospects to not only buy the product or service you're offering, but to buy it from you. Determine what your competitors are doing—or not doing—that you can use to position your company, product or offer more favorably.

■ **Give prospects a reason to buy today.** No matter how magical your marketing message is, fewer people will likely respond in a recessionary period. Spur prospects to action with a limited time offer, such as a discount or complimentary service.

Companies that market superior products and value prevail in times of both prosperity and recession, while those with inferior products and exaggerated marketing claims fail. Whether it's branding, prospecting or customer retention, make smart decisions today, and enjoy a vastly stronger market presence when the economy bounces back.