



## Mail Enters a New Era

Far from killing off direct mail, technology is making it stronger

Look at recent developments, and it becomes clear we're witnessing a new age of direct mail. Long an effective marketing device, mail is now being linked with new technologies in astounding ways that improve its effectiveness and bring a new engagement. Such advancements ensure it will last several more generations, and will likely launch mail into a new era of viability.

It wasn't supposed to be this way. The explosion of digital technology was supposed to be the death knell for direct mail. The medium was expected to take what direct had done, and do it better, faster and cheaper.

Consider the irony then that far from killing it off, digital is helping usher in this new era of direct mail.

Of course direct mail and digital have always been buddies. Mail was the primary way most of us learned about the Internet. (Remember those ubiquitous disks from a major online company?)

Catalogers have always known that mail can drive additional sales and online visits, and many digital entrepreneurs have turned to the mailbox to drive people to the inbox.

The difference today is that marketers are now finding methods for combining digital technology with mail to increase the power of the message. Mail is no longer the carrier, the device you use to drive someone online. It's the beginning of a conversation that carries on once the customer logs on.

Using QR codes, personalized URLs and digital tracking techniques, such as Intelligent Mail, marketers are adding impact to a medium already known for its ability to engage an audience.

For example, Go Green Items recently used a QR code on its mailer to provide potential customers with a discount. Other marketers are combining QR codes and mail to provide augmented reality experiences that help get their message across.

Clearly, the efficiencies of mail — its laser-like ability to target customers, paired with a way to expand that message, through augmented reality or a personalized URL — is making marketers rethink their opinion of what many regarded as an "old" advertising vehicle.

It's about the convergence of traditional and digital, yes, but that's just the start. What we're witnessing is a revolution that will launch mail into the next generation and beyond.

It's another lesson in the amazing adaptability of mail. Marketers would be smart to take full advantage of this flexibility. And smart marketers do.

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## NEW LOCATION, NEW NAME

PCI | CREATIVE GROUP LLC

We have relocated our offices just a half mile away to 652 Glenbrook Road, Suite 4-103. In addition, we are changing our name to PCI Creative Group, LLC. While we are still retaining PCI Group, Inc., we believe our new name better reflects our broader range of services. Since 1985 we have been responsive to your needs and have expanded to include whatever products or services those needs might be. We continue to offer the same customer service, project management, responsiveness and attention to detail as in the past. We are now offering more comprehensive marketing services in response to the every changing ways in which businesses need to communicate. We will be sharing more with you on this in the weeks to come.

*New Location, New Name...*

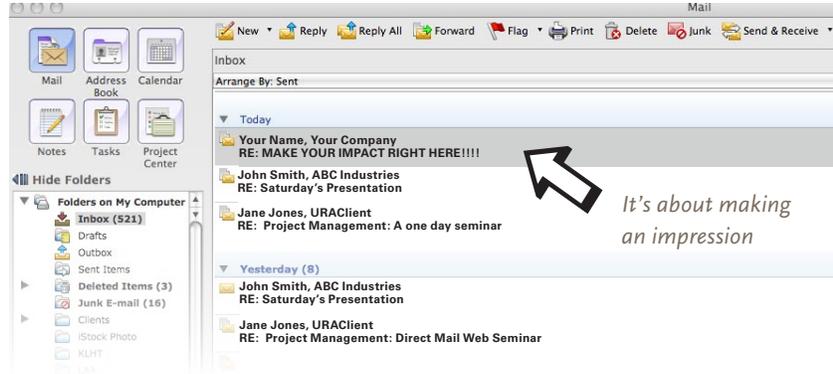
# Five Ways Not To Squander The Subject Line

by Andrew Robinson, *email Insider*, [www.mediapost.com](http://www.mediapost.com)

As noted in recent *email Insider* posts, e-mails are most likely to get opened not only when they are personalized, but also relevant to the recipient. This is especially true for the subject line. A mere 50 characters (the length of a typical subject line) are all you have to grab the attention of readers, enticing them not only to open your e-mail, but to take the desired action rather than report the e-mail as spam. For consideration, we share the top five insights for writing subject lines that are not squandered, but rather ensure campaigns are destined for success.

**Tip 1: Read the newspaper.** Do you want to develop subject lines that result in higher open rates? Pick up your local paper. News headlines provide an excellent example of how to highlight an important point with brevity. A good headline, and, by extension, a good subject line, is short and intriguing enough to compel the reader to read on. Where possible, the subject line should clearly state what readers can expect from your e-mail: what's in it for them or what you want them to do as a result.

**Tip 2: Remember your objective.** Your objective should drive the content of your subject line. Before developing your subject line, think carefully about your objective as it is key to the success of your e-mail. If your objective is for your readers to buy something, your subject line should reflect that call-to-action. Ideally, try testing your subject lines on a small number of targets — or, at the very least, some co-workers outside your department — to see if their actions are on target with your objective. If not, re-work and try again.



## Here's to *better* subject lines, leading to even stronger campaigns

**Tip 3: Remember where you're "from."** A good subject line sells recipients on opening it, but that could be all for naught if they don't know where the e-mail came from. Ideally, the "from" field should be the name of your company; then there's no need to include it in your subject line, freeing up valuable real estate. If you're e-mailing a recipient for the first time, make sure the subject line creates some familiarity and conveys credibility.

**Tip 4: Get to the point — quickly.** As mentioned earlier, you only have 50 characters to develop a subject line that gets noticed. This equates to an approximate two-second window in which a recipient will decide to keep reading and open the e-mail, or press the "delete" button. Therefore it is critically important to include the most information most pertinent to your objective up front, always keeping your end goal in mind. Subject line length may vary based on e-mail provider, so send a test e-mail to yourself in order to make sure that important information, such as time and date, aren't cut off when they reach your inbox.

**Tip 5: Make it personal.** In many cases, subject lines can be personalized based on past purchases or Web site visits. However, if your customer database is up-to-date, you may also want to try personalizing your e-mails with first names, which may be even more persuasive. Be sure to use proper capitalization, such as "Alice" instead of "alice." In addition, always include a link in your e-mail to where readers can update personal data and e-mail preferences to ensure you're communicating with them in the manner they prefer.

Squandering the subject line is one of the easiest ways to subvert an e-mail campaign. Here's to better subject lines, leading to even stronger campaigns.

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