

HANDY NEWS

for friends of Handy Mailing Service / April 2018

WHAT'S
GOING
ON THIS
MONTH



Tax Day April 17th

The regular tax return filing deadline is April 15. However, due to April 15 being on a Sunday and the Washington D.C. Emancipation Day holiday being observed on April 16 instead of April 15, 2018, Tax Day is on the following Tuesday.

Provided by efile.com



2018 GKIC SuperConference April 19th-21st

It's that time of the year again! We would love for you to stop by our booth and say hi to us at the biggest conference of the year.

Sometimes The Little Things Mean A Lot - Part 1 of 2

By Craig Simpson, Direct Mail Consultant and Coach, Simpson Direct Inc.

Turn your small base hits into home runs!

There is no end to the improvements we can make to our sales materials. Even when we have a piece that works great, there are always further refinements we can make that will bump up the response rate.

With my own clients, I'm always testing changes to sales pieces. You have to because with time even the best piece will begin to lose its effectiveness. Language begins to sound dated; cultural references get old; your prospects' interests change; the makeup of your target population evolves. With a target that's always moving, you have to keep adjusting your aim.

But one thing you have to be prepared for is that not every change brings a huge increase in response – and that's not a bad thing. Some marketers make the mistake of thinking that only a major increase in response is worthwhile. They want to get a home run every time or they don't see the value in even bothering to make any changes. But in my experience, a lot of little base hits can be very effective, and may often be the best you can expect.

For example, we know that an increase in response of ½ a percent can be considered quite respectable. If your normal response rate is 2 percent, getting a ½ a percent jump is a 25% increase overall. In terms of numbers, that means out of a 10,000 piece mailing, you'd get an additional 50 orders.

That would be great. We would all love to see results like that! But that's not always what you get. It's not unusual to make one change (like adding a second color to a piece) that leads to a bump of only .10% - which would be one additional order from 1,000 pieces mailed or 10 more orders from a 10,000 piece mailing. Okay, that doesn't sound like much, but . . .

The Little Things Add Up!

I know an increase of a tenth of a percent sounds pretty small, but you should not be discouraged by this kind of outcome. In fact, you should consider it a great finding. Now you just have to find some more variables that do the same thing for you.

Let's say that in your continuous testing you carefully test a large number of variables and you find five different changes, each of which yields a .1% increase. These might include adding the second color, including a bonus for ordering within 10 days, changing the headline a bit, adding a picture of the product, and adding a couple of testimonials.

You put all the changes together in one piece, and guess what? They have a cumulative effect. Five times .1% gives you a total increase of .5% - which was the home run you were looking for. But it was all because of those little base hits.

To have a great cumulative result like this you have to have a plan for uncovering all those powerful little pieces, and that's where testing comes in.

Continued next month...



HANDY MAILING
— SERVICE —



3 Types of Evidence Your Pieces Mailed

By: Julie Stull

When you send a mailing out, there are a few ways to prove your mailing made it to the post office and mailed as promised. Here are three ways we do this.

1. Postal Verification Form

For whatever postage class you're mailing, you'll have available from us a Postal Verification Form. An official document from the USPS that details a number of things about your mailing. It provides information about the number of pieces mailed, the mailer ID, postage class of mailing, postage cost, and much more. We receive this from the Post Office and are happy to send it to you at no extra cost.

2. Seeding Your List

We also ask that before you send us your mailing list you put "seeds" in it. A seed is a name in your mailing

list known only to you. These aren't necessarily people you want to market to, but just people who'll receive your mailing. You can make up a name or use a real name and have all the addresses go to a location where you can check on the mailing. Again, you don't need to tell us anything about these seeds; these are just for you to know that your pieces mailed. It also assures you that your pieces are produced with high quality and accuracy since you will have received a "live" mailed piece.

3. Your Mailed List

After we run your list through our data processing software we can email you that mailed list if you would like. This is the same list we run your envelopes, your cards, your newsletters – whatever – with. And it matches the exact mailed count listed on the Postal Verification Form.

So, if you have any more questions or would like to know more about direct mail, check out some of our blog posts or give us a call. We'd love to chat.



We are thrilled to announce that we are currently in the process of building a new website. Because we are always looking for ways to improve and become better, we felt this is something that would be very beneficial.

We can't wait to show it off to you guys once it's finished! We think there are going to be some super improvements that will benefit you, most of all!

Don't worry though, while it's being built you will still be able to access and reach everything on our current website.

HMS BLOG

Something that we're excited about here at Handy Mailing Service is the development of our blog on our website. If you aren't aware, twice a week, we post about direct mail related topics.

Many of these blogs address questions that we have heard from you, our customers. These blog post topics range anywhere from data processing to lumpy mailers to EDDM.



The goal of our blog is to simply provide answers to the questions of anybody who is sending out direct mail. We hope that you find it useful and a resource to refer back to.

If you have any blog topic suggestions, we would love to hear them. Just email your question or topic to Ryan@handymailing.com.



The Hour of Power

By: Alex Gorges

Whenever my son, Leo, plays in the sandbox, he has this unique – almost superhuman – ability to stay focused. Whether it's digging holes or driving his John Deere toy tractor over mounds of sand, he's undeterred by distraction. Acorns could fall and smack him on the head, and he'd probably not notice. That's the kind of focus I want in my life.

I love finding new ways to increase my focus and energy, so I can create and do more each day. There's already a mountain of useful information on this topic; I only hope to sprinkle on one more handful of dirt.

It's an idea called "The Hour of Power," and it's really pretty simple. Each morning, set aside one hour to do your most important and creative work. This might include a creating your marketing plan or strategizing for the next quarter. Set aside this time for whatever requires you to use your brain at its best.

1. You're Best in the Morning

But maybe you're not a morning person and instead love the night. If you can do quality work in the night, then, by all means, wait until the world is asleep before beginning your quality work.

That said, however, I invite you to reconsider the morning to do your best work. I also at one time loved burning the midnight oil, but then I realized that I had more cognitive energy in the morning. Not at first, of course. It took several months for my body to adjust to those early hours. But when it finally did adjust, I began to produce more. It's the best choice I ever made. The morning is sacred, a time with fewest distractions. It's before you recall all the other work you need to do.

2. Create and Work from an Outline

Each night before you go to bed, write an outline of what you want to accomplish in the hour. Once outlined, set this piece of paper at your workstation for the following morning. Then, when you're sleeping, your subconscious mind will churn over this outline, offering fresh insights when you awake and start your work. It will untangle intricate problems and solve conundrums that you couldn't when you were awake. Your brain will keep working while you're snoozing away. Whenever you're ready to work you'll have your outline ready.

The outline also offers a track to run on. It keeps the mind locked in, chained to the work you want it to work, unable



to wander to the land of distraction. If we feed our mind with clear objectives, it will hone in and solve problems much faster with less energy.

3. Work from A Clean Slate

Most likely you work from a desk. Is your desk littered with papers, pens, mail, and notes from calls and emails? Clean it, file it, organize it, or trash it. All of it. At the very least, take all of that stuff and place it in another room. Make a commitment to not read the news or check email during this time. And in extreme cases, unplug your internet connection. You should only have your current work on your desk. That's it – no more. Why? Because items on your desk pull your mind from what's important. Your mind will naturally gravitate toward easier work, especially if you're working on cerebral work. This time is sacred; do not desecrate it with low-value work. Remember, the more distractions you eliminate, the more high-quality, creative work you'll produce.

4. Track your Results

It also helps to track your work. Input your results into an Excel or Google spreadsheet after each Hour of Power to track your progress. Create fields like the following:

- Energy Level
- Level of focus
- How often was your mind distracted?

If you keep a log of these or similar items, you'll have a history of the work you perform. Then, you can always return to your work and tweak the little things. I use a Google Sheet to track my morning workflow. And I track all the books I read, when I finish them, and how many pages. It's provided me with motivation to keep going when I'm not feeling the energy.

Try applying these four strategies and see how your work transforms. Are you more productive? More creative? Whatever results you find, write these down and keep track of results.



HANDY MAILING

— SERVICE —

**Striving To Exceed
Your Expectations**

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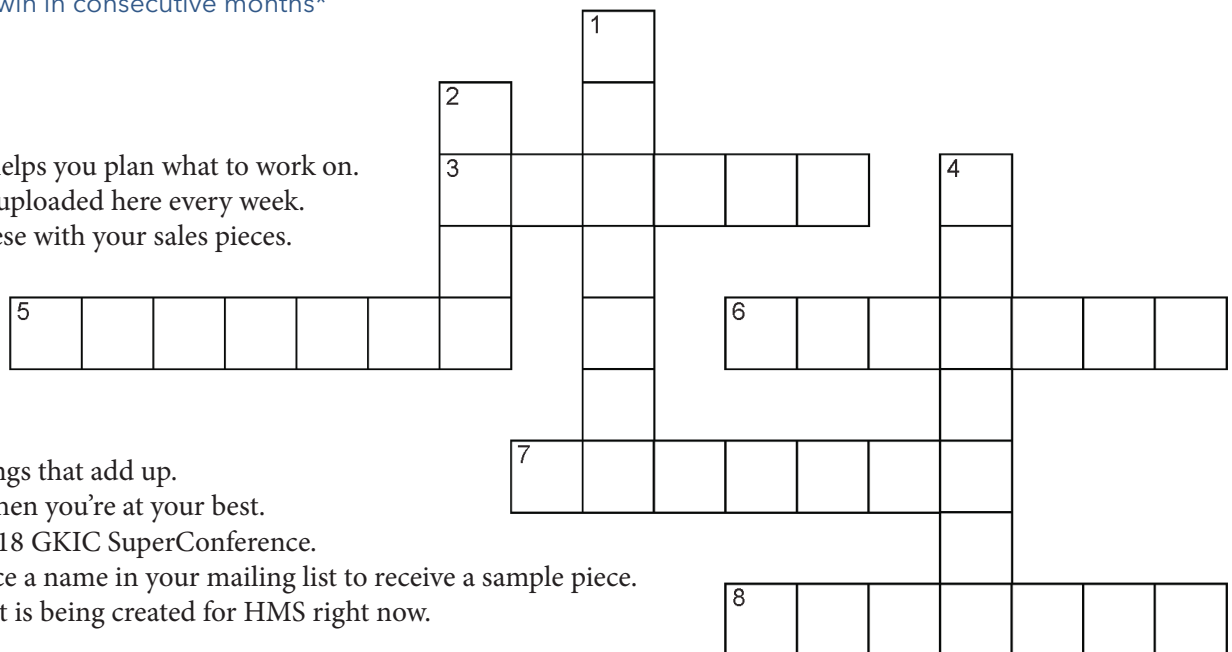
Win a \$25 Starbucks Gift Card!

The first two people to return this crossword completed, via fax at 316-942-2240, or emailed to Thomas at Thomas@handymailing.com, will receive a **\$25 Starbucks Gift Card!**

Winners cannot win in consecutive months

Down:

1. Creating this helps you plan what to work on.
2. Two posts are uploaded here every week.
4. Always test these with your sales pieces.



Across:

3. The size of things that add up.
5. Time of day when you're at your best.
6. Location of 2018 GKIC SuperConference.
7. When you place a name in your mailing list to receive a sample piece.
8. Something that is being created for HMS right now.

HMS CROSSWORD

**Congrats to Alice Collins of
Andover Public Schools for
winning last month's crossword!**