

VARIABLE INFORMATION PRINTING YIELDS DRAMATIC BENEFITS, AGAIN!

How about a cut in set-up and production time by several hundred per cent?

Imagine getting a stuffed elephant in the mail. How about juggling balls? Or a massager? Now imagine it coming from -- of all people -- your banker. That's just what a large bank client of Salt Lake City-based Laser Mail is doing right now -- with phenomenal results.

Laser Mail is a Salt Lake City based mailing house that has been providing full service in mailing production and distribution for twenty years. With six digital print engines they produce an average of twenty-five variable information-printing jobs per day, with a total of about 150,000 pieces per week.

One of Laser Mail's clients, Response Advertising, works with Zions Bank of Utah, a regional bank with 150 locations, to build stronger relationships with their premier prospects. Response Advertising designed a campaign to get bankers in the door to sell to their hottest prospects. So each of 170 bank officers compiled a list of names of business people they would give their eyeteeth to see.

The campaign was a series of three packages mailed over a period of ten weeks with five different options to choose from. The mailing package consisted of a box (slightly smaller than a shoebox) containing a set of juggling balls, a stuffed animal elephant, a roll of silver duct tape, a pair of trouser suspenders, or a wooden back massager. Inside the box went a carefully crafted and personalized sales letter tying the gift to the bank's services and a personalized mail-in reply card (also with a telephone number to call). The package was addressed with a large, personalized label covering the top of the box also tied into the gift to be found inside.

This kind of "dimensional" direct mail approach is one of Response Advertising's specialties, according to Steve Cuno, partner and creative director for Response Advertising.

Response Advertising uses Laser Mail to manage, produce and mail these complex mail campaigns. "The bank wanted to send these highly-personalized packages to their most valued prospects but to keep costs to a minimum," explains Bill Larkin, president at Laser Mail. "Using a traditional Mail Merge application, we would have had to produce 520 to 1,705 separate layouts and proofs for the various letters, reply cards and shipping labels. Each prospect was linked to a specific bank officer so the pieces needed variable letterhead, signatures, phone numbers and branch addresses. As a result, it became very complicated for us from a production standpoint."

"Thanks to PrintShop Mail" continues Larkin, "we were able to execute the entire program with ease and confidence. Now we were able to take the series of packages and completely personalize them for each of the 170 officers using only 15 separate layouts. The conditional page selection of PrintShop Mail greatly reduced our concerns of operator error and

enabled automated checks and balances. The bottom line is that PrintShop Mail allowed us to cut setup time to a small fraction of a traditional Mail Merge and production time several hundred per cent. And co-mingling the various bank officers' letters saved over \$15,000 in postage alone."

The campaign has been a terrific icebreaker according to Steve Cuno. "You don't have to be a slick salesperson to follow up on these mailings. Most calling officers find they only need to say, 'I'm the one who sent you the juggling balls,' and, presto, they have an appointment." Branch managers are getting positive feedback from recipients of the mailings. People are enjoying the refreshing approach -- admittedly a different one for a bank. "I'm impressed that Zions Bank has the vision to launch a campaign of this nature. Many people in the financial services industry are so hung up on looking "professional" (translation: "stuffy") that they forget that being human and personable is a good thing. Even in business." reports Cuno.

"Personalized printing is Laser Mail's primary business opportunity," concludes Larkin. "Fast and efficient production is vital to us. Thanks to PrintShop Mail, we can now continue to grow our business, without worries about the production of complicated jobs".

Variable information printing is fast turning out to be the main advantage of digital printing. Why? Because you are able to deliver a much more personal and targeted message. Personalized printing is a powerful way of improving your communication to customers. Most of all, it shows that you pay special attention to each individual customer. That is true personal communication. Do you know a better way to communicate through printing?

** This campaign received the Outstanding Solutions Showcase Award for 2001 from the Imaging Network Group at its annual conference in May, 2001 in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. The members of the ING association voted the Zions Bank "Dream Prospects Mailing" as the best business application of electronic services for this year's award. Ing is a world wide organization representing many of the most innovative people in the electronic printing industry.

