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## Multiplicity: The Secret to Great Marketing Campaigns

By Tim Klabunde, CPSM

By the time my colleague Mark\* sent me an e-mail, he was already beyond frustrated after another failed marketing campaign. In the past several months, he had developed an ineffective postcard mailing, wasted time with a series of cold calls to potential clients, and spent hundreds of dollars on a website optimization that did not bring in a single project. Everything that Mark had done had been part of successful marketing campaigns at other companies, so why weren't his as effective? As we spoke, it became clear that he was failing to leverage the rule of multiplicity.

### Hit Rates and Multiplicity

To understand multiplicity, you must first understand hit rates. Everything you do in marketing has a hit rate; that is, the number of desired responses you receive from your efforts. For example, postcard mailings result in three to six return phone calls for every 1,000 cards mailed, or a 0.3 percent to 0.6 percent hit rate. Likewise, true cold calls result in two to five future direct communications for every 100 phone calls, or a two to five percent hit rate. While these hit rates can be used as the basis for marketing campaigns, there is a simple

way to rapidly increase these rates and build a strong return on investment (ROI) for your marketing dollars.

### The Rule of Multiplicity

Multiplicity is the concept of combining related marketing activities together to multiply your hit rates and ultimately the effectiveness of your marketing program through the saturation of your target market. The key to building a successful marketing campaign is to combine several approaches together within a concentrated group of people.

### How Multiplicity Works

When you combine a series of events, you effectively multiply the hit rates together ( $2 \times 3 \times 4 = 24$  percent hit rate), instead of simply sending out independent campaigns that result in adding your effectiveness together ( $2 + 3 + 4 = 9$  percent). In Mark's case, he could have initiated the same postcard mailing to a select group of prospects, followed up with a letter containing a company introduction, emailed a link of helpful information he had posted on his website, and then initiated a warm call to the prospect. By using this combined approach, Mark would be able to greatly

increase the effectiveness of his marketing campaigns.

### Building Your Marketing Campaign

When you start a new marketing campaign, look at your objective, then identify the resources that you have available: the communication channels you can use, the time you have to deliver results, and your budget. With these parameters in mind, develop a marketing campaign that closely associates key marketing activities together with a consistent message. It is important to do this within a concentrated group of people, making changes and refining the process as you go to develop the best approach for your company and objective.

### Overcoming Failure

In Mark's case, it was easier to just send out a postcard campaign and sit back to wait for the calls to roll in. But, realistically, we all know that building our companies is harder than mailing a little piece of paper. Multiplicity is used by the best marketers in the world for one main reason—it works! Utilize the rule of multiplicity the next time you have a marketing objective to attain, and I promise that you will never go back to one-off marketing. ■

*\*Not actual name.*