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## Heard of Smart Phones? How About Smart Mail?

In the old world of marketing, it was all about volume. Mail enough pieces and you're sure to hit at least some of the right people at the right time. There are many terms for this approach — undifferentiated mail, mass mail, and the colorful "spray and pray."

While there is still a place for mass mail, marketers are increasingly blending in a mix of what we might call "smart mail." These are mailings that are more targeted and more relevant to the intended audience.

Smart mail can take a number of forms.

**Segmenting:** Segmented mailings involve taking an existing list and breaking it up into broad demographic or psychographic groups and speaking more directly to their needs. You might speak to women differently from men, singles differently from marrieds, those with children differently from those without. Although there will be variation within each demographic, there will be a number of shared characteristics that will enable you to target the message.

**Targeting:** You don't need to mail to your entire database every time. You can select out target groups based on the goals of the campaign. You might select out your best customers for a special discount, for example, or send a message to inactive customers to get them re-engaged with your company. If you're a home furnishings company, you might take an undifferentiated ZIP code mailing and select out only "new movers" from that area instead.

**Personalizing:** The ultimate in targeting is speaking to the audience of one. You can speak to each individual by name and create the message based on what you know about them. A good example is a travel company offering personalized travel recommendations based on trips an individual or family has taken in the past.

**Trigger-based mailings:** These are mailings that are generated automatically, based on some external event. For example, letters sent by automotive dealers anticipating the expiration of a customer's lease or encouraging customers to come into the service department at the time their car's mileage is expected to hit a certain point.

Targeted, relevant marketing will be the key to success in 2011 and beyond. As you plan your marketing strategy this year, think about marketing smarter, not harder. Talk to us about how targeted, segmented, personalized, and triggered mailings can help you reach your campaign goals.