

PMG's Money-Saving Direct Mail Tips

Save money and time with these expert cost-cutting production tips.



- ✓ **Avoid odd sizes and shapes** in your direct mail package components.
- ✓ Be open to **art or size changes that may maximize impressions** on a press sheet to save paper and time.
- ✓ Choose a **"good enough" paper stock** that's strong enough to withstand the production process. Consider using your printer's "house sheet" which they have on hand.
- ✓ If you're interested in recycled papers, **10% post-consumer waste (PCW) content costs less** than 30% PCW or 100% recycled paper.
- ✓ **Avoid unnecessary finishes** like gloss and UV coating.
- ✓ **Avoid complex folds** that may require offline folding or multiple passes through different machines.
- ✓ **Consider less four-color ink coverage** to reduce ink costs. Determine if bleeds are necessary for the design, as they may also increase costs.
- ✓ Instead of more expensive textured paper stocks, **use art to create the illusion of a texture.**
- ✓ Explore whether using an **ink to tint paper stock instead of colored paper** makes sense for the component (depends on size and/or quantity).
- ✓ **Consider testing out of expensive premium items** if your package has other compelling elements.
- ✓ **Conduct a production audit** to look for ways to save money throughout your annual program. For example, gang printing of certain components like return envelopes.
- ✓ **Take advantage of commingling and drop shipping** your mailings to save big on postage. Your postal logistics provider can get you the best postage rate and delivery method to maximize your savings.
- ✓ **Plan ahead.** Add more lead time into your direct mail strategy, creative and production timelines so you can be more nimble. Sometimes less expensive options require more time.
- ✓ For higher volumes (500M+), **coordinate with suppliers as far in advance as possible** to ensure paper is ready on time for production and that you are on suppliers' schedules.
- ✓ **Provide partners upfront PDFs to review for possible cost-saving** format or printing options and to verify that mailing budgets align with the creative.
- ✓ **Consult with a postal expert on strategies to take advantage of USPS promotions** along with other possible discounts.

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hello@pmgdirect.net | 410.290.0667 | pmgdirect.net

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