



September 20, 2012

Better than Saving Postage Seriously, there are some things that are even better...

ProList, Inc. is an Industry Innovator in data management and direct mail services solutions.

At ProList we never stop thinking about your direct marketing. This is more than a slogan – it's bordering on being a problem. I mean, we are obsessed with this stuff. Our spouses worry about the faraway look in our eyes while we ponder better response rates over dinner – you should be taking advantage of this disorder.

Of course we've got all the technical stuff covered for you. You want to know the maximum allowable [folded self-mailer](#) dimensions after January 5, 2013, the relevant CPI limiting the size of a postage increase year to date, how long it takes to deliver your mail to Mankato, MN, we can tell you. OK, maybe not the delivery time to Mankato, but we can make an educated guess.

But there's a lot more we can do than translate the DMM. We work with some of the most talented direct marketers in the country every day. We attend conferences on current and future trends in direct marketing. We see a lot of mail - a lot of it is truly great, some of it could...ummm...use some help. And we can all benefit from some objective advice.

Today's advice is – **be direct**. A direct mail offer is no time for subtlety – tell your prospects what you want them to do, and tell them how to do it. We are surprised at how many mailings lack a clear call to action. "Call us today." "Go to www.thisoffer.com!" We see some efforts with great information about a product or course, and then no clear path for response. Make your call to action prominent and easy to do.

A growing trend today is the use of alternative response channels. Today many of our clients still get a majority of their responses in a reply envelope. Fund raisers in particular appeal to an older demographic, and so they shy away from web or mobile based response. Older prospects are more likely to send a check in the mail, and those checks are likely to be larger than the online donations of younger folks. That's fine as far as it goes, but don't allow your efforts to become complacent – more and more, older Americans are spending more time online – and the younger ones are getting older! Make sure you have an effective online response strategy **now**. Fortunately, ProList offers world-class resources on developing effective landing pages for both web and mobile users. Test an online landing page on a future effort (the pros at ProList make it easy), and see how it works for you. Associations have started putting renewal forms online for lapsed member efforts. Members can fill in the whole thing online, and it has been very effective. Call us to find out how.

So spend some time with us on your next effort – *we never stop thinking about your direct marketing*, so you might as well find out what we're thinking about. Maybe we can make your marketing more effective.

Your End of 2012 Postal Checklist What Postal Things Should You be Worrying About?

As 2012 recedes into the sunset, or wherever it is that years recede, there are a couple of postal issues you should be tossing and turning about. Or at least be aware of:

- IMb is coming. It's still not official, but the Intelligent Mail barcode requirement is still in place for January. ProList will automatically take care of your outbound IMb, but you need to take action on your reply mail. If your reply mail isn't compliant, the outbound mail that carries it may lose its discount. Getting an IMb for your inbound mail is a more [difficult process than you might imagine](#), so get started today! ProList will help you, but there are some parts you will need to participate in. If you don't have IMb's on your reply mail yet, call your Customer Service or Sales rep today! We'll help you get compliant.
- [New folded self-mailer](#) rules take effect in January. They're not hard, but are weird. If you aren't familiar with them, call us – we have a lot of material that will tell you what you need to know.
- Postage rates will almost certainly go up in January. Currently the limit that is allowed by law is based on the increase in Consumer Price Index (CPI), currently about 2.75%. Any larger increase will require an exigent rate case (just don't get me started) or action of Congress. Both seem unlikely in the short run, so we are predicting an increase of about 3% overall.
- Congress will do something...or not. In case you forgot, USPS is on course to lose about \$14 Billion this year. [Eventually Congress will need](#) to take some kind of action. Some type of can kicking maneuver is expected in the coming months that should have little or no impact on postage or service. 2013, on the other hand, could be very interesting. We urge you to pay attention. Or at least pay attention to us.
- Learn about SnailWorks. OK, this isn't for your postal checklist, but it should be on one of your checklists. Multi-Channel marketing is the future – and the future seems to be here. Check us out at www.MailMeetsPURL.com.

To learn more about ProList on our website visit: <http://www.prolist.com>
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