

## **Case Study: “Old-School” Marketing Gets Results**

By *[Kevin Gault](#)*

Many white paper marketers swear by the latest online marketing methods. They think an eye-catching online ad or a persuasive email captures customers best. A successful marketing firm, however, has learned that an “old-school” method can do the job better.

MarketSense ([www.market-sense.com](http://www.market-sense.com)), a 20-year-old business-to-business marketing agency based in Burr Ridge, Illinois, specializes in generating qualified sales leads for its clients. The full-service firm gets impressive results with precisely targeted direct mail. Yes, good old-fashioned mail.

### **Hit the Target**

Clark Jones, director of business development at MarketSense, explains, “Over the years, we’ve done email ‘blasts’ and online ads offering white papers to prospects within in our own databases as well as those from rented or purchased databases, but the results often fell short of our target. We needed sales leads that were more qualified.”

“We realized that when you run banners and other display ads on the Internet, you typically have very little control over who is clicking on your ads. We’ve found that direct mail—and, more specifically, direct-mail—lists-provide a far greater ability to target our message to the specific audience we’re trying to reach. Direct mail has given us—and our clients—better results.”

Jones says that when a company advertises a white paper giveaway online, in most cases people simply click on a link-like they do hundreds of times a day-and download a PDF of the white paper. The paper may end up on their desk buried under a pile of other documents.

But with a traditional direct-mail piece, Jones notes, the precisely targeted recipient must open the envelope and pull out a letter and reply card. When they do this, they’re more inclined to read the letter and respond to the white paper offer.

### **Connect With Qualified Leads**

For a direct-mail campaign, MarketSense starts by identifying target audiences that the company wants to communicate with via white papers. Then the firm selects appropriate white papers they’ve developed and obtains mailing lists of targeted recipients for the mailing.

“The sales leads we get from our direct-mail campaigns are qualified leads because we segment our lists and send only to people who fit a specific profile,” says Jones. “And when appropriate email lists can be obtained, we are able to achieve great results with integrated campaigns that combine email with traditional direct mail.”

Direct mail gives MarketSense the advantage of being able to target recipients by industry, company size, job title, department purchasing responsibility and other characteristics.

“That’s why we like direct mail,” Jones says. “We have much more control over who we’re promoting our white papers to because we can target the front end to a much greater degree than we can with most online promotions.”

### The Results

MarketSense mails an old-fashioned sales letter in a nice envelope with a postage-paid return address card (see image below).

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“We do approximately one mailing per month and target a 1% - 2% response on average, sometimes achieving much higher and sometimes falling short of that goal (based on list quality and message responsiveness),” said Clark.

It’s important to keep up with the latest online marketing techniques, but don’t overlook the targeted effectiveness of direct mail. Keeping this “old school” marketing tool in your bag of tricks could give your campaigns—and your bottom line—a lift.