



NO POSTAGE  
NECESSARY  
IF MAILED  
IN THE  
UNITED STATES



**BUSINESS REPLIES**

FIRST CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 0 CHICAGO IL

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

**Temporary Services**  
**202 South State Street, Suite 1124**  
**Chicago, IL 60604**





## Strategies

**STOPPING DIRECT MARKETING BEFORE IT STARTS:** The ideal situation for dealing with junk mail, email, faxes, phone calls, and other forms of direct marketing and solicitation would be to stop them before they start. How to effectively do this is outlined in a variety of places, but very comprehensive information can be found at the website of Junkbusters ([www.junkbusters.com](http://www.junkbusters.com)). This site provides scripts to use on Telemarketers which might allow you to sue them for invading your privacy if they answer certain questions in a particular way. A vast array of resources is available here and it would be impossible to reprint so much information in this booklet without running the risk of creating a waste problem ourselves. Still a certain amount of junk mail is inevitable. Also problematic is the use of business reply cards in magazines, which are essentially a form of junk mail that is being hidden inside a publication rather than sent to your mailbox. Nobody that buys magazines does so for the business reply cards. Even if you do need one business reply card, you most certainly don't need five of them from the same magazine. Ten tons of undeliverable mail waste is generated by direct marketing in Chicago every day! This doesn't begin to account for the even larger amount that gets delivered and thrown away. In response to the growing problem of direct marketing solicitation and advertising assaults in general, Temporary Services suggests the following creative strategies:

### Strategies for Using Business Reply Envelopes and Postcards:

**DIRECT ACTION:** Business reply cards can be used to engage in some creative direct action against companies that are notorious abusers of the environment, their employees and their power in your community. If you want to target a specific company, try and get a hold of a business reply card that they send out to solicit new customers. Photocopy the business reply card many times. The company you are targeting probably has deep pockets. Keep this in mind and consider your direct action on an appropriate scale. You may need to make several thousand copies. The copies you make can be affixed to envelopes or packages. The way that your direct action works best is if the mail actually gets to its destination. There are some things to consider here. Make the mail look as official as possible. You might consider making a logo or sticker that you can affix to the mail to let the company you are sending it to know why you did it. To keep this action anonymous, it is probably best to put all of your mail into free standing outdoor mailboxes. Don't

deliver it directly to a post office. Keep the weight of each package or piece of mail under 16 ounces. If you don't, it won't be delivered. Even though you are not doing the direct action for your own monetary gain, THIS APPROACH IS ILLEGAL so do it with this understanding.

If you can find a large quantity of business reply cards printed by the company you have targeted, use them instead. This is what we have done in our own direct action against Starbucks. Starbucks is notorious for going to metropolitan areas and wiping out local business. Independent coffee shops disappear once Starbucks arrives with its deep pockets and ability to offer coffee at prices that undercut competition. Starbucks, until recently, only bought coffee from large plantations. This meant that workers on those plantations were not fairly compensated for their work. Starbucks announced recently that it will start purchasing coffee from fair trade growers. Starbucks is doing this on a small scale and the direct action is intended to show support for going 100 percent fair trade. Workers in every coffee growing country deserve the same standard of living that the people who purchase their coffee from Starbucks do! We made our own "Unofficial" Starbucks reply form and affixed it to the back of hundreds of Business Reply cards that were available at Starbucks locations. These reply cards were provided to solicit comments from customers. Here is our form:

- I agree that Starbucks should buy ALL of its coffee from small farms and independent coffee producers. Fair trade is an important component of my cup of coffee.
  
- I agree that Starbucks should stop using paper cups altogether and require their customers to bring re-usable mugs. I already do this myself.
  
- I don't care about the environment or living standards for people in other countries. I just want a good latte every day.

Please affix one of Starbucks business reply cards to the reverse of this form and put it in the mail. The postage is already paid for. Your response is very important.

In addition to the direct action supporting fair trade, Temporary Services is initiating a paper, coffee cup mail-back using Starbucks' own money to send trash back to them.

**RETURNING LANDFILLS:** 1) Fast food restaurants generate a large percentage of the waste that clogs landfills. You could use business reply cards to return all of the garbage from the landfill to the companies responsible for creating it. 2) Cities like New York ship their waste out of the city to other states. Use business reply cards to send all of the waste back. Find companies responsible for generating a great deal of waste and send it back to them.

**RETURNING LITTER:** Litter that clogs gutters and covers streets and alleys is often directly related to the work of direct marketers. Business reply cards can be used to mail small packages of litter back to those who have contributed to this waste. One simple way to do this is to fill small ziplock bags with waste (remember that for putting things in a mailbox it is important to keep the package under sixteen ounces). Put the business reply card on the inside with the address facing out. Tape it to the inside if necessary to ensure that the address remains clear and readable. The clear plastic bag shouldn't interfere with the computer scanner's ability to read the address, but if you think it will, simply affix the reply card to the outside of the package.

**POSTMAN'S CHOICE:** This fun strategy was inspired by and titled after a mail art piece by the artist Ben Vautier. Vautier made a postcard that was stamped on both sides and addressed to two different people with a message for each one. The postal worker that processed the card was then given the option of choosing which person should receive it. Temporary Services has done something similar with business reply cards. On some of these we ask the postal worker to vote on a question by sending the postcard to the addressee that corresponds to their answer. Two examples of this game:

Example One:

"Mail Person: If both a cat and a baby were drowning, which would you try to save first?"

To vote cat, mail to Cat Fancy.

To vote baby, mail to American Baby."

Business reply subscription postcards are provided for Cat Fancy magazine as well as for American Baby.

## Example Two:

"Mail Person: Who do you think has more sex?

A. Men that drive a Lincoln Navigator.

B. Women that read Condé Nast Sports.

To vote for A. deliver this to Lincoln. To vote for B. deliver this to Condé Nast."

Again postcards for each company are attached back to back to aid the postal worker in following through on their decision. This strategy involves not only the postal worker that may get to make a choice, but the person in the mail room, who will have to assume that an individual has selected their company over another one after making a particular, personal decision. Even if the choice of who the card is sent to is determined by a computer or a machine, it will still be received and read by a person on the other end.

**INTER-CORPORATE GAMING:** Take two business reply cards from different companies. Tape them to each other with their backs together. Write somewhere on the cards that you are initiating a game. You want to see which company receives the double-sided postcard the most. Write instructions that the "players" of this game make small, tally marks indicating the number of times their company has received the card. This game can be repeated indefinitely because the postage never gets canceled. The receiving company is debited the postage amount on the card. You might want to write that this game is a good way to waste the "player's" company's money. This should be a strong selling point. The larger the corporation the stronger the chance they have a large mail room and ground level employees receive the cards first. They are the ones most likely to keep the game alive.

**GIFT FOR THE WORKER IN THE MAIL ROOM:** This will be easier if you have a business reply envelope rather than a postcard. Consider making a mix tape of your favorite music for the person in the mail room. Send candy, a drawing, a story you wrote, or perhaps some jewelry. Send a personal letter telling the person that opens the mail that you hope their day is going nicely despite the fact that their job might be tedious. If the company you are responding to has workers going through the mail, consider that any creative gesture you make will probably be in the vast minority - anything you do other than buying a subscription or ordering a product, will arouse special interest, and may resonate for quite some time. Your gift will probably be shared with

others, and possibly displayed in the work area.

**PERSONAL RE-USE:** Business Reply envelopes can be re-used for personal letters to friends and family. Simply cross out the addressee's information and the business reply permit section, affix a stamp, and save on having to buy an envelope.

**Junk Mail Re-Use Strategies:**

**RECIRCULATING CIRCULARS:** Supermarkets and large chain stores are often the largest and most frequent printers of newsprint circulars. These are among the bulkiest, most wasteful, and most unwanted form of junk mail. The unnecessary burden they put on mail carriers is immense. A good way to recirculate these is to take them back to the one of the sender's stores. When you have a particularly large quantity, bring them to the store that is responsible and deposit them in an appropriate place, such as inside a freezer in the frozen foods section, or on top of a clothing rack in a department store.

**BODY ARMOR:** Prisoners and rioting protesters have been known to create a form of cheap body armor by taping layers of magazines around their mid-sections to protect them from billy club blows and rubber bullets. Prepare for battle or rough play by creating body armor with duct tape and a stack of mail order catalogs and supermarket circulars.

**PAPER MACHÉ:** If you have children or simply enjoy this sculptural medium, use your old junk mail to make paper maché. Soak newsprint or paper in water for a long period of time until it gets soft and mushy. It may help to tear the paper up into finer pieces or to put some of it into a blender. Drain some of the water and add white glue or wheat paste to create this tough, sculpting material. In prison, a variation on this old recipe is to use toilet paper and sugar. Toilet paper pulps very quickly. When it is mixed with sugar, the maché can be used to make extremely durable dominoes and chess pieces.

**Other Waste Return and Re-Use Strategies**

**GARBAGE HOUSING AND FURNITURE:** There are many well-documented examples of durable and often beautifully designed houses and furniture made from garbage. Particularly popular materials for small home construction are unrolled and flattened metal drums, and bottles and cans - often anchored and fitted together with sand and

cement. Common materials for making furniture include rubber tires and compacted cardboard. An excellent resource for these strategies is *Garbage Housing* by Martin Pawley (1975, The Architectural Press Ltd., Great Britain) which shows that the strength of a thoughtfully designed Heineken bottle can be close to that of a brick. Waste from mass production, as books like this show, can potentially solve housing and furnishing problems when products are designed with an eye for their creative re-use.

**PROMOTIONAL SAMPLES:** A common promotional strategy in large American cities, is for companies to send people out onto the street to hand out free product samples. These are usually small samples of food or toiletry items such as little boxes of cereal, shampoo samples, and individually wrapped mints and sticks of gum. When gum and mint samples are being distributed, hundreds of discarded plastic wrappers litter the streets almost immediately. These light pieces of garbage get dropped on the ground, or blown out of trash receptacles by the slightest breeze. Respond to this promotional practice by collecting the waste it generates and attempting to hand out empty wrappers and packaging while standing alongside the company's promotional people. While it is definitely nice to get a free candy bar or box of cereal, people should be reminded that the treat they get for free has a serious environmental consequence.

### Telemarketing Strategies

**TELEMARKETERS:** Telemarketers waste something less tangible than paper, but no less valuable: your time. No one appreciates being called at home by telemarketers. Few methods of solicitation are more disruptive, invasive, or unwelcome. There are many people who have dealt with telemarketers creatively by singing to them, pretending to be the opposite sex, dramatically altering their voice, or asking for the solicitor's home phone number to call them back on their time. The following strategy not only irritates the person that is calling, but also ties up the line making it harder for them to call other people. When called at home by a Telemarketer, politely interrupt their sales pitch and say "I am very interested in what you are offering, but could you please hold on for just one moment while I finish doing something?" The telemarketer will say yes, excited that you are at least interested and not just going to hang up. At this point put the telemarketer on hold and resume whatever it was you were doing when they called (washing dishes, cooking, watching TV, listening to music, sitting on the toilet,



will wait for at least five minutes - sometimes longer. Leave them on hold until they give up. Eventually pick up and repeat this strategy. Ask "Are you still there?" At this point the solicitor will probably sound a bit exasperated, for now *they* have been inconvenienced. Politely ask "Could you hold on just one more moment?" At this point they will still probably say yes, but you will be able to detect a tone of irritation in their voice. Now put them on hold again. Allow them to remain on hold until they finally give up and disconnect. It might be argued that the people that are employed by telemarketers are simply doing their job and are not in a position of power to effect change in their workplace. Still if one is forced to work a low-paying job, it is possible to find a number of other jobs that are far more ethical than one that requires you to disturb people at home. In our increasingly invasive corporate culture, every effort must be made to respect the privacy and personal time of others.

#### TELEMARKETING DIRECT ACTION:

- 1) A man upset by his mother's contribution to Jerry Falwell's televangelist organization rigged his computer to call the organization's 1-800 number repeatedly. This action led to a bill that exceeded \$100,000. The organization sued the man and lost. His use of the 1-800 number was deemed reasonable because the service was provided for free.
- 2) Taken from an article in the Chicago Tribune: You can use your computer to detect when you are being called by another computer (in lieu of a telemarketer who will pick up shortly after you do). Set the computer to emit a high frequency pitch once someone picks up the phone on the other end. The man who suggested this strategy said that the number of telemarketing calls he received went down from 30 a day to 5 a week.



Tubs of business replies waiting to go out. outout.



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[http://www.megsinet.net/~nobudget/temp\\_serv.html](http://www.megsinet.net/~nobudget/temp_serv.html)