

## IMA Member Guide to Marketing and Public Relations

Material adapted from Wikipedia, a free online encyclopedia

The IMA Member guide to marketing and public relations is intended for use by the association members to assist them in their marketing efforts. This material is neither an endorsement or guarantee of information, rather is intended for use by association members as a guideline to media, media relations and public relations. Material was adapted from Wikipedia, a free online encyclopedia and is intended for member use only.

### Press Releases

A **news release**, **press release** or **press statement** is a written or recorded communication directed at members of the [news media](#) for the purpose of announcing something claimed as having news value. Typically, it is mailed, faxed, or e-mailed to assignment editors at newspapers, magazines, radio stations, television stations, and/or television networks. Commercial [newswire](#) services are also used to distribute news releases. Sometimes **news releases** are sent for the purpose of announcing [news conferences](#).

A news release is different from a news article. A news article is a compilation of facts developed by [journalists](#) published in the [news media](#), whereas a news release is designed to be sent to journalists in order to encourage them to develop articles on the subject. A news release is generally biased towards the objectives of the author.

The use of news releases is common in the field of [public relations](#), the aim of which is to attract favorable media attention to the PR firm's client, and [publicity](#), the aim of which is to attract favorable media attention for [products](#) marketed by the client.

### Elements

While there are several types of press releases (such as general news releases, event releases, product press releases, and more recently social media press releases), press releases very often have several traits of their structure in common. This helps journalists separate press releases from other PR communication methods, such as pitch letters or media advisories. Some of these common structural elements include:



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- **Headline** - used to grab the attention of journalists and briefly summarize the news.
- **Dateline** - contains the release date and usually the originating city of the press release.
- **Introduction** - first paragraph in a press release, that generally gives basic answers to the questions of who, what, when, where and why.
- **Body** - further explanation, statistics, background, or other details relevant to the news.
- **Boilerplate** - generally a short "about" section, providing independent background on the issuing company, organization, or individual.
- **Media Contact Information** - name, phone number, email address, mailing address, or other contact information for the PR or other media relations contact person

## Press releases

*Main article: [press release](#) (also called a "news release")*

**Press release format** The typical press release announces that the statement is "FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE" across the top (some may instead be [embargoed](#) until a certain date), and lists the issuing organization's media contacts directly below. The media contacts are the people that the release's issuer wants to make available to the media; for example, a press release about new scientific study will typically list the study's lead scientist as its media contact. The bottom of each release is usually marked with **###** or **- 30-** to signify the end of the text.

**Five "W"s and an "H"** There are 6 vital facts to convey in the first paragraph of a release to ensure that it doesn't end up in the bin.

### Who, What , When, Where, Why, How

A [press release](#) is a written statement distributed to the media. It is a fundamental tool of public relations. Press releases are usually communicated by a [newswire](#) service to various news media and journalists may use them as they see fit. Very often the information in a press release finds its way verbatim, or minimally altered, to print and broadcast reports. If a media outlet reports that "John Doe said in a statement today



that...", the "statement" usually originated in a press release, or a direct quote from an interview with a John Doe.

The text of a release is usually (but not always) written in the style of a news story, with an eye-catching headline and text written standard journalistic [inverted pyramid](#) style. This style of news writing makes it easier for reporters to quickly grasp the message. Journalists are free to use the information verbatim, or alter it as they see fit. PR practitioners research and write releases that encourage as much "lifting" as possible.

Many journalists believe it is unethical to copy from a press release—they believe it is a lapse of good judgement (for instance, a direct quote, as in: *Senator Smith said, "This is the most fiscally irresponsible bill that the Congress has passed since the Buy Everyone A Mercedes Act."* In this case, a journalist may copy the quote verbatim into the story, although ethical reporters prefer to try soliciting an individual quote from the speaker before filing their story). Public relations professionals believe that press releases and other collateral material aid a journalist's job, and it is the job of the journalist to decide whether or not reprinting material verbatim tells the real story.

Since press releases reflect their issuer's preferred interpretation or positive packaging of a story, journalists are often sceptical of their contents. The level of scepticism depends on what the story is and who's telling it. Newsrooms receive so many press releases that, unless it is a story that the media are already paying attention to, a press release alone often isn't enough to catch a journalist's attention.

With the advent of modern [electronic media](#) and new technology, press releases now have equivalents in these media [video news releases](#) and [audio news releases](#). However, many television stations are hesitant to use VNR's that appear canned and are not newsworthy.

### **A new kind of press release—"optimized" for the Internet**

The advent of the Internet has ushered in a new kind of press release known as an *optimized press release*. Unlike conventional press releases of yore, written for journalists' eyes only, in hopes the editor or reporter would find the content compelling enough to turn it into print or electronic news coverage, the optimized press release is posted on an online news portal. Here the writer carefully selects keywords or keyword



phrases relevant to the press release contents. If written skilfully, the press release can rank highly in searches on Google News, Yahoo News or MSN News (or the many other minor news portals) for the chosen keyword phrases.

Readers of optimized press releases constitute far more than journalists. In the days before news search engines, a press release would have landed only in the hands of a news reporter or an editor who would make the decision about whether the content warranted news coverage. Although the news media is always privy to online press releases in the search engines, most readers are end-users. Optimized press releases circumvent the mainstream media which is formerly—but no longer—the gatekeeper of the news.

**Press release format** The typical press release announces that the statement is "FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE" across the top (some may instead be [embargoed](#) until a certain date), and lists the issuing organization's media contacts directly below. The media contacts are the people that the release's issuer wants to make available to the media; for example, a press release about new scientific study will typically list the study's lead scientist as its media contact. The bottom of each release is usually marked with ### or -30- to signify the end of the text.

## Press conferences

*Main article: [press conference](#) (also called a "news conference")*

A press conference consists of someone speaking to the media at a predetermined time and place. Press conferences usually take place in a public or quasi-public place. Press conferences provide an opportunity for speakers to control information and who gets it; depending on the circumstances, speakers may hand-pick the journalists they invite to the conference instead of making themselves available to any journalist who wishes to attend.

It is also assumed that the speaker will answer journalists' questions at a press conference, although they are not obliged to. However, someone who holds several press conferences on a topic (especially a scandal) will be asked questions by the press, regardless of whether they indicate they will entertain them, and the more conferences the person holds, the more aggressive the questioning may become. Therefore, it is in a speaker's



interest to answer journalists' questions at a press conference to avoid appearing as if they have something to hide.

But questions from reporters – especially hostile reporters – detracts from the control a speaker has over the information they give out. For even more control, but less interactivity, a person may choose to issue a press release.

## Marketing strategy

A *marketing strategy* serves as the foundation of a [marketing plan](#). A marketing plan contains a list of specific actions required to successfully implement a specific marketing strategy. An example of marketing strategy is as follows: "Use a low cost product to attract consumers. Once our organization, via our low cost product, has established a relationship with consumers, our organization will sell additional, higher-margin products and services that enhance the consumer's interaction with the low-cost product or service."

A strategy is different from a tactic. While it is possible to write a tactical marketing plan without a sound, well-considered strategy, it is not recommended. Without a sound marketing strategy, a marketing plan has no foundation. **Marketing strategies** serve as the fundamental underpinning of marketing plans designed to reach [marketing](#) objectives. It is important that these objectives have measurable results.

A good marketing strategy should integrate an organization's marketing goals, policies, and action sequences (tactics) into a cohesive whole. The objective of a marketing strategy is to provide a foundation from which a tactical plan is developed. This allows the organization to carry out its mission effectively and efficiently.

Marketing strategies are partially derived from broader [corporate strategies](#), corporate missions, and corporate goals. They should flow from the firm's mission statement. They are also influenced by a range of [microenvironmental factors](#).

Marketing strategies are dynamic and interactive. They are partially planned and partially unplanned. See [strategy dynamics](#).

## Types of marketing strategies



Every marketing strategy is unique, but if we abstract from the individualizing details, each can be reduced into a generic marketing strategy. There are a number of ways of categorizing these generic strategies. A brief description of the most common categorizing schemes is presented below:

Strategies based on [market dominance](#) - In this scheme, firms are classified based on their market share or dominance of an industry. Typically there are four types of market dominance strategies:

**Leader, Challenger, Follower, Nicher**

## Marketing Practice

In practice, as opposed to theory, research has indicated that the outstanding problems facing marketers lie in the use of specific functions. Most senior managements have committed to the philosophy, even though their junior managers may be cynical about the degree of that commitment. Unfortunately, there is little evidence to show that this new-found belief has led to positive action. Indeed, if we look at the marketing activities they do subscribe to, using the 4Ps framework say, there is little evidence that marketing practice (as opposed to the theory) has been widely embraced. In particular, pricing is largely on a cost-plus or competitive basis, promotional budgets are small (and spent more on sales promotion than advertising or PR), 'place' is - in any case - not relevant, and marketing research is almost all second-hand.

## Conviction Marketing

One aspect which is little recognized is '**Conviction marketing**'. Sometimes called '**commitment marketing**', it is, in many respects, alien to most of the concepts of traditional marketing. Yet it is probably more prevalent than the genuine use of pure marketing; and arguably it is not infrequently more successful. It has a long and chequered history. The propaganda machines developed by the Nazis offered some of the most potent, and widely deplored, demonstrations of its power (and this represents one possible reason why discussion of this style of marketing is even now generally avoided). The religious 'marketing machines' had been even more effective in earlier generations (and can even now be very powerful, as is evidenced by the cases of Christian and Islamic fundamentalism). In the commercial sector, though, its use has sometimes been



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just as powerful - and very productive! Indeed, the majority of the few truly global brands have embodied it to some degree; IBM, with its philosophy of 'Customer Service', McDonalds, with Q. S. C. & V, Coca Cola, with its embodiment of the American teenage dream, Marlboro, and the wide open spaces of the frontier!

It is different to 'selling', which is conventionally seen as the main alternative to marketing, in that its focus is very firmly on the consumer; as all marketing is supposed to be - where the focus of 'selling' is internal (the customer is to be persuaded to take what the organization has to offer). On the other hand, conviction marketing's focus is still one-sided. There is little or no attempt to use market-research to find out what the consumers need or want, though research is sometimes used to justify the organization's existing prejudices - and is frequently used, to great effect, to optimize the presentation of its chosen message.

## **Practical Rules for Conviction Marketing**

Currently, there is very little theory available to support conviction marketing; indeed, it is often shunned - as an unfortunate aberration - by marketing academics. However, there are a number of ideas which appear to lead to successful implementation of this 'rogue' form of marketing.

Thus, the power-house of such 'conviction marketing' is the powerful idea (the 'conviction' to which the organization has made its 'commitment'), to which the organization believes the consumers are also committed (despite any evidence to the contrary!) or need (for their own good!). Despite the focus on the consumer, and frequent reference to the importance of that consumer, the real organizational commitment is to the overarching idea (or set of ideas, often a 'lifestyle'). The essence of, and the strength of, such 'conviction marketing' is the power it gives to the marketing organization; to 'evangelize', where religious as well as political parallels, are often more relevant than those of conventional marketing theory.

In turn this power derives - where it is successfully applied - from a number of factors:

**Distinctive** - The concept being marketed must be distinctive. Successful conviction marketing is not the province of the marketer who is dedicated to pallid incrementalism. It has to be readily identifiable; as Coca Cola was - in terms of the very powerful image



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of the bottle, if not necessarily the product contained. Beyond that, however, it has to be based on an identity, a brand personality. The beneficiaries of conviction marketing are typically not products where the technical features are predominant. Coca Cola and Marlboro are a matter of personal taste, but it is the images associated with them, their brand persona, which add the necessary richness to the relatively mundane. Even in the case of IBM it was the marketing and support (rather than the very complex technology) which was its outstanding feature. The richness, the depth, to the identity seems to be necessary (at least in the most successful examples), to give an almost human identity.

**Communicable** - Despite the richness of the concept it has to be instantly communicable, which demands that it be clear; and preferably simple. It has to be conveyed by simple messages, such as the shape of the bottle (or now the graphics on the can) of Coca Cola, or the cowboy and Marlboro. Where the product is complex, and none could be more complex than that of IBM, it has to be enshrined in an associated philosophy, "Customer Service" (personified by the field personnel in the now rather outdated, but very necessary, dark suits and white shirts). It is frequently associated with a distinctive form of quality; McDonalds 'Hamburger University', for example.

**Conviction marketing** is, above all, dependent upon the consumers belief in what its communicators say. Being somewhat unrelated to the basic needs, the 'vision' of the 'product' (of its identity) has to be conveyed to the target audience. They, in turn, have to enter into a 'belief' in the 'product' before they can fully appreciate it. This means that the message being communicated has to be believed; and that in turn means that the communicators themselves need to be believed.

In some cases the 'communicators' can be those of conventional marketing; the Marlboro cowboy in the advertising, or the bright clean image of McDonalds' outlets. But behind them there is often a human face. In IBM it was the sales force, immensely capable and imbued with (many would argue indoctrinated in) the IBM culture; and which of their customers could resist such evangelists. But, above all, it usually requires a strong (and almost obsessively dedicated) human personality at the centre, to make the vision work; the Watsons at IBM and Ray Kroc at McDonalds developed very rich cultures which were aimed more at their own employees (the 'communicators' the public see) rather than at their markets.



## Competitors

There is one element of conviction marketing which is beyond the control of the organization itself, and that is what its competitors choose to do. Almost by definition, a 'conviction marketed' brand will develop a new segment of the market. Its unique identity will, at least for a time, give it a monopoly there. Eventually, though, competitors will recognize the success of the brand; and will want some of the action.

It is a peculiarity of conviction marketing that the almost hypnotic effect of the message also seems to infect competitors. They usually attempt, with only marginal success, to copy the original. Inevitably, the copies turn out to be pale imitations of the original; Burger King could not match the evangelical dedication to standards of McDonalds. Pepsi, for many decades, had to follow Coca Cola. The competitors usually have to wait, therefore, for the leader to make a mistake, or for the market to change; Pepsi was eventually rewarded when the market did change, and Coca Cola made a very public mistake with its change in recipe! Compaq similarly capitalized on both the changes in the PC market and IBM's uncharacteristically unsure handling of its own responses.

## Categories of Conviction Marketing

Although customer needs are at the heart of conventional marketing, they are only an 'enabling' factor in the case of conviction marketing. If the 'vision' is too far removed from the consumer's view of reality, it will not be accepted. Even so, Clive Sinclair's C5 electric/pedal-power car (eventually, derisively, called the 'electric clog') was initially accepted with praise by the media, based on his own charismatic image and obvious commitment to it; and it took nearly three months for commentators to admit that the idea was in reality laughable. The resultant shock to believability, on the other hand, probably brought down the remainder of his business empire (which was unconnected to the C5, and more soundly based)! There have been other spectacular mismatches to reality; IBM's PC Junior, Ford's Edsel. These are, however, the recorded exceptions; for most mismatches fail at the 'new product' stage - and disappear with the 90% of such new products which do not achieve acceptance.

Conviction marketed products can be broadly divided into two groups;

**PRODUCT BASED <> VALUE BASED**



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The former are products, or services - frequently in the high technology field, whose creator has a blinding faith in what product or service features are needed. Steve Jobs, at Apple, believed in the special technology of his products (even after IBM set new standards - and John Sculley had to be recruited from Pepsi, to inject more conventional marketing expertise), Alan Sugar believed in his personal ability to put together low-priced electronics packages. The problem with conviction marketed products in this category is that they can be very rapidly overtaken by changes in the market; typically, new technology supersedes them (as the Commodore Pet, one of the original PCs, was displaced from the business market by Apple, which in turn was superseded - as brand leader - by IBM), or tastes change (as Woolworth found out as its traditional place on the high street was undermined).

As already indicated, however, the strongest 'conviction marketed' brands are those in very general markets where the distinctiveness comes from the image; from the intangible VALUES associated with the brand. These brands are usually much more capable of change, since the identity is not usually locked into 'physical' features. The customers (and the organization's own employees) can easily accommodate the new features needed to accommodate developments in technology and taste. IBM's 'Customer Service' carried it through decades of revolutionary change and Disneyland is constantly absorbing new rides - but still keeping them immaculately clean! Even McDonalds, which should perhaps be one of the most product based of retailers, is in reality based on conviction marketing of values; Q. S. C. & V." (Quality, Service, Cleanliness & Value). It has managed to change what it serves (adding a breakfast menu - and lines based on chicken and fish, as well as pizza) and how it serves (increasing the size of its 'sit down' sections - so that it has become a restaurant rather than just a take-away outlet) as well as embracing (for a while at least) 'healthy foods'.

The challenge for less charismatic marketers, committed to the wisdom of the 'outside-in' viewpoint, is to understand to what extent the success of 'conviction marketing' undermines traditional marketing theory. This is a question mark which implicitly hung over much of marketing theory through the 1980s; and, in particular, drove practitioners and academics alike to look for alternative approaches - such as competitive advantage. The reality is that most products and services (at least in terms of numbers of lines, if not of value of sales) are managed without reference to the principles of marketing; and have been throughout history. The difference is that 'conviction marketers' have very



successfully extended this common 'inside-out' approach by adopting some of the tools of marketing. Indeed, the conviction marketers probably make greater use of marketing tools (albeit to somewhat perverted ends) than do many of those who would pay lip-service to traditional marketing. Philip Morris, which owns the Marlboro cigarette brand, also owns the Miller Brewing Company of Milwaukee. In applying the same sort of charismatic (and 'macho') image to 'Miller High Life' they used extensive market research to fine tune the positioning. More important, the company continued to be aware of the demands of its market place, and subsequently launched the highly successful 'Miller-Lite' (low calorie beer) as a 'less filling' beer which fitted this image.

At the end of the day, the basic justification for conventional marketing, in the absence of the blinding (and hopefully viable) vision of the conviction marketer, is simply that it is generally the most successful approach to product or service management. Giving the customer what he or she wants rarely fails!

### **Problems inherent in Conviction Marketing**

The main problem facing conviction marketers is that the necessary strength of their commitment may blind them to the realities facing them and their customers. It is difficult enough for any marketer to adopt the unbiased perspective essential to understanding the customer's needs and wants. It may be impossible for a conviction marketer, whose 'vision' may be so powerful that it precludes any doubts about the 'product'. The Concorde airliner development team were convinced of the market for their 'baby'; and their market research supported that view - it was only the market which disagreed. Even IBM can fall foul of this problem, as it did with its personal computers; when its immensely strong corporate 'vision' got in the way of any meaningful recognition of the scale of the problem posed by its wayward dealers.

Catastrophe theory is derived from science and technology; but it may be very applicable to conviction marketing. In a very simplified form (for it is the idea, not the detail, which is important) it states that some systems can be 'over-stressed', so that they will support loads beyond the point at which other systems would obviously start to deteriorate. When they pass the final point of no return, however, their performance degrades (they fail) suddenly and catastrophically. This compares with most other systems where the fail point may be reached much more quickly, but the subsequent degradation in performance is



much more gradual; and, hence, predictable and controllable (allowing, perhaps, for the possibility of recovery).

The problem is that, once past the point of no return (and frequently triggered by an apparently trivial change in circumstances), the position can be destroyed; by simply being forced, almost overnight, to obey the normal rules of the game.

This phenomenon has been most notable in the financial futures markets (the October 1987 crash, for instance), or in political circles (even Communism in Eastern Europe suffered this fate in 1989). In a less dramatic manner it might also be seen at work in those national industries (such as the UK motorcycle industry) virtually destroyed by Japanese competition.

A final comment before I finish this section. Marketing was not developed, nor dramatically advanced, in the laboratories of its academic theorists. It was the outcome of the practical explorations by practitioners, gradually probing the frontiers of what could be achieved by their activities. The academics usually came later and served a very valuable function by documenting, in a form which could be transferred to other managers, what had been learned by this practice. Even so, it is the practice of marketing which is important; and the theory which should be in support of this - a fact which some academics may have begun to overlook!

## Direct marketing

**Direct marketing** is a discipline within [marketing](#) that involves the planned recording, analysis and tracking of individual customers' (business-to-business or consumer) responses and transactions for the purpose of developing and prolonging mutually profitable customer relationships. The term was coined in the 1970s by Lester Wunderman, who pioneered direct marketing techniques with brands such as [Amex](#) and [Columbia Records](#).

Direct marketing is a form of marketing that attempts to send its messages directly to consumers, using "addressable" media such as mail and email. Therefore, direct marketing differs from regular advertising in that it does not place its messages on a third party medium, or in the public market, such as a billboard or a radio commercial would.



Instead, the marketing of the service or commodity is addressed directly to the target customer.

DM uses non-addressable media as well as addressable ones. The important thing is that it seeks a response and it is this which the recipient, usually a marketer, bases their future actions, or contact strategy, on. In fact all DM is done through media, it's just that many, e.g. email, telemarketing, SMS, are "addressable". It usually is not taken to include face-to-face contact. Direct marketing is attractive to many marketers, because in many cases its effectiveness can be measured directly. For example, if a marketer sends out one million solicitations by mail, and ten thousand customers can be tracked as having responded to the promotion, the marketer can say with some confidence that the campaign led directly to the responses. By contrast, measurement of other media must often be indirect, since there is no direct response from a consumer. Measurement of results, a fundamental element in successful direct marketing, is explored in greater detail elsewhere in this article.

While many marketers like this form of marketing, it is sometimes criticized for generating unwanted solicitations, which are sometimes referred to as junk mail and e-mail spam.

## **Direct marketing channels**

Any medium that can be used to deliver a communication to a customer can be employed in direct marketing. Direct marketers often refer to such media as "addressable" to distinguish them from "mass" media, such as television, radio, and print.

### **Direct mail**

Probably the most commonly used medium for direct marketing is direct mail, in which marketing communications are sent to customers using the postal service. In many developed countries, direct mail represents such a significant amount of the total volume of mail that special rate classes have been established. In the United States and United Kingdom, for example, there are [bulk mail](#) rates that enable marketers to send mail at rates that are substantially lower than regular first-class rates. In order to qualify for these rates, marketers must format and sort the mail in particular ways - which reduces the handling (and therefore costs) required by the postal service.



Direct mail permits the marketer to design marketing pieces in many different formats. Indeed, there is an entire subsector of the industry that produces specialized papers, printing, envelopes, and other materials for direct mail marketing. Some of the common formats, include:

**Catalogs:** Multi-page, bound promotions, usually featuring a selection of products for sale.

**Self-mailers:** Pieces usually created from a single sheet that has been printed and folded. For instance, a common practice is to print a page-length advertisement or promotion on one side of a sheet of paper. This is then folded in half or in thirds, with the promotional message to the inside. The two outside surfaces are then used for the address of the recipient and some "teaser" message designed to persuade the customer to open the piece.

**Poly packages:** Large (often 9x12 or bigger) full-color packages sealed in a clear plastic outer wrap. The contents show through the poly, giving the potential for maximum initial impact. Poly packages are extremely effective, but also quite expensive.

**Postcards:** Simple, two-sided pieces, with a promotional message on one side and the customer's address on the other.

**Envelope mailers:** Mailings in which the marketing material is placed inside an envelope. This permits the marketer to include more than one insert. When more than one advertiser is included, this is often called "[marriage mail](#)". Valpak is one of the largest examples of a marriage mail service.

**Snap Mailers:** Mailers that fold and seal with pressure. The sides detach and the mailer is opened to reveal the message.

**Dimensional Mailers:** Mailers that have some dimension to them, like a small box.

**Intelligent Documents:** Programmable mail pieces built dynamically from database information, and printed digitally for faster production.

## **Advantages and Disadvantages of Direct Mail**

**Advantages include the following:**



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**Targeting** - Historically, the most important aspect of direct mail was its ability to target previous customers exactly. If a suitable list was available, it also did a good job of targeting prospects. However, with the arrival of Email organisations could have a dialogue with customers far more cheaply and by using cookies on their website have a dialogue with their customers via the internet.

**Personalization** - Direct mail can address the customer personally and be tailored to their needs based on previous transactions and other data gathered historically.

**Optimization** - Because of its direct accountability, direct mail can be tested to find the best list; the best offer; the best creative; the best timing (and many other factors) and the winning tests rolled out to a wider audience for optimal results.

**Accumulation** - Responses (and non-responses) can be added to the database, allowing future mailings to be better targeted.

**Disadvantages include:**

**Cost** - The cost per thousand will be higher than almost any other form of mass promotion (although the wastage rate may be much lower).

**Waste** - Large quantities of paper are thrown away (see below).

**Alienation** - Some recipients resent direct marketing being "forced" upon them, and boycott companies that do so.

**Business-to-Business Mailings (B2B)**

Business products and services have long used direct mail to promote themselves. Traditionally, this worked in one of two ways. As a direct sale, therefore precluding the use of a salesperson or a retail store, or as a method of generating leads for a salesforce. The former method was ideally used by products that were easy to sell, were familiar to the prospect and needed no demonstration. The latter method was used for large ticket items or for those that needed demonstration for example.



## Direct mail



Typical junkmail.

Although **bulk mail**, **junk mail**, and **admail** are, strictly speaking, not synonyms, the terms are used in common parlance to refer to [advertising](#) circulars, free trial [CDs](#), pre-approved [credit card](#) applications, and other unsolicited [merchandising](#) invitations delivered by [mail](#) to homes and businesses. The term "junk" is usually used when someone receives an item of mail that is untargeted or not relevant to them. Bulk mailings are a particularly popular method of promotion for businesses operating in the financial services, home computer and travel and tourism industries.

Advertisers often call it "targeted mailing", as mail is usually sent out following [database](#) analysis. For example a person who likes [golf](#) may receive direct mail for golf related products or perhaps for goods and services that are appropriate for golfers. The [USPS](#) prefers to call it "advertising mail" (*admail* for short), noting that some people might find offers of interest to them in it. [\[1\]](#)

Some people respond positively to direct mail advertising and find useful goods and services on offer. Traditionally, this was more true in rural areas where people had to travel many miles to do their shopping and direct mail and [mail order](#) shopping was a major convenience. However, many people dislike it, in the same way as with [telemarketers'](#) calls and [e-mail spam](#), and some jurisdictions like the [US](#) have laws requiring junk mailers to withhold their offerings from residents who opt out.

## Direct response

A related form of marketing is direct response marketing. In direct marketing, the marketer contacts the potential customer directly, but in direct response marketing the



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customer responds to the marketer directly. Its most common form today is [infomercials](#). They try to achieve a direct response via television presentations. Viewers respond via telephone or internet, credit card in hand. Other media, such as magazines, newspapers, radio, and e-mail can be used to elicit the response, but they tend to achieve lower response rates than television.

Order forms or coupons in magazines and newspapers are another type of direct response marketing. Mail order is a term, seldom used today, that describes a form of direct response in which customers respond by mailing a completed order form to the marketer. Mail order is slow and response rates are low. It has been eclipsed by toll-free telephone numbers and the internet.

## Legislation

In the [United States](#), the [United States Postal Service](#) maintains that direct marketers pay the majority of the costs of mail. Bulk mail thereby subsidizes low cost [stamps](#) for letter, magazine, and book mailing. No such compensatory relationship exists with [e-mail](#) or faxes, which require the receiver to pay for [bandwidth](#), storage space, or paper and toner, and some of the solutions to e-mail spam in the United States have involved instituting a freight cost on mass e-mail to make it productive. Such solutions have not been universally lauded, as they leave the recipients of unsolicited e-mail with the problem of storage and bandwidth consumption and would increase costs to companies that send only solicited mass mailings.

The United States telemarketing industry was affected by a national do-not-call list, which went into effect on October 1, 2003. Under the law, it is illegal for telemarketers to call anyone who has registered themselves on the list. People can register for the list on the web at [donotcall.gov](#). After the list had operated for one year, over 62 million people had signed up [3]. The telemarketing industry opposed the creation of the list, but most telemarketers have complied with the law and refrained from calling people who are on the list.

## Press kit

A **press kit**, often referred to as a "media kit" in business environments, is a pre-packaged set of promotional materials of a person, company, or organization distributed



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to members of the media for [promotional](#) use. They are often distributed to announce a release or for a [news conference](#).

## Common press kit components

Backgrounder with historical information on the company or individual

Fact Sheet listing specific features, statistics, or benefits

Biographies of key executives, individuals, artists, etc.

Past Press Coverage

[Photos](#) or other images (high resolution) of key executives, logos, products, etc.

A [press release](#) detailing the current news the media kit is sent in reference to

Media contact information (usually of a [public relations](#) department or spokesperson)

A CD, DVD, Software title, video, etc. as appropriate for the sender of the release

## Press kit uses

Product launches

New company launch

Mergers and acquisitions

News conferences

Large events / Industry trade shows

