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Western States Envelope & Label

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Insiders Can Use Outside (Envelope) Help

By Steve Brocker

Within the envelope, a compelling offer calls out to the recipient. Then that recipient answers these essential questions:

- Is this nonprofit worthy of my donation?
- Is this product or service something I need or want?
- Is the price fair, or better yet, a bargain?
- Is the company or organization credible?
- Is it easy to donate or order?

Much has been written about creating the offer, targeting the audience, and even organizing contents to maximize response. We go to great lengths to create what's inside the package. Yet, like baseball, without an at-bat you can never hit a home run. Getting the outer envelope opened gives you the at-bat you've worked so hard to achieve.

The possibilities for a winning outer envelope are almost endless, but here are some solid ideas I've seen over the years to help you get those at-bats:

- **Paper upgrade.** This will enhance the sender's image in the recipient's mind. The feeling and look of a fine paper creates mystery about the perceived value of the contents. Of course, the contents need to echo the upgraded appearance. Healthcare providers, financial planners,

real estate developers and politicians (yes, it's that time again) are popular users of fine paper options.

- **Color your world.** An enhanced, 4-color image on the envelope brings your message to life. With today's technology you can create short-runs as well as long-runs using digital, offset or enhanced flexographic printing. The cost has been driven down with technology improvements. Nonprofits love the "picture is worth a thousand words" approach.
- **Larger and unique is better.** Everybody recognizes No. 10 envelopes. Be different to get noticed. Envelopes can be 6-1/8 x 11-1/2 and still receive letter-size postage rates. Somewhere short of that, but still within the letter mail aspect ratio of between 1.3 and 2.5, there's an opportunity to use more real estate for creative copy, more windows for "peeks" into the contents, and less chance of someone just like you in the customer's mailbox. Go larger than the maximum letter size, such as a 9 x 12, and your postage goes to "flats" rates. Don't dismiss this option based on cost alone. Its uniqueness in the mailbox along with the presentation of unfolded collateral can produce a winner.

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President's Perspective

While we here at Western States Envelope and Label plot our course for the New Year, it's time for us to renew our commitment to you our customer.



As a trusted supplier and partner to you in your business, our focus this year more than ever before will be to provide you with the necessary products and services to help you succeed, and to do it in a manner that exceeds your expectations. You can count on our dependable, reliable performance while we provide you with innovative new products and ideas. Our industry-leading customer service and sales team will help you find solutions and make your buying experience rewarding and enjoyable.

Our commitment to continuously improving ourselves and our organization has helped us become an even stronger resource for you. We want you to think of us as the best possible answer to your envelope and label needs. Challenge us, as your customers challenge you. We will work together to make 2012 a year of opportunity for all of us.

Put us to work for you today!

Thankfully Yours,

Mark

Mark Lemberger
President

- **Add an intriguing feature.** Unique opening devices like Tear-ific® and EZ Open™ are opportunities to improve response. Engage the recipient with the envelope. The goal is to get the envelope opened. QR codes are another option that's been popular since the July/August 2011 USPS Mobile Barcode Promotion. Linking mail to digital media creates more engagement. But make sure the landing page is mobile-enabled and relevant to the mailing's contents.
- **Green ways.** Environmental messages implied in the mail piece design have to be important to the mailer. Recycled and/or forestry certified paper is economical today. Also, the reusable envelope market is starting to take hold. This gives mailers a green message, plus engaging opening devices like those mentioned above. But make sure green messages make sense for you or your client's organization—insincerity is one message you do not want to project.

These ideas only scratch the creative surface. There is a lot to consider when choosing the proper envelope: the audience, the timing, the offer, competition and of course, the budget. Bring an envelope marketing expert onboard early in the process and discuss concepts. There are so many new ideas and options to consider; the last thing you want is to short-change a potentially great result for you or your client.

Your Challenge. Our Solution.

This case studies column shares ways we've helped businesses face challenges by crafting new envelope and label solutions.

Client:

A printer/mail house customer in Ohio whose client was a local cable company

Product:

Special Double Window Envelopes

Challenge:

This printer's client wanted to reduce their use of costly advertising inserts with their customer billing statements, yet they still needed to keep customers informed and cross-sell products.

Solution:

Western States created a Special Double Window with 1" side seams. Four different

copies of this envelope were printed in 4 colors (one copy distributed per quarter). The colorful envelopes grab the customers' attention, relay key information, and reduce the cable company's inserting and mailing costs. In addition, the 1" side seams run better and faster on our print customer's inserting equipment.

Client:

Beverage manufacturer in Pennsylvania

Product:

Customized Label Tape

Challenge:

This malt beverage manufacturer was vying for attention and market share inside store coolers where its product line is distributed. They

needed a unique removable label to use inside convenience store coolers that was attractive yet durable and functional. Also, the labels' glossy surface had to be dulled down so it was visible inside the lighted coolers.

Solution:

Western States created a customized label tape for cooler shelving that was 1 3/8" x 8 7/8" long. The 2.3 mil white polypropylene labels with removable adhesive were printed digitally with 4-color process ink. The success of this label tape helped these products draw attention inside store coolers.

This unique label also earned a Print Excellence and Knowledge (PEAK) Award in 2011.



Make Print Interactive

This article's headline is not a typo; it is possible to make print interactive. How? Using QR Codes. You know, that boxy-looking barcode that holds valuable information a target audience can access immediately. They simply scan this print-based "hyperlink" from their smartphone and they're directed to a URL instantly.

QR Codes are quick, cheap and easy to implement. They're also measurable. You'll know who's using them when so you can make the most of your marketing dollars.

Without a QR Code, a printed piece can have a fleeting moment with an audience. But QR Codes give you that added edge of getting them to take the next step ASAP. They bring true value to a printed piece by adding this interactive feature. But to use a QR Code effectively, incorporate these three steps:

1. Explain. Don't assume everyone knows what a QR Code is. Include directions on how to use it and explain what they can access when they scan it.

2. Sweeten the deal. You need to apply the Advertising 101 principle of "What's In It For Me?" Give them an incentive for scanning in the QR Code, such as a free sample or product discount.

3. Crunch your numbers.

QR Codes are 100% measurable, so you can track results and control your campaign's success. In fact, there are sites that will analyze and track your links for free.

Let Western States help you develop the right QR Code for your next print project – contact your Sales Rep today!



Less is More...

Save Some Green on Ink Costs

Cutting costs on raw materials isn't always the best for the environment or your bottom line, especially when it comes to inks.

A cheap or buy-in-bulk route may sound like the way to go, but this may cost you more in the long run. Ponder these points for smarter ink usage:



Size matters. Consider packaging size, noting that smaller ink containers usually mean higher prices. If you use large quantities, try drums or totes and pump ink. Packaging costs for these are much lower, plus you'll cut down on waste (as the pump has a sealed system).

Something old, something new. If it's not vacuum-sealed, typical sheet-fed ink expires in one year. If you have inks close to that one-year mark, have them made into black. Also, have your ink maker put the manufacture date on the can.

Spot on spot color. Examine how accurate your spot color estimating is, as this can be a big ink waster. Work off your leftovers immediately by using an inexpensive Mixmaster system. For mixing your own spot colors, precision systems work well. Many printers will make 15% less ink than they estimate for a job and quickly mix any additional ink needed to keep inventory down. Also, ask your ink rep to help you estimate ink usage.

Pigment power. Another simple way to keep expenses in check is to monitor ink strength; lowering pigment amounts will help lower costs.

Think about your ink. Do an audit of ink handling in your pressroom. Do you save ink properly? How are your inks organized, dated and used? Devise a more efficient system for your ink usage.

A perfect color-to-paper match. It's tough to match a spot color when stock options change. For example, changing color on a rougher paper surface that is more absorbent doesn't do the trick. Ask your ink rep to help you adjust inks, as they have the tools and knowledge to offer accurate solutions.

Tango, Anyone?

Tangerine Tango that is, the PANTONE® 2012 Color of the Year. It's guaranteed to boost your energy and make you blush in a reddish-orange sort of way. For more about 2012 Pantone forecast colors and 17-1463 Tangerine Tango, visit pantone.com > About Us > News.

Label Ideas That Stick

Create until it clicks. For product and packaging labels that get noticed and get results, don't be afraid to try and try again. Do your homework so you know how your customers interact with various products and packages. Print several label options in your first print run, so you can test which designs worked and which ones fizzled.

Get a bigger bite from food labeling. With all the required nutritional and expiration date info, it's hard to make consumers hungry for your or your customers' food products. Think outside the package with unique substrates, labeling technologies, inks or finishes. Try something different; it may send more of that product to the registers sooner.

QR Codes. These can be invaluable to food product

manufacturers. They can identify markets more accurately and include info that brings the consumer closer to that product by telling its full story (its origin, sustainability, etc.).

For more about these and other label solutions, contact your Western States Sales Rep or go to westernstatesenvelope.com.



Where to Find Western States...

We've been fortunate to appear in several industry publications over this past year. From ads to features and columns that share our experts' insights, here's where you'll find us and learn some valuable information:

- **Print Solutions** is a monthly magazine of the Print Services & Distribution Association (PSDA), an international organization of print distributors, trade printers and suppliers working together to ensure that end users receive the products and services they need to succeed since 1946. Learn more at psda.org.
- **Print Professional** is a monthly magazine that aims to provide leading print news about technology and products (labels, tags, forms and more) to the leaders who sell and support the industry. Go to printprofessionalmag.com.
- **Canvas** is dedicated to environmentally and socially responsible operations supporting print sales and marketing executives. This magazine is produced online one month, and printed/mailed the next. View the digital version at <http://thecanvasmag.com/new/issues/>.
- **Printing Impressions** is America's most influential and widely read resource for

commercial printers. Go to <http://www.piworld.com/>.

- **Mail: The Journal of Communication Distribution Official Mail Guide** (mailomg) is the world's most comprehensive and authoritative mail communications product almanac. Inside you'll find everything you need to create, process and distribute mail communications. It's updated with the latest products and services from the industry's leading vendors—pictured and profiled in an easy-to-use, objective format. Visit at <http://mailomg.com/>.
- **PostScripts** newsletter, published by the Mailing & Fulfillment Service Association (MSFA), is considered a "must read" by member companies. Published monthly, each highlights a theme relevant to mailing or fulfillment operations, such as production management or information technology. For a free pdf sample: <http://www.mfsanet.org> > Publications & Services > Newsletters.

To see more industry news from Western States, see the About Us (What's New) tab at westernstatesenvelope.com. Stay tuned as we will be introducing a new website in the near future.

A Positive Vibe from PSDA

Western States was honored to host a visit this past November from key staff team members of Print Services & Distribution Association (PSDA). In fact, Matt Sanderson, PSDA Executive Vice President featured this photo in an inspiring article he wrote about the positive impact that being positive has in one's business and personal life. For instance, did you know that smiling is good for your health, and being happy is proven to be contagious? Or that

being positive actually makes you happier and healthier?

Western States has been a proud PSDA member company since 2002. To see "The Power of Positivity" article in its entirety, go to pdsa.org and select the December 2011 issue of *Print Solutions*.



Smiles to share. Our employees pictured with the visiting PSDA staff (l to r): Jim Sommers, Sandra Bezold, Kim Armstrong, Tom Manning (PSDA), Brittany Conner, Jenny Daus, Barbara O'Connor (PSDA), Matt Sanderson (PSDA), Chris Pilarski, Chrystal Worgull, Renee Berger and Chris Guzikowski.

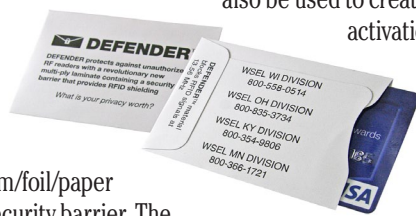
In Our Product Spotlight

RFID Shield – DEFENDER™: Your Best Defense Against Identity Theft

RFID Shield – DEFENDER™ envelopes are manufactured from a revolutionary new durable multi-ply material, consisting of paper/durable film/foil/paper laminate layers that act as a security barrier. The powerful radio frequency identification (RFID) personal identity protection is FIPS 201 (Federal Information Processing Standard) approved, and prevents fraudulent RFID skimming. Innovative and tough, this product protects information on many mediums, such as smart (debit/credit) cards, e-passports, employee IDs, access control cards and enhanced driver's licenses (EDL's).

RFID Shield – DEFENDER™ envelopes are water-resistant, lightweight, archival and tear-resistant. This envelope stock looks and feels like paper, is easily printable, and is chain-of-custody certified. It can be converted into any envelope, sleeve or envelope inserting product your customer

may need. The RFID Shield – DEFENDER™ can also be used to create pressure sensitive adhesive activation labels, protecting cards and tags with an Integrated Circuit (IC) construction like the one pictured below.



Watch for more details about our new RFID Shield – DEFENDER™ products! In the meantime, contact us at westernstatesenvelope.com or at 800-558-0514 with any questions.



An example of Integrated Circuit construction, where DEFENDER™ shielding can protect the card's information.

Please Call, Email, or Complete the Reply Card to Send Us Your Comments, Questions or Request Samples.



WESTERN STATES ENVELOPE & LABEL

Wisconsin
P.O. Box 2048
Milwaukee, WI 53201-2048
800-558-0514

Ohio
P.O. Box 966
Toledo, OH 43697-0966
800-835-3734

Kentucky
P.O. Box 18730
Erlanger, KY 41018-0730
800-354-9806

Minnesota
980 Berwood Ave. East, Ste. #400
Vadnais Heights, MN 55110-5110
800-366-1721

www.westernstatesenvelope.com

Beef Up Your Multimedia

If interacting online with your target audience is uncharted territory for you, don't worry. There are plenty of ways you can use social media and your website to successfully engage your audience. A couple tips to get you started:

Download free stuff: Invite them to download a free eBook or whitepaper you created. This gives them free access to your valuable expertise, which can help build their business and yours.



Start a blog: You can use a blog as your company's regular news source. Commit to posting at least once a week to build credibility and keep the communication lines open. A daily post is even better. Just keep your posts simple yet informative. Share a new product feature, post a video, share your insights on an industry trend...the possibilities are endless!

Watch for more online marketing ideas in our next newsletter issue.

Customers' Corner

A big **THANK YOU** so much for your loyalty to our newsletter and for your great referrals for our company! From our last issue we continued to receive tremendous feedback, 252 reply cards, 285 sample requests and 97 requests for online ordering.

Remember that this is *your* newsletter. To keep it going strong, please keep in touch. Make sure we have your current contact info, so we can best serve you and personalize your mailings. Either complete the enclosed reply card, call us at 800-558-0514 or "Contact Us" at wsel.com, via social media at; Facebook, Google+, Twitter, LinkedIn, PrintJunkie and YouTube.

You can also send us your latest contact info with your comments and suggestions. There's no deadline because we're always looking for ideas. Plus we'll reward you with a free gift! Send them to:

Renee Berger, Editor
Eric Kidman, Marketing Specialist or
Russ Nadasdy, Graphic Designer
Inside the Envelope & Label

Western States Envelope & Label
P.O. Box 2048 Milwaukee, WI 53201
e-mail: marketing@westernstatesenvelope.com

Come Socialize
With Us

