



TEN TOP TIPS FOR BUYING DATA

If you're a fledgling data buyer or you need some help to get the best from your campaign,

Thinking Data's **Stephen Cook** has Ten Top Tips to get you underway...

1 Source the Right List

There's an enormous range of options out there, from compiled and pooled databases, to magazine subscribers, mail order buyers and exhibition attendees. A lot of the choices you'll be presented with depend on your target audience, but all list options should be provided with information about how they are compiled, how often it's updated, basic volume and selection information, and a clear breakdown of costs.

2 Make the Right Selections

So as well as the right type of list, consider further refined selections. Consumer lists will typically be selectable by age, gender, etc.; business lists by job function, type of company and so on. If you've got a specific geographical area to cover, specify it now. Equally, though, don't feel you have to tighten up your selections until you get exactly the volume you want: you can always test a proportion of the file.

3 Check for Suppressions

Quality lists will have been run against various suppression files to remove people who have moved house or died, or businesses which have relocated, or closed. We ensure that all mailing, telephone and fax data is also run against the appropriate preference service files. If you're including your own data in our campaign, we can arrange to have that cleaned, too.

4 Do you Need to De-Duplicate?

Thinking Data always removes duplicate records from our data when processing orders. There is no additional charge for this service. But do you have your own client file, which may contain some duplicates with our data? If so we can offer a free evaluation to confirm exact mailable volumes and costs.

5 Test

Like any good direct marketers, we would always recommend testing any data set. Test a random sample, or a variety of different "test cell" using varying selection criteria, and see what works best. Talk to us about the best ways of segmenting and tracking your test campaigns.

6 Frequency of Contact

Consider whether you simply want to contact your recipient once, or many times. Specific lists vary in the options that they'll give you, but most will entertain repeated use, and many business lists (like Thinking Data's own) can be leased for a year, or purchased outright. You may well improve response by sending follow-up mailings as a reminder, or following up with a phone call, or presenting a variety of offers over time.

7 Consider your Creative

Thinking Data aren't creatives or copywriters, but we have seen a lot of mailings over the years. Remember that you've only got one shot with each contact to make the recipient a customer, and you've got to do it right. Get professional help with your mailing campaign, or talk to us about how we can help. Remember also that many list owners will require a copy of the mailing piece or telemarketing script for approval before you order.

8 Quality of Data

Sadly, no list will ever be completely accurate. The UK Direct Marketing Association states that list owners should inform clients if responder lists will have over 3% goneaways (mailing returns), and over 6% for compiled lists. Thinking Data only offers lists that conform to the DMA's requirements.

9 Removals

Promptly remove anyone from leased or purchased lists who asks you to do so. Also, do pass on their details to the list owner too, so that we can make sure they're not contacted again by other buyers.

10 Feedback

Please remember to tell us how the campaign went. We thrive on your feedback, and we'll help with analysing response data and designing roll-out campaigns if you wish.

Finally, good luck with your campaign, and remember we at Thinking Data are here to help.



Need Help with Buying Data?
Call Thinking Data on 0844 736 2512
or email think@thinking-data.co.uk