

## Direct Mail & Email Marketing Glossary of Terms

1. **Above the fold.** The top part of an email or web page that can be seen without scrolling. This is generally more desirable placement because of its visibility. Due to variances in screen size and the introduction of mobile browsing, this is not a set distance.
2. **Active buyer.** Customer whose latest purchase was made within the last 12 months.
3. **Active subscriber.** Subscriber of magazines, e-newsletters or goods and services who has committed for regular delivery for a period of time still in effect.
4. **ASCII.** American Standard format for data storage on magnetic media (tape or disk).
5. **Blacklist.** List of IP addresses that are being used by or belong to organizations or individuals that have been identified as sending spam. Blacklists are often used by organizations and internet service providers as part of their filtering process to block all incoming mail from a particular IP address (or block of addresses).
6. **BRC or BRE.** Business Reply Card or Business Reply Envelope.
7. **Brokerage commission.** The commission (usually 20%) paid by a list owner to a broker to handle the rental of a list.
8. **Bulk mail.** Mail that is rated for postage partly by weight and partly by the number of pieces in the mailing. The term is generally used to refer to standard mail.
9. **Business list.** Any list of individuals or companies based on a business-related interest, inquiry, membership, subscription or purchase.
10. **Business-to-Business marketing.** Reaching prospects and customers in their workplace with offers that relate to their profession – as opposed to their lifestyle, hobbies or family.
11. **CAN SPAM.** A law that became effective January 1, 2004 that establishes requirements for those who send email with primary purpose of advertising or promoting a commercial product or service.
12. **Carrier route presort mail.** Mail sorted by carrier route to qualify for discount postage rates.
13. **Cheshire label.** A type of plain paper label used in mailing. Requires a Cheshire machine to affix to mailing material. The most common computer label.
14. **Cleaning names.** A process whereby names and addresses on a customer or prospect list are corrected (addresses standardized; ZIP codes corrected; spelling and punctuation corrected; duplicates consolidated).

15. **Click through.** When a reader takes action on an email and clicks on a link.
16. **Click through rate.** The number of times all links in an email were clicked compared to the total list size, represented as a percentage. To determine the click-through rate, divide the number of responses (clicks) by the number of emails sent (multiply this number by 100 to express the result as a percentage).
17. **Click to open rate.** The number of times all links in an email were clicked compared to the number of people who opened the email, represented as a percentage. To determine the click to open rate, divide the number of responses (clicks) by the number of emails opened (multiply this number by 100 to express the result as a percentage).
18. **Compiled list.** Names and addresses taken from directories, newspapers, public records, etc. People who share common characteristics. Compiled lists are usually the least useful or responsive for direct marketing.
19. **Consumer list.** Any list of individuals at home addresses who have bought merchandise, subscriptions, given to a non-profit, etc.
20. **Conversion rate.** The percentage of responders who become customers.
21. **Continuation.** An order from a mailer who has previously tested or used the list within 12 months and is using it again.
22. **Copy.** The text of a marketing piece.
23. **Cross-selling.** Encouraging customers to buy products from other departments or categories.
24. **Datacard.** Information about mailing and/or email lists that includes counts, demographics, pricing and selections.
25. **Data enhancement.** A process whereby a customer file has data appended to it (such as age, income, home value) from some external data file.
26. **Data entry.** Entering names and addresses and other data via manual keying, electronic data transfer or by scanning. Also called keypunching.
27. **Database.** A file that is maintained on a computer comprised of pertinent information such as a company's prospects or customers. The file can serve multiple applications and be manipulated for various purposes.
28. **Decoy.** A unique name added to a mailing list used to spot unauthorized use of the list. See seeding.
29. **De-dupe.** Short for de-duplicate. Identifying and consolidating duplicate names usually done in a merge/purge operation.

30. **Demographics.** Those characteristics of a population which are measured by variables such as age, sex, marital status, family size, education, geographic location, and occupation.
31. **Direct mail.** Using the U.S. Postal Service to deliver your message. Can be used for consumer and for business-to-business offers.
32. **Direct Marketing Association (DMA).** One of the chief trade associations serving the direct response field, with emphasis on direct mail marketing through all classes of mail. Main focus is on larger corporations.
33. **Duplicate.** The same name occurring twice or more on the same file.
34. **Email authentication.** Practice of validating that an email sender is legitimate to cut down on spam and phishing scams.
35. **Email frequency.** The intervals at which email marketing efforts are repeated: weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, bi-monthly, etc.
36. **Email list manager.** Controller of an email list or database entity.
37. **Email marketing campaign.** Coordinated email marketing messages delivered at intervals with a specific objective or goal.
38. **Email newsletter.** An email message sent out to a group of subscribers with relevant information on a topic, to keep in touch with existing customers, or simply as a means of distributing new product information.
39. **Fulfillment.** All activities involved in the processing and servicing of mail, fax and telephone orders.
40. **Geo-coding.** The process of appending latitude and longitude coordinates to a database record so it can be properly placed on a geographical map.
41. **HTML.** Abbreviation for Hyper Text Markup Language, which is the language used for creating documents for the World Wide Web.
42. **Hard bounce.** An email that has bounced back to the sender undelivered without having been accepted by the recipient's mail.
43. **House file.** Commonly referred to as a customer list, a house file is a consolidated database containing each customer's name, address and summarized order information.
44. **Hyperlink.** An element in an electronic document that, when clicked on, links to another place in the same document, or to an entirely different document.
45. **Indicia.** Imprinted designation on mail that denotes postage payment (e.g., permit imprint).

46. **Labels.** Paper printed with a name and address that is affixed to a mailing piece and serves as the mailing address vehicle. Different types of labels include: peel-off or pressure-sensitive labels, gummed labels and paper (or Cheshire) labels.
47. **Lettershop.** A company that handles all the details of printing and mailing direct mail pieces to deliver to the post office for mailing.
48. **List Broker.** A list specialist hired by a mailer to make the necessary arrangements to use other companies' lists. Brokerage services usually include research, list selections, recommendations and logistics so that the rented lists arrive at the proper time. The standard commission to a list broker is 20%.
49. **List cleaning.** The process of updating a list in order to remove any undeliverable addresses. Other cleaning activities could include removing duplicates, names on the DMA Mail Preference Service, prison, ZIP codes, etc.
50. **List maintenance.** The ongoing process of keeping a mailing list up-to-date by adding, editing and deleting data.
51. **List manager.** Whereas a list broker works for a mailer, the list manager works for the list owner. The primary function is to promote the list to mailers and list brokers for list rental. List managers can be either an internal employee of the list owner, or part of an outside list management company paid a commission by the list owner. Management services usually include marketing of the list, coordinating and controlling rental activity and accounting. The standard commission for a list manager is 10%.
52. **List rental.** The process of renting (for one time use, or other periods) a list of names of customers owned by some other organization for an agreed upon cost per thousand names.
53. **Mailing list.** A list of customers or prospects used to mail catalogs, offers or sale announcements.
54. **Mail shop.** An independent company which specializes in preparing materials for mailing. They affix labels, sort for bulk rates, insert in postal bags, etc.
55. **Media.** Any form of communication that reaches the general public and carries advertising. Direct response media would include space advertising, direct mail, TV, radio, take-ones, card decks, package inserts, cooperative efforts, and on-line shopping services.
56. **Merge-purge.** The process of combining two or more lists into one while at the same time identifying and removing any duplicate names.
57. **National Change of Address (NCOA).** A service provided by the U.S. Postal Service through licensed computer service bureaus that enables mailers to make any necessary address corrections prior to their mailing being dropped. The mailer provides a magnetic tape that is run against the national change of address bank and then is returned to the mailer with all the corrections made.

58. **Net Names.** The number of names remaining after a merge-purge eliminates all duplicates.
59. **Nixie.** A direct mail letter which has been returned to the sender because the address was wrong. Also, any undelivered piece of mail.
60. **Opt-in email marketing.** The process of collecting permission to email users whereby the user must take action to receive email communications.
61. **Opt-out.** The option that allows the recipient to be removed from receiving future emails from the sender.
62. **Outsourcing.** Using an outside service rather than performing the work in-house.
63. **Personalization.** The process of including personal references in an outgoing mail piece. See Variable Data Printing (VDP).
64. **Pop-ups.** A window that pops-up over the browser window. Generally considered an attempt at spam.
65. **Postage-paid reply service.** A service allowing mailers to use a lettershop's postage-paid permit and have the business-reply mail sent there instead of opening their own account with the USPS.
66. **Presorted mail.** A form of mail preparation required to bypass certain postal operations in which the mailer groups pieces in a mailing by ZIP code or by carrier route or carrier walk sequence (or other USPS recommended separation).
67. **Prospect.** A potential customer who you have targeted.
68. **Prospecting.** Mailing or telemarketing to prospects who are not yet your customers.
69. **Purge.** To eliminate undesirable names from a list.
70. **Record.** A collection of fields that describe all the information on a customer.
71. **Respondent.** Someone who has answered a direct response letter or advertisement.
72. **Response list.** Any list of individuals who have responded to a mailing/offer.
73. **Response rate.** The percentage of people who responded to your offer. A typical direct mail response rate to prospects is 2%.
74. **Return On Investment (ROI).** A key measure of the success of any direct marketing activity. It is the total net profit from a direct marketing initiative, divided by the total cost of the entire operation.

75. **RFM.** Stands for Recency, Frequency, Monetary – a method for segmenting or rating your customers. The best customers are those who have bought from you recently, buy many times, and in large amounts.
76. **Sectional Center Facility (SCF).** The first three digits of the U.S. ZIP code.
77. **Seeding.** False or "dummy" names are added to a mailing list as a way to check delivery and to uncover any unauthorized list usage.
78. **Soft bounce.** An email that has bounced back to the sender undelivered after it was already accepted by the recipient's mail.
79. **Sorting.** The computerized process of reorganizing a list from one sequence to another. A file can be sorted by last name, company name, ZIP code, high donors, multi-buyers, recent buyers, etc.
80. **Spam.** Unsolicited email advertising.
81. **Telemarketing.** Talking on the telephone to prospects or customers. Inbound telemarketing is usually customers or prospects calling your toll free number. Outbound telemarketing is when you place the call to a prospect or customer. Telemarketing can be done by your in-house staff or by an external telemarketing company.
82. **Test.** An order that is placed for a small quantity of names to see how the list performs. If it performs well, a continuation order for more names is usually placed.
83. **Universe count.** The total count or number of names on a mailing list.
84. **Variable Data Printing (VDP).** A form of on-demand printing in which elements text and graphics may be changed from one printed piece to the next without stopping or slowing down the printing process and using information from a database or external file.