

6. DIRECT MAIL

There is no more powerful tool for generating enquiries than direct mail. However, like advertising, direct mail works best through repetition and enquiries can often filter through weeks after the mailing has arrived. Effective direct mail can produce a very high response rate – the key is using quality, customer-specific data, high impact design/creative, and personalisation (avoid stuck-on mailing labels as this can be the kiss of death to direct mail).

Of course mail-merging and printing thousands of sales letters, designing leaflets/flyers and stuffing envelopes can be a tedious and time consuming job, but you can always outsource your direct mail to a database/direct marketing company who specialise in the Window Industry.

7. EMAIL MARKETING

Email Marketing is a low-cost way of making instant contact with prospects or existing customers. But with 150 billion spam emails sent every day, you need to think carefully about your email strategy. Spam filters, junk folders and the sheer volume of emails we receive means your email campaign can easily get overlooked.

With email you only have a split second to generate interest so you need to make sure your message is short, sharp and high-impact. And remember, email data degrades at 5% to 10% per month, so it's vital you keep your email list up-to-date.

8. WEBSITE

It cannot be emphasised enough how important your website is and how essential it is to keep it updated regularly. This "shop window" is how you will be judged by potential customers and it's so easy to lose potential customers because of a poor

website – and you will never know about those potential customers! When was the last time you looked at your website – from a potential customers' point of view?

9. DATABASE

Always use a database to record, manage and update prospects and customers. Just because a prospect says "no" today, doesn't mean they will say no in six months. So record their details and stay in touch with them. New technology means sales and marketing people can easily manage databases from home or office with little or no I.T or database experience.

10. SOCIAL MEDIA

More and more businesses are using social media to get in front of their target audience and the window industry is no exception. Unlike traditional marketing, social media is a two-way conversation between you and your customers, meaning you shouldn't treat your social media accounts as a way to bombard your followers with countless adverts and plugs about your business. Engage with people. Get involved and connect with your customers. It will make you appear open, transparent and friendly.

These ten pro-active marketing strategies will help your business succeed in the next twelve months.

Andrew Scott is Managing Director of Purplex Marketing, the window industry's only full service marketing agency. He is also a member of the Institute of Direct Marketing and a Fellow of the Institute of Sales & Marketing Management. For further details visit www.purplexmarketing.co.uk or telephone 01934 808 132.