



# Direct Mail Best Practices



## Direct Mail Best Practices

A strategic guide to help you make the best, most effective decisions when creating your direct mail marketing.

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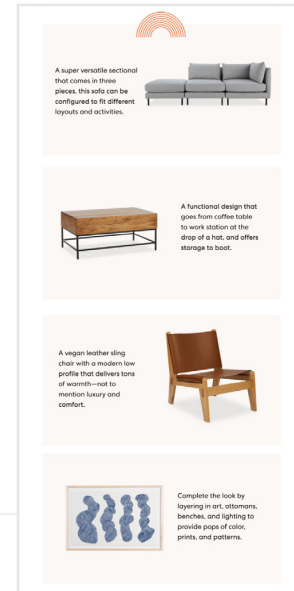
## Best Practices: Layout

### The S Curve

We'd recommend designing using an "S-curve" layout (photo on the right, content on the left, then content on the right, graphic on the left, and so on).

This helps the viewer move through the piece with ease and ensures you're not overwhelming the piece with either too many graphics, or too much text.

### Newsletter Example




### Use of Space


Don't be afraid to use *all* of the available space (this includes the top right corner on the back of your direct mail piece).

With that said, white space is okay – and can help draw the viewer to what you really want them to focus on, whether that's a CTA or a great photo.

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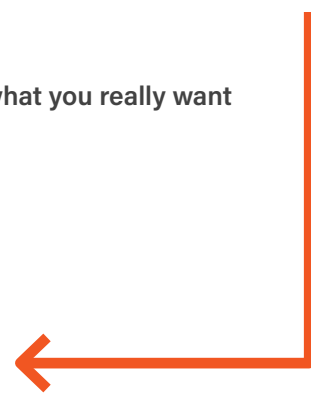
PSRST FIRST CLASS  
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**PAID**  
Conshohocken, PA  
Permit No. 339



**Burgers that are so good it's bad.**

Hours of Operation  
Sun-Thurs: 10am - 9pm  
Fri-Sat: 10am - 11pm

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Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462





## Best Practices: Content

### Focus Content Around the “5 Ps”

To ensure maximum effectiveness, direct mail content should always include the following “5 Ps”:

**Patient/Patron Centered:** Ensure your piece’s content depicts that you are aware of (and understand) your customer’s wants and needs.

**Prompt:** Any action steps that viewers are able to take on your piece should be fast-to-access. Use obvious, clear links that bring viewers directly to a relevant page that communicates to the user – “This was built *specifically* for you”.

**Personalized:** Content should be targeted, valuable, and align with the individual needs of your consumer. Not only that, but it should be delivered in a manner they desire. Personalize the content for their uniqueness. When available, use variable logic to:

- Control offerings
- Craft design
- Develop content

As an example, for customers of ages less than 55, it would be a targeted approach to show a young- to middle-aged family. For customers of ages older than 55, showing an older couple may be more relevant to them, helping them form a connection with your direct mail.



**Pathways:** Give the user clear, obvious options to access more information from you after you get their conversion, or if they’re not quite ready to take the leap. Always think about what can happen next – not just about the direct mail piece at hand.

**Portable:** Ensure that your content can be accessed on the go and in their pocket. This means, make sure they’re lifestyle-aligned and mobile-capable. Give the campaign members multiple options for response, whether they’re at their desk or on their phone.





## Best Practices: Content (continued)

### Short & Sweet

Always use short and brief phrases or bullet points, if possible, to convey extensive information, instead of taking up a lot of space and overwhelming your viewer.

Longer blocks of text can be hard for the reader to digest.

### More Colors & Graphics, Less Text

Along the same lines, don't use your direct mail to communicate all of the possible information you could give to your recipient. Provide high-level info, like a list or one or two sentences, that highlight a few different services and pique their interest. Then, use web links, landing pages, and PURL landing pages to give them one or several options to learn more.

If you'd like to include your hours of operation, shorten them to take up as little space as possible. Leverage your landing page for heavier, longer content, and simply use the direct mailer to *drive* campaign members to the landing page.





## Best Practices: Personalization

### Welcome!

When targeting new-movers, always welcome them with a phrase like, "Welcome to the neighborhood!"

Get more personal and targeted by adding a name and area; "Jane, Welcome to Philadelphia!"



### PURLs

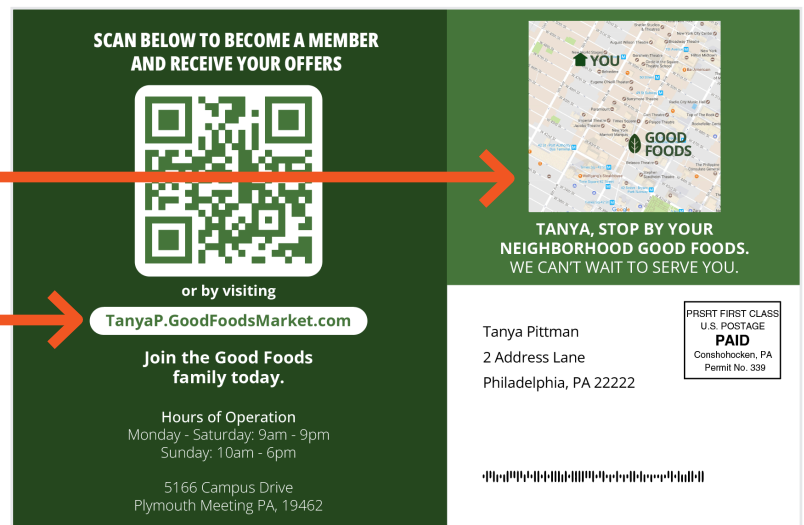
PURLs should always be formatted as follows:

FirstNameLastName.CompanyURL.com  
or FirstNameLastInitial.CompanyURL.com

For Example: [JeffSmith.GoStrata.com](mailto:JeffSmith.GoStrata.com)  
[JeffS.GoStrata.com](mailto:JeffS.GoStrata.com)

### Maps

If you'd like to include a map with your location, take advantage of some personalization and show the distance from the recipient's house to your business. This adds both personalization and relevance, and again, will make your viewer feel seen and important.



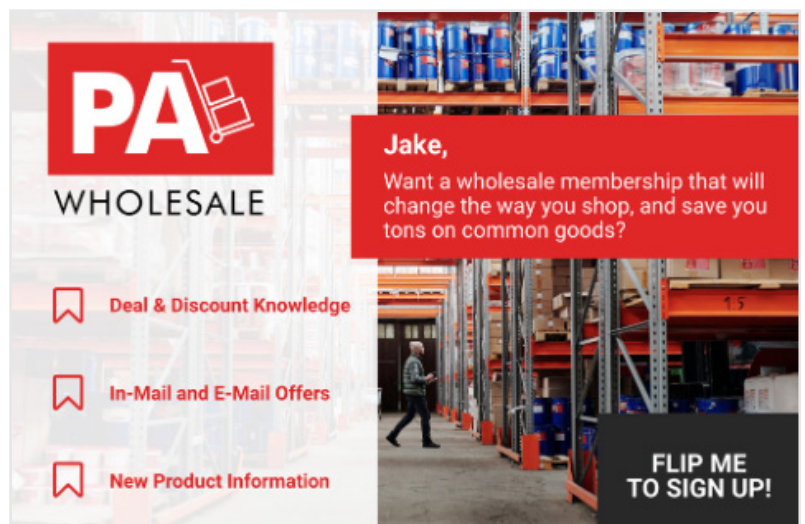
## Best Practices: Graphics

### Vibrancy

Utilize highly vibrant and eye-catching colors as much as possible - as long as they align and/or work with your branding. Don't be afraid to take some risks and try things out. After all, a picture (especially one that's vibrant and unique) can be worth a thousand words.

### On-Brand

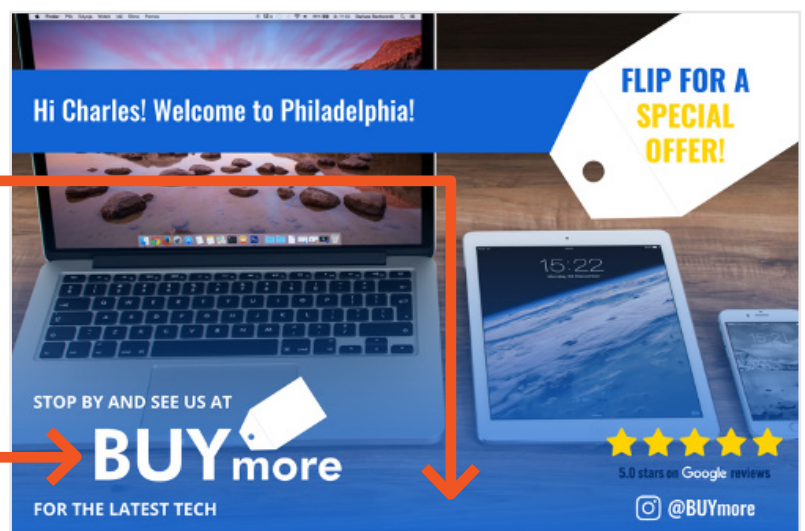
Always ensure, and even do a double-check, that all fonts, colors, graphics, textures, and more are on-brand. If you have a brand guide, take some time to contrast and compare to create and continue consistency.



### Clarity

If an element, such as text or a logo, is difficult to see due to busy or similarly colored background imagery, add a transparent or gradient background of one of your brand colors.

Similarly, if an element is difficult to see because of a light or dark background, try changing it to all white or all black.





## Best Practices: Graphics (continued)

### No Distractions

When choosing graphics, look for ones that will complement your brand and content, not distract from it.



### Social Media

Only include your social media handles if and where necessary. If you only choose to only include one, pick the one most relevant to your business and most used by your customers.







## Best Practices: CTAs

### Ensure Your Mailer Has a Call to Action

Use precise, clear language so that your recipient knows *exactly* what to expect when they take action.

Visit the link to learn more ✕

Visit the link to request a referral ✓

### Ensure Your CTA is Front & Center

And that a lead-in to the CTA, or the CTA itself, is available on every page.



### Utilize Multiple Forms of Interaction

QR codes are useful when you have longer links. They hide tracking information and can enable 1:1 engagement tracking.

Personalized URLs\* are also great for implementing 1:1 engagement tracking and garnering the viewer's curiosity. These types of URLs can make them feel special as they see their name on both the direct mail piece, and on a webpage.

\*Be sure to call out this personalization. It's been found that using a purl without addressing the elephant in the room (that their name is in the link!) can cause a lack of trust.



## Best Practices: CTAs (continued)

### Separate eBRC and PURL CTAs from the BRC

BRCs get high responses because they're half of the piece. Give eBRCs and/or PURLs the same space, and you'll see your response rates increase.

Keep in mind, a large percentage of recipients will *only* respond via online forms, and that's okay. To avoid missing out on potential customers, vary your CTAs based on demographic information, when possible.

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### Ensure the QR Code Takes Up Space

If you include a QR code, make sure it utilizes more space than the other elements on the back of your direct mailer. The QR code should draw the viewer's eye, and *first*.

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### Minimize Conversion Steps

Every step you make a prospect take to get to the CTA is another 'conversion step.' So, while envelopes can be exciting, they force prospects to decide whether they'll view your mailer before even seeing your creative and messaging.

If using an envelope is absolutely necessary, be sure to use envelope messaging such as, "free gift inside!" to enhance the likelihood of the recipient opening your piece. Make sure the envelope answers the question: "What do I get by opening this envelope?"

If using a digitally printed self-mailer, ensure you include personalization on the front, and messaging that encourages the recipient to read on. And, if the self-mailer folds, make sure a CTA is apparent on the outside of the self-mailer, and that it answers the question: "Why should someone open this mailer?"





## Best Practices: CTAs (continued)

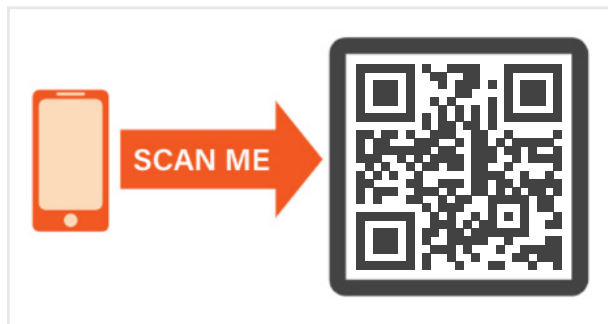
### The QR code and URL or PURL Should Always Be the Same Color

(Unless the background of the QR code is the same color as the PURL/URL). Overall, ensure that both are given the same emphasis, as some of your customers will be attracted to a QR code, while others will be drawn to some form of a URL.



### Create emphasis on the QR code

To create emphasis and focus on your QR code, add a “scan here” arrow and phone icon.





## Get in touch:

Ready to put our people, processes, and technology to work for you? Let's make smart happen together.

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