

**Building Your Mailing List**  
Blue Ribbon Consulting, LDO, LLC  
Lisa Derby Oden  
273 Poor Farm Road  
New Ipswich, NH 03071  
(603) 878-1694  
Email: [lisa@horseconsulting.com](mailto:lisa@horseconsulting.com)

There are many ways to get your horse services and/or product into the mind of your client or buyer. Some of these methods are: advertising in newspapers, magazines, radio, television, billboards and other signage, direct mail, promotional materials with your logo, internet, telemarketing..The list is a long one, and it can frequently be difficult to decide where to spend your marketing time and money. A good marketing plan will make use of a variety of tools based on who, and how many, that particular tool targets and reaches.

Direct mail is a widely used marketing tool of small businesses of all kinds. It provides an effective method for your horse business to stay in the front of your client and prospects minds. Your mailing list is the backbone of your direct mail program, and a valuable asset for your horse business. If you don't have a mailing list you can start now to build one.

If you already have one, remember to go over it periodically to change, remove, and add names and addresses.

#### **How do you go about building your mailing list?**

- 1) Start with the obvious - your customers - past and present. Add your new customers as your business grows.
- 2) What associations are you a member of? Add these organizations to your list. Check with the association to see if their mailing list is available, and if there is a fee for it.
- 3) Who else does what you do? No two businesses are exactly alike. Your competition may have customers who are interested in some of your services/product, just as some of your customers may be interested in what the competition has to offer.
- 4) "Prospect" for names. Review trade publications and directories frequently. Scan the internet for snail mail addresses. If you're at a trade fair, show, or other event pick up the programs and flyers. Many of the sponsors and patrons are good additions to your list. The yellow pages is another good source.
- 5) When you have an open house or other function that the public is invited to, or are advertising a special sale or product, have a drawing for a door prize or gift. The coupons that everyone fills out for the drawing then become new names for your list.
- 6) Written, telephone, and internet inquiries regarding your business can be part of your list. Just let the inquirer know that you would like to keep them posted of new developments and offerings that may be of interest to them. If they are opposed to being on your mailing list, they will decline your offer.
- 7) Your suppliers and vendors can be part of your list.
- 8) Be sure to bring business cards with you when you are off your property. As you chat with your peers and colleagues at formal and informal meetings, there comes a time when you swap business cards. These people should be added to your list.
- 9) Local and industry press are an important addition to your list. You may want to decide whether you send this group your direct mail or a media release, or both.

The easiest way to maintain your list once you've started it is on a computer. If you don't have a computer and its not in the budget for the immediate future, then outsource this task. Once the information is on a computer in a database you greatly increase your options for your mailings. The address information can be printed directly on labels; it can be sent via e-mail to your printer

or copy center where they can do all the addressing for you; and it can be stored on disk and given to your printer to access. The list can also be coded as you compile it so that you can do partial mailings to those with particular interests.

Now you're ready to go build your list, design a direct mail campaign, and watch your business grow!

(Lisa Derby Oden has been providing business development, marketing, and association consulting services to the horse industry since 1995. Oden is author of "Growing Your Horse Business" and "Bang For Your Buck: Making \$ense of Marketing For Your Horse Business." She is the 1999 AHC Van Ness Award recipient for outstanding service to the horse industry. She can be reached at: (603)878-1694; email at [Lisa@horseconsulting.com](mailto:Lisa@horseconsulting.com); or visit her website at [www.horseconsulting.com](http://www.horseconsulting.com)