

DMNews

Gift subscriptions: Seven super subscription steps

Peter Stein, director of business development, Canterbury Graphics Strategic Marketing

August 11, 2008

Everyone loves getting gifts — no matter how small — and the gift-giver reaps the rewards of gratitude. It comes as no surprise, then, that gifts are a highly effective and profitable source of subscriptions for publishers, and have been for many years. There are a number of tried and true techniques that you can follow for acquiring new gift subscriptions and increasing retention on gift renewals.

First of all, get on board. Utilize low cost marketing vehicles such as cover wraps, tip-ons and blow-in and bind-in cards to acquire new gift subscriptions. With postage costs continuing to increase, these are great ways to utilize the magazine as a marketing vehicle for acquiring new gift subscriptions.

Decide that “the buck(slip) stops here.” Promote gift subscriptions through your renewal series by inserting a buckslip with a gift offer. This will yield incremental subscriptions at a very low cost.

You may also want to try a “twofer”. Use a two for one gift offer through a cold mailing. This offer traditionally garners exceptional response rates and the back-end typically holds up well.

On gift renewals use a “negative option” order form. For example, for a series we did for a client, our form read: “Each of the following gifts will be renewed automatically unless you cross off a name.”

Use multiple media to shock and awe. Integrate your gift marketing efforts using a combination of mail, wraps, Web marketing and e-mail marketing.

Remind them why they love you. Push the benefits of the magazine to potential gift givers and resell the benefits during gift renewals. To really sell them on the gift subscription renewal, you need to remind people why they gave the gift initially.

Lastly, remember to “deck the halls.” Creative should be fun and holiday-themed.