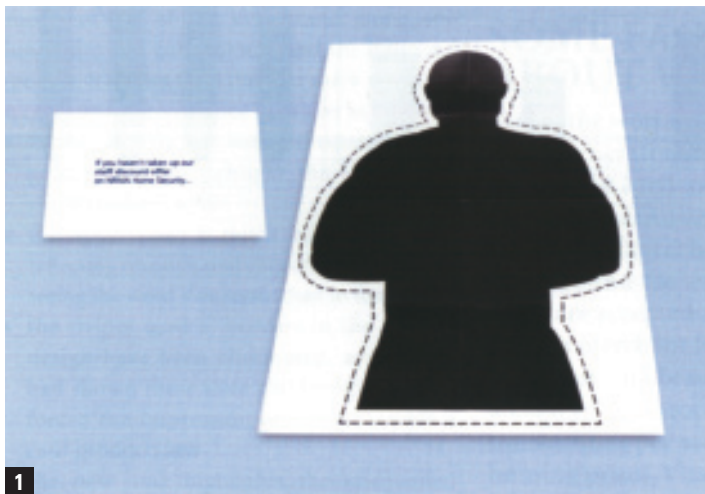


THE DIRECT MAIL TEST

Malcolm Auld reviews some of Australia's best (and worst) direct mail



1



2

When you're asked to 'judge' finished creative work, there is a tendency to overanalyse, so I've simply commented on these packs based on my initial reaction to seeing them for the first time and then given a bit more insight into how they may have performed better. I have no idea if these packs have

been tested or if their success is measured by their contribution to brand awareness, rather than simply the response rates.

And when you've been creating advertising as long as I have, it's rare you see anything new. Which is the case with the mailpacks featured in this issue. Not that there's anything wrong with using ideas that have been executed before - after all, if they've worked previously, there's a good chance they'll work again. But I've forgotten how many facsimile pay envelopes, coat hangers, and paint tubes/free art I've seen over the years.

Typical of many mailings using envelopes, a number of these mail packs don't use their envelopes effectively. The envelope has two purposes. One is mechanical - to carry the contents. The other is to encourage the recipient to open it or, to quote Bill Jame, one of the industry's most famous copywriters, "the envelope is the hotpants on the hooker".

We tend to forget these basic premises when writing our mailings and instead we write puffery or corporate statements that don't encourage the

1. CLIENT - SGIC HOME SECURITY AGENCY - M&C SAATCHI DIRECT SYDNEY

Having once been a marketing manager in the security business this pack tickled my fancy. A very clever way to demonstrate what you'd have to do if you didn't take up the special offer. Simple, engaging and probably paid for itself easily. And I bet there's a few 'Dangerous Daves' pinned to the walls in the agency. One of those pieces you wish you'd done yourself and also gave the client some personality within the agency.

2. CLIENT - DIRECT RESPONSE AUSTRALIA AGENCY - POLKADOT (now Imagine Creative)

I look forward to seeing this agency's new business mailings, as it has historically delivered some very creative 3Dimensional packs. The film canister is a well-used device that will always be opened and allows for theming around dramas, blockbuster events and the like. This sample included a free DVD for the movie *Casablanca* and the free popcorn matched the film theme as part of the involvement device. I expect everyone who received it, opened it to see what was inside.



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