

“10 great tips to help you make your direct mail work...”



Brought to you by KJS Print to Mail Service Ltd

© Copyright Results Corporate Europe plc 2006 – 2007. Not Exhaustive.

“10 great tips to help you make your direct mail work...”

Contents

01	Direct Mail and your future strategies.
03	How to begin writing and creating marketing that communicates effectively with your prospective and existing clients!
05	A step-by-step guide on how your direct mail marketing pieces break down and what you need to consider when you develop each stage.
06	Building rapport with your reader.
07	Effectively educating your reader with your body copy.
07	Use the right fonts for your headings, for your sub-headings and for your main copy.
08	6 Tips Worth Studying...
08	Offers... Special or Otherwise.
09	How can you allay people's natural scepticism? What can you offer as a risk reversal or guarantee?
09	Use a 'Call to Action' for Direct Response.
09	Laying out your piece.
10	Use your envelope to sell for you.
12	Useful Information.

Direct Mail and your future strategies

90%

of the scientists that have ever lived are alive today

There are always going to be “**new**” things coming along, technology is moving at an amazing pace these days. I heard a statistic quoted the other day that said 90% of the scientists that have ever lived are alive today, now that’s pretty amazing, but I don’t doubt it.

So what has that to do with getting the best results from your Direct Mail?

The fact is that whilst markets have changed and there is more and more data and information around, the core strategies and the major points to ensuring you maximise the success of your Direct Mail haven’t changed very much at all, it’s all in the detail... it’s not what you say but how you say it, it isn’t what you do it’s how you do it.

“Direct mail doesn’t work for us! We’ve tried it, and it doesn’t work!”

That’s been heard many times from disillusioned people who’ve poured resources into Direct Mail and felt they’ve wasted their money.

Why? Often because they lack the fundamental elements of success... the right strategy, planning... and execution.

Direct mail is just another “**delivery platform**” it shouldn’t be seen as something in isolation. It is simply another delivery platform for your message, a very strong and effective one when done properly... but it’s part of your marketing “**mix**”.

Indeed, **ANY** delivery process that can reach your target market,

and achieve your outcomes cost effectively, should be seriously considered and included in your “**mix**”. It may include direct mail, but possibly also telemarketing, magazine advertising, mail order, web marketing, fax campaigns, email, even canvassers... or a combination of these.

There are those who would insist that “**direct mail**” is dead, and email and emailed full colour brochures and HTML e-Newsletters have replaced the humble letter or posted package.

cost is not the issue, cost effectiveness is

Whilst it's tempting to believe this, there are some who are totally comfortable with an **“electronic”** brochure... but many who aren't. They won't **'dial up'** or log on just to look at your brochure or your promotion.

Having said that though, mail is a high per unit cost in comparison, especially in comparison to faxing or email campaigns for example, but **“cost”** is not the issue. **Cost EFFECTIVENESS** is. You have to be very careful to ensure your direct mail is delivering cost effectively... and that is what this guide is about.

Direct mail has not been replaced, there are simply other alternatives now. You only have to look in your own letterbox to see that. People still like to touch and feel their mail. In fact, there are studies that have shown that direct mail, when executed properly, can far **'out pull'** electronic campaigns.

We've teamed up with marketing specialists Results Corporation to put together this guide, it's written very simply and makes good use of some excellent points that we know impact massively on the success, or otherwise, of a campaign.



Stuart Speechley

Director

KJS Print to Mail Services Ltd

How to begin writing and creating marketing that communicates effectively with your prospective and existing clients!

When you begin writing with a blank page it can be one of the most difficult things to do but there are ways to make it easier.

Everything in life is a process, getting to work in the morning means you go through several processes, showering, brushing your teeth, getting dressed, having breakfast etc. Likewise, developing your direct mail is best achieved by working through a step-by-step process.

The first thing you will need to do is consider and identify with clarity, who you want to communicate with. Making sure that you get your target market right is critical to the success of your campaign.

If you send information to somebody who has no interest in the subject matter it won't work for you. That may sound simplistic but the reality is that most of the Direct Mail sent is '**mass mailing**' in the hope that it '**hits**' the right person. It is the same whatever you're selling, whether it is a golf holiday, a hotel break or telecommunications, ensure that you get the very best, targeted data you possibly can and it will increase your chances of success.

Targeting is **King!**

Decide What You Want to Achieve and Be Specific

Similar thinking to targeting needs to be applied when setting! Once you've identified your data list you must decide what, exactly, you want to achieve with your mailer? Brainstorm everything you want to put into your piece.

Do you want them to call you, to take a call from you, to buy directly off the page or something entirely different? Whatever it is, decide right at the beginning of your process and make sure your direct mail literature is geared towards that outcome. This focus will give you better outcomes?

Remember, in order of importance, getting your targeting market profile right should come first as it can increase or decrease your response rate dramatically.

Once you have exhausted your brainstorming and written down all your ideas you will need to sort them into order of importance as follows:

- 1 The absolutely crucial things you want to say
- 2 What you need to say
- 3 What you would like to say if you have room

You will need to be aware of one major pitfall that many businesses make!!... They see an example that another company has produced and, perhaps as they are extremely busy, they will merely copy the example and substitute their name and details... **this NEVER, EVER gives the BEST RESULTS!**

These figures show how the individual elements of your direct mail campaign can increase your response rate.

TARGETING by up to

2000%

HEADLINE by up to

1000%

BODY COPY by up to

750%

OFFER by up to

300%

GRAPHICS & DESIGN

by up to

150%

When you are preparing your piece you will need to work through the following stages in this order as it will make it easier to write.

A

Accurately establish your target

B

Decide on your offer

C

Write your copy

D

Then write your headline

E

Once you can see your piece communicates it is time to add design and graphics

A step-by-step guide on how your direct mail marketing pieces break down and what you need to consider when you develop each stage.

Begin with a compelling headline

Your headline is the most important element of your marketing communication pieces as it determines 75% to 80% of the pulling power and therefore, as a general rule should take up about 20% – 25% of your total space.

Putting your headline in quotation marks can increase recall by up to 28%.

Your headline needs to do at least one of two key things...

- 1 It must make a promise or offer a benefit
- 2 It should overcome a frustration or a problem

Where possible it should also direct both of the above at a specific target market.

You need to try and make your headline as compelling as possible. One way in which to do it is by using the word “**you**” as it makes it very specific to the reader.

For example, “**7 Reasons Why You’ll Be Thrilled With...etc.**” or “**5 Great Ways to Solve Your...etc.**”.

Placing your headline in upper and lower cases will make it easier on the eye to read!!... never use all capitals as it has the opposite effect and makes it very difficult to read.

Your headline can often be found in the body copy of your piece, which is why it pays to write your text first. To help you do this you should read through your copy and pick out key words then see how you can incorporate them into your headline to show the benefits of your offer to your readers.

To enable you to overcome frustrations and make a promise, you need to think about frustrations your clients or prospects may have with you and your industry and also the solutions you offer.

Your headline determines
75% to 80% of the **pulling power**

Building rapport with your reader

Once you have grabbed your reader's attention with your headline they will read your first sentence, you can now begin to educate them as to why they should buy from or deal with you. Your copy needs to do the following things...

start with a
**rapport-
building
paragraph**

- 1 Build rapport
- 2 Show your reader you understand their needs and frustrations
- 3 Overcome their lack of knowledge about you, your offer or both as pertinent.
- 4 Translate the features of your products and services into benefits to your reader

You need to show your reader that you understand what they need as well as that you understand what it is like to deal with your industry and any frustrations that come with it, so start with a rapport-building paragraph which speaks to your reader as if you were face to face. It helps demonstrate your customer focus. People like to be spoken to in an informal, conversational manner.

A great way to start this is by brainstorming “**you**” sentences, such as... you have... you want... you can't afford not to... you have probably... etc.

Then select the sentences your reader is most likely to respond to i.e. **“Like many people you have probably wondered how you can get rid of xxx and at the same time have a highly efficient system that will xxxx...”**

Written correctly, this will give a natural lead into the remainder of your copy. In fact, at this point you really need to educate your reader about exactly what you can do for them and how you can overcome their frustrations.

Effectively educating your reader with your body copy

You must give your reader exactly what they want at this point, which is to know what's in it for them? What is this all about? Why would they be interested in this? Wherever you can, be as specific as possible, don't talk in platitudes. You wouldn't expect anybody to send you a mailer that says, **“Our product/service is quite good”** you expect people to tell you how great they are, for whatever reason, so you really now need to talk specifics.

For example; This programme is designed to ensure you get the maximum return on investment, every single time you use it, everything from yyyyyyy to zzzzzzzzz will improve within 7 months.

Always stand in their shoes and try to figure out how your message would come across from their perspective... remember, it's all about how they perceive you and your offering.

Every time you mention a feature, you need to relate it back to your reader with a benefit. For example if you were to say **“Assistance with your computer systems”**, you'd need to ask yourself What is the benefit of this is to the reader? i.e. **“...which means you'll be able to receive expert advice on your specific requirements ... and have peace of mind that you have chosen the right system for your business.”** After all, the readers aren't concerned about the features of your

products and services; they are concerned about the benefits of these features to them.

Always write in **“The Point Of You”**. You must write from your READERS perspective and not your own. To test this, look at your **‘you and we’** ratio. Ideally, you should have at least 3 **“you's”** to every **“we”** in order to be communicating effectively with your reader. Remember that your marketing and advertising must focus on WIIFM or **“What's In It For ME?”**. Unless the recipients of your message can clearly see the benefit for them, you'll lose them!

Try to employ some **“Power Words”**. There are certain words that can move people emotionally and move them to action. Apart from someone's own name, **“you”** is certainly the most effective power word. Other's include: now, how to, new, free, amazing, introducing, health, easy, proven, guarantee, save, love, money.

Use the right fonts for your headings, for your sub-headings and for your main copy

From a design perspective the **‘cleaner’** fonts are preferred by designers, Sans Serif fonts such as Arial and Verdana... but it's proven that whilst they are very good for Headlines and Sub Headlines they aren't the best fonts for body text, that falls to Serif fonts such as Times New Roman and Palatino.

There are figures to support these statements as well; in a recent Marketing Seminar, University figures stated that in split tests to determine comprehension 14% thought that information written using Sans Serif fonts were the easiest to comprehend whilst 67% thought they were not. Similarly, 72% thought that when Serif fonts were used for the information, they were the easiest to comprehend and only 12% thought they weren't.

So, to get the best comprehension of your message, use 20 point Arial for your Headings, 16 point Arial for your Sub Headings and 12 point Times New Roman for your body copy.

6 Tips Worth Studying ...

- 1 Write as you speak, (almost as if you were on the telephone or face to face) in a style your reader will feel comfortable with.
- 2 Make it easy to read and understand. Let someone read it out aloud to you to see if it is easy to follow.
- 3 Be enthusiastic! Always be positive about your product or service. Make your message dramatic when possible. Keep your message simple. Never complicated. No jargon or big words. Be specific. A product advertised as **“exceeding government standards by 52.7%”** resulted in a sales boom for a new product. When the message was **“softened”** to **“over 50%”**, the sales dropped off dramatically. Harness the **“Law of Specificity”** which says the more specific you are the more powerful your message will be.
- 4 Avoid **“brag and boast”** copy. **“Were the biggest... we’re the best...”** as this is very subjective and can be questionable, remember, even well known companies say **“Probably, the best...”**. If you want to talk about your new offices or have been in business for X years, say **“Our new offices make it easier for you to park, and to examine our services in air-conditioned comfort...”** or **“We’ve been in business for X years, which means you get the security of knowing you’re dealing with a reputable and experienced company...”** you need to remember to ALWAYS look through the eyes of your prospect to find the benefits. Make your message believable, even if that means pointing out shortcomings, it will draw readers to the honesty and integrity of your piece.
- 5 Be absolutely honest in what you say. Be confident about going into detail with long copy on strong selling features... What matters is what it DOES, and on that you can write multiple pages and still keep a prospect interested.
- 6 If you’re letters run over on more than one page a good idea is to split your sentence and have the second half of the sentence on the next page as it will encourage people to look at the next page in order to finish the sentence and will naturally lead them onto reading the rest of your letter.

Offers!!... Special or Otherwise

Including an offer in your piece can increase your response by up to 300%. Can you offer a FREE, no obligation quotation/visit/demonstration/consultation etc.? You also need to make sure you build up the value of whatever your offer is. If you offer something free you must put a value on it otherwise it could be thought of as worthless. Do you have any **“Soft Dollar”** options to offer which will have high perceived value for your clients but entail low cost to you? Explain your offer in detail? i.e. **“Call XXX NOW for your special, FREE, no obligation visit/consultation/demonstration etc”**, in which we will take you through our X step X guide for assessing your specific requirements (valued at £X).

How can you allay people's natural scepticism? What can you offer as a risk reversal or guarantee?

Unfortunately many people are sceptical. They need more than just a good reason to respond to you. They need to have the feeling of **"no risk"**. You can often overcome this by doing two specific things. You can use testimonials and you can use guarantees.

Can you include some testimonials from delighted customers, or alternatively, explain your **'one-year, no quibble'** guarantee to them so that they know you will do everything possible to delight them?

It's worth thinking about it in some detail, with testimonials their value is the fact that they are a third party endorsing your product or service... you can tell people how good you are until you're blue in the face, but that's what is expected, somebody else edifying you is far more powerful.

Use a 'Call to Action' for Direct Response

People like to be led, they want to be told what to do. So the more specific your call to action is and the easier you make it for your reader to respond, the greater your chance of them responding. You can make your call to action stronger, by linking it to your offer. i.e. **"Call NOW for your FREE, no obligation evaluation on FREEFONE (number) and find out how you can solve your xxx concerns."** That way, you're emphasising the word NOW and also adding the reason for why they should call.

You could include a direct response form i.e. a fax back sheet or reply slip. You should make these as easy as possible for your prospect to respond to. You already have their details so make it easy for them by filling them in on the form. Also include tick boxes as you're much more likely to receive a response if all your prospect has to do is tick a box. If you include a reply slip, again make sure it's easy for them i.e. tick boxes and enclose a postage paid envelope.

Laying out your piece

A captioned photograph needs to be as close to the top right-hand as possible. The reader will read the caption second, after the headline.

Use benefit orientated subheadings to guide your reader through your information. This will allow people in a hurry to scan your piece and still pick up the key messages.

You should try to keep your paragraphs as short as possible so they give the impression that it will be a quick and easy read.

Photographs showing your product in use beat straight product illustration by 30%.

Adding a PS to the end

The PS or Post Script is most likely to be the second part of your letter or leaflet to be read, therefore, it should include your call to action, your offer or re-emphasise the point of the letter or leaflet.

Use your envelope to sell for you

You can use your envelope, or if you polywrap you can use your header sheet, to encourage your prospects or clients to open the post and really get into your message.

Whether you use your selling message in the form of a headline or a statement, by giving your reader another very strong selling message you can lead them inside, right into the heart of the reasons why they should buy from you.

There are those that say, don't use an envelope message as it 'tips people off' but the reader will know what it is once they open it anyway, the key is to get them to the point

where they want to open it, it almost jumps out of the post delivery begging to be read.

Another way of making your direct mail stand out from the rest of the mail is to use colour or graphics on your envelopes or headers. A bright coloured envelope really does stand out, or you could even use photographs and graphics that depict your product or service. As long as it is relevant and well done.

The first thing is the strong and compelling headline, without it your recipient won't keep reading.

Begin to build rapport and perhaps empathise with their needs, wants or issues. If your reader feels that you understand them they are far more likely to continue.

At this point you need to tell them what is in it for them, from their perspective. Remember that all your readers apply basic human nature they want to know.

What Is In It For Me?

Once you've told them the benefits from their perspective you need to validate what you are saying or claiming. Be as specific as possible and keep in mind the following...

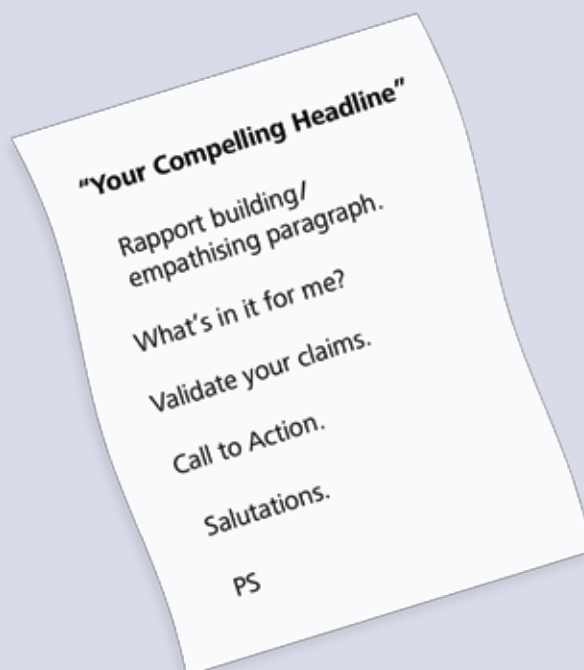
We do...

Which means...

So that...

Include an offer where possible, and make it a limited time offer if you can as it can prompt people to take action now rather than later. When thinking about your offers don't think "**20% Off...**" it isn't very compelling unless it's a stunning offer and you're using it as loss leader. Think about what you can include that is high perceived value but costs you little.

Finally, here's a 'formulaic' letter layout.



You must then ask them to take action.

“Call NOW on 0800 1234567 to get your...”,
you need to lead them, it’s the best way of retaining an element of control.

Once you’ve signed off you should use a PS, and make it link to the headline, after all that is what prompted them to read in the first place so you can finish with what excited them at the beginning.

We hope that your guide has been useful for you, it may be a reminder of how best to get your direct mail to maximise and give you the best Return On Investment, or it may be a whole host of brand new information that you can use to begin to get the highest return you’ve ever had.

This is just an outline but I’m sure you can see that there are some very valuable **‘rules’** that, when followed, will lift your response, increase your revenue and ramp up your profits.

If you have any questions or want to know more about making your direct mail work effectively please contact:

KJS Print to Mail Services Ltd
+44 (0)845 308 2007,
sales@kjsmail.co.uk
www.kjsprinttomail.co.uk

A Series – For Trimmed Work

A0	841 x 1189mm	33 ¹ / ₈ ” x 46 ³ / ₄ ”
A1	594 x 841mm	23 ³ / ₈ ” x 33 ¹ / ₈ ”
A2	420 x 594mm	16 ¹ / ₂ ” x 23 ³ / ₈ ”
A3	297 x 420mm	11 ³ / ₄ ” x 16 ¹ / ₂ ”
A4	210 x 297mm	8 ¹ / ₄ ” x 11 ³ / ₄ ”
A5	148 x 210mm	5 ⁷ / ₈ ” x 8 ¹ / ₄ ”
A6	105 x 148mm	4 ¹ / ₈ ” x 5 ⁷ / ₈ ”
A7	74 x 105mm	2 ⁷ / ₈ ” x 4 ¹ / ₈ ”
A8	52 x 74mm	2” x 2 ⁷ / ₈ ”
A9	37 x 52mm	1 ¹ / ₂ ” x 2”
A10	26 x 37mm	1” x 1 ¹ / ₂ ”

SRA Series – For Bleed Work

SRA0	900 x 1280mm
SRA1	640 x 860mm
SRA2	450 x 640mm
SRA3	320 x 450mm

ENVELOPE SIZES

Envelopes may appear to be simple but the range of choice is vast. There is an entire industry dedicated to the most sophisticated techniques available to manufacture a range of products to meet everybody’s needs. The international envelope size range has been developed to accommodate the A size sheets – the range of envelope sizes is designated the ‘C’ series.

Size C3

To take: A3 (297 x 420mm) unfolded
Uses: Computer printouts, brochures, calendars, showcards.

Size C4

To take: A4 (210 x 297mm) unfolded
A3 (297 x 420mm) folded once.
Uses: Brochures, booklets and general printed matter, A4 size flat.

Size C5

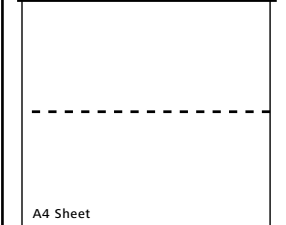
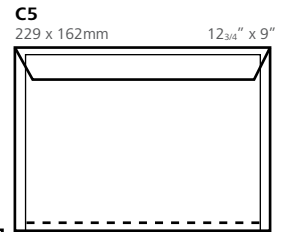
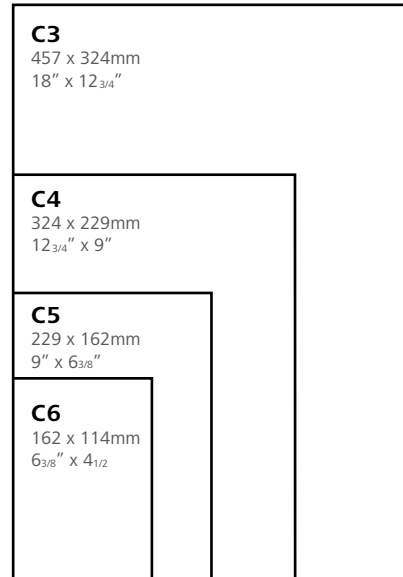
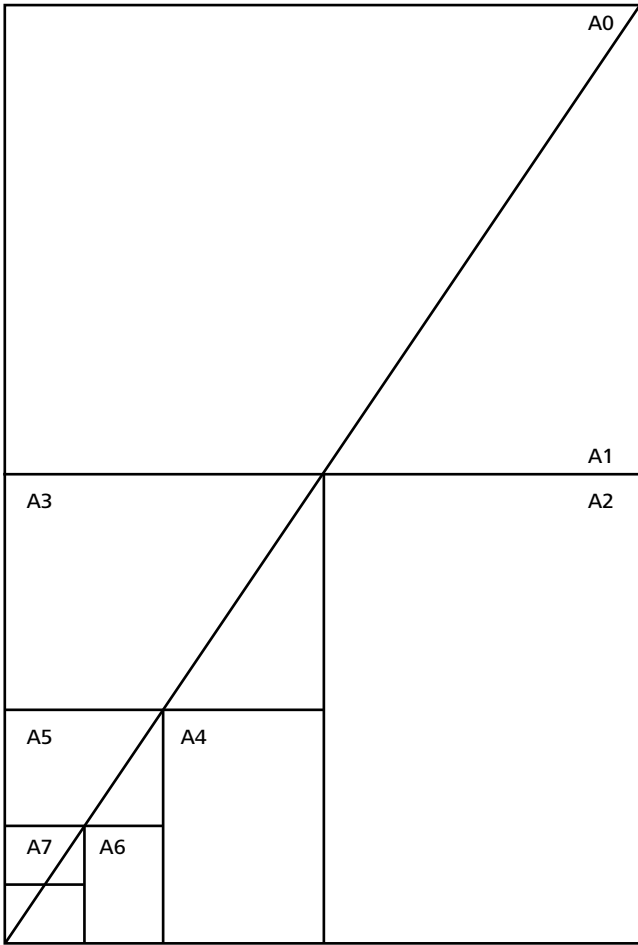
To take: A4 (210 x 297mm) folded once. A5 (148 x 210mm) unfolded.
Uses: Small brochures and letterheads, A4 folded in half.

Size C6

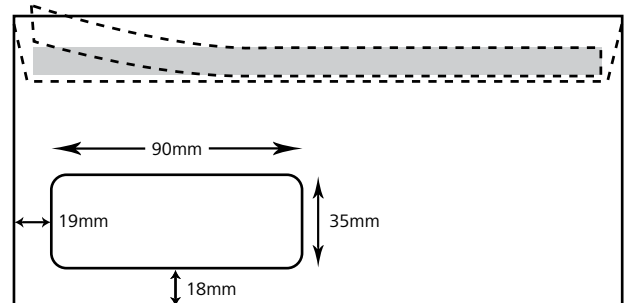
To take: A4 (210 x 297mm) folded twice A5 (148 x 210mm) folded once.
Uses: All general correspondence, invoices etc.

Size DL

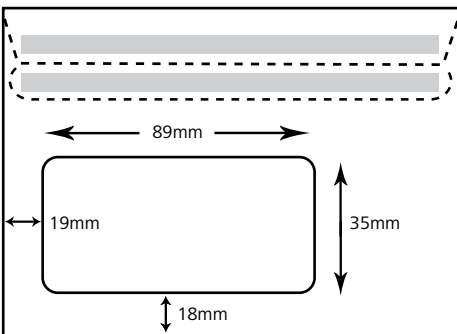
To take: A4 (210 x 297mm) folded twice A5 (148 x 210mm) folded once.
Uses: All general correspondence, invoices etc.



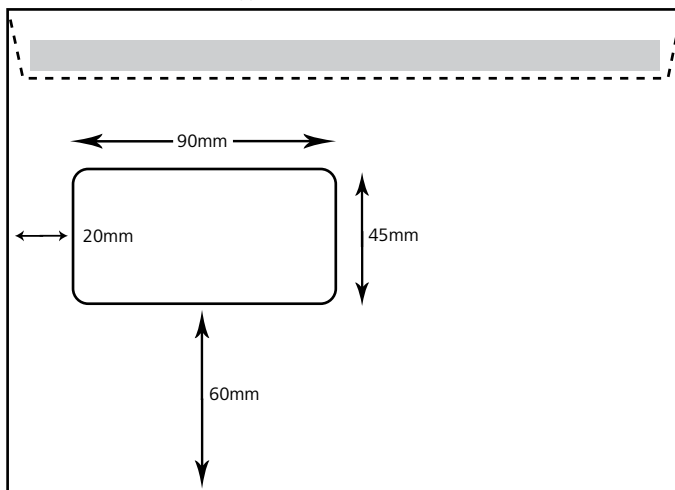
DL Peel & Seal Window
110 x 229mm 6 3/8" x 8 5/8"



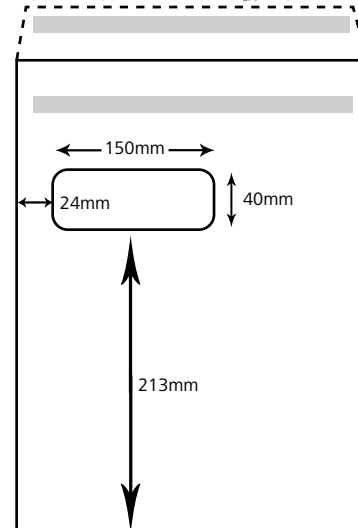
C6 Self Seal Window (double flap)
114 x 162mm 14 1/2" x 6 3/8"



C5 Gum Window
162 x 229mm 6 3/8" x 9"



C4 Self Seal Window (single flap)
324 x 229mm 12 3/4" x 9"





KJS Print to Mail Service Ltd

9-12 Astore Park

Padholme Road East

Peterborough PE1 5XL

t +44 (0) 845 308 2007

f +44 (0) 845 308 2008

e sales@kjsmail.co.uk

www.kjsprinttomail.co.uk