

## **The Literature Package\***

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Most literature packages can have six elements:

1. The envelope (a flat 9" x10").
2. The letter (personalized laser letter with a signature).
3. The sell piece or product literature.
4. Where-to-buy lists or phone numbers of the closest reseller (could be in the letter or a separate office listing).
5. A business reply card (preferably pre-addressed with the prospect's name.)
6. The business card of your direct salesperson.

### ***The Envelope***

The envelope should be a flat, large receptacle that will hold everything without folding the contents to get them into the envelope. Don't stuff nicely printed literature information a small 6" x 9" envelope. The outside of the envelope should have the words:

"You requested this literature"

This forethought solves several issues:

- The mail room or the gatekeeper will not throw it out.
- The recipient will be reminded that they asked for the literature.

### ***The Letter***

The letter is definitely a sales piece. You should use the same care in its creation that you would use for a letter for a direct mail piece. Have your agency write the letter or better yet have them design the entire response package. The letter should be:

- Dated.
- Personally addressed.
- Preferably one page (this isn't a direct mail package).
- Refer to their inquiry and the product inquired about.
- Tell a story. Speak to the inquirer about the benefits of your company in human, down-to-earth language that the inquirer can identify with. Use a dull product pitch, and it will go unread. Tell a story, and you may capture their imagination.
- Be signed by someone in sales, preferably the salesperson who will be calling on them.

- Below the postscript some companies will list the names of the closest resellers or the sales office of the person signing the letter.
- Make sure that the post script sells.

Some companies will replace the letter with a tent card that says: “Thanks for the inquiry. Call us if you need anything.” Sometimes the tent card is quite large and is a non-laser printed form letter. Advice: Tent cards tend to go unread.

### ***The Literature: How to Save \$10-\$20 for every Literature Package***

The literature itself should be what the person asked for and nothing more. I often hear a product manager say, “Well, while we’re sending them this piece of literature, let’s send them these three multiple-page brochures, a catalog, a PR release, and a few specifications sheets. Maybe they’ll get excited about these other products.” When the recipient gets the multipound literature package with so much unasked-for material, their first inclination is to set it aside until he or she has more time to look through it. Will this ever happen? Probably not in their lifetime. After a while, the monster package is most likely edged off the desk and into the trash.

The other obvious reason to send people only what they asked for is cost. Put the four-color, four-page brochure in the package with a letter, and it might cost \$1 in labor, a few cents for the letter, and \$2 for the brochure and postage. Add the second unasked-for brochure, and you’ve doubled the cost of the contents and, probably, the postage. The cost of the literature package can zoom from a few dollars to \$10 to \$20 or more. This is a tactical mistake that can cost the company tens of thousands of dollars over a period of time.

### ***Where to Buy and the Business Reply Card***

The where-to-buy instruction in the literature package is crucial to creating a preference. If the sale will be made by your salesperson, have them sign the letter. If you are referring the inquirer to a reseller or retail store, give them the name(s) of the closest place to find the product, but sign the letter from the highest sales executive in the company.

The last piece in the package is the business reply card. If you want to make your pitch for other products, this is the place to do it. If the BRC is pre-addressed with the prospect’s name, etc., you will get a higher percentage back than if it is not pre-addressed. This may not be easy for you to do if the fulfillment is handled in-house, but it is easy if done with an outside vendor.

\*This information has appeared in various articles and workshops Obermayer has presented. Most recently it has appeared in his book, James Obermayer, *Managing Sales Leads: Turning Cold Prospects Into Hot Customers*, (Mason, Ohio, Textere an imprint of Thomson/South-Western, 2007) and Racom Books, Page 153