

Testing Alternative Size Catalogs



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The decision to move to a smaller size catalog format must be handled very carefully to minimize risk. The first rule of direct marketing is to test, test and test again. Consider split cell (A/B) testing against a number of variables and list segments, and thoroughly evaluate response rates before making the final decision on a full rollout.

Many marketers utilize a combination of book sizes, qualifying for both flat and letter rates in their overall direct marketing mix. Some use different sizes for different purposes – to keep their marketing fresh, to **create sales events** within their marketing rotation plan, to move clearance merchandise or to launch a new product, for example.

Your response rate will not necessarily decline if you move to a smaller catalog size, but you should utilize program testing and optimal design techniques to minimize risk.

Same Square Inches, Bigger Page Count

Did You Know? These different trim-size and page-count options deliver the same total square inches.

Format	Trim	Pages	Square Inches/Page	Total Square Inches
Full Size (Flat)	8.25" x 10.5"	16	86.625"	1386"
Slim Jim	5.5" x 10.5"	24	57.75"	1386"
Digest	5.25" x 8.25"	32	43.3125"	1386"

Best Candidates for Smaller Sizes

A smaller catalog format might work if your catalog program has any of the following characteristics:

- You mail a minimum of 10,000 pieces per event.
- You sell specialty products in a tightly targeted niche (i.e., jewelry, cigars, gourmet candy, cosmetics, etc.).
- Your finished catalog weight is less than 16 ounces.
- Your full-size catalog has high product density.
- You market upscale products that could be highlighted with just one image to a page or spread.

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Small Format Catalog Strategies

- Promote clearance merchandise
- Rotate with full-size catalogs to increase frequency and keep your catalog program fresh
- New product line launch
- Reduce your prospecting mail costs
- Target lapsed customers with less expensive format
- Segment product lines by target audience
- Increase market reach by redistributing the savings

The Small-Size Bonus

Smaller trim sizes will lower the product density per page, which can be easier to read and showcases the product better, thereby lifting response. A small catalog format can also give you the advantage of a unique trim size when competing for visibility in the household mailbox.

Yes, you can still qualify for postal co-mail savings if you switch to a smaller catalog format. Quad offers many co-mail solutions for a variety of catalog sizes. We also provide postal optimization and delivery management solutions for letter rate catalogs.

Avoid these Testing Pitfalls

1. One cataloger tested a digest versus a full-size catalog. Both had the same page count. But since the digest was half the trim size, all the photos in the digest were shrunk to half size. The full-size catalog won the test – but what actually won? The trim size or the big photos?
2. Another cataloger tested a slim jim, but it didn't work because the company couldn't offer the full product range. Sure, a catalog with fewer products will get a lower response than a catalog with more products, but why remove any products at all?
3. A third cataloger tested a digest versus a full-size catalog the correct way. They offered the same products in both and kept all the photos the same size as well, putting half as many products on each of the digest pages. The test was a tie.

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Get Started

Quad/Graphics helps marketers develop their testing strategy, segmenting their data, reworking page layouts, and producing and delivering catalogs of every size effectively and efficiently to the mailbox. Contact your sales representative today to get started.

Who's Using Digest Catalogs

According to Media Finder These Companies Are...

A.G. Ferrari Foods	Dunn Knives
Adam & Eve	Edible Landscaping
Aerosoles	Freeda Vitamins
Afro World	French Connection
Amish & Plain Clothing Patterns	Golf Around the World
Animal Crackers	KB Footwear
Apricot Farm Mail Order	King's Chandelier Co.
Audiobook Stand	Lloyds
Basket Maker's Catalog, The	Lotions 'n Lace
Belgian Shoes	Neiman Marcus Home
Cheese Box, The	Shoe Express
Cherry Republic	Sierra Nut House
Chocolate Affairs	Wisconsin Cheese from Paoli
Cigar Box Label Art	Van Otis Chocolates

This is a sample of Media Finder Data published on April 19, 2013, targeting catalog titles with the following dimensions:

Spine to Face:
5" – 5.5"

Head to Foot:
8" – 8.5"

Who's Using Small Catalogs

According to Media Finder These Companies Are...

Dillard's	McSpadden Dulcimers
AGET Manufacturing Co.	Qiagen, Inc.
Alfa Aesar	Rod and Staff Publishers, Inc.
Boden	Ross Metals Corp
Burston Marketing, Inc.	Seventh Avenue
Colony Brands, Inc.	SSP Stainless Steel Products
Crate & Barrel	Starcrafts LLC
Eckler Industries, Inc.	Temple University Press
Frye's Industries, Inc.	Tognar Toolworks
Golden Trophy	Urban Oven
Katadyn Foods North America	Wild Garden Seed
Leafwood Publishers	Worldwide Treasure Bureau
McDarlin's Calligraphy	Wrap London

This is a sample of Media Finder Data published on April 19, 2013, targeting catalog titles with the following dimensions:

Spine to Face:
6" – 7.25"

Head to Foot:
8" – 9.25"

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Who's Using Slim Jim

According to Media Finder These Companies Are...

AD Trophy	Franklin Mint
Alice's Home & Cottage	Friendship House
American Cancer Society	Full Compass
Atlanta Cutlery	Godiva-Christmas Catalog
Barron's-the Sale Book	H2O Wear
Brown's Bonsai Nursery	MacMall
Catholic Child	Mississippi Gift Company
Dakin Farm	Mother Myrick's Confectionary
Deva Lifewear	Mountain Rose Herbs
Divine Delights-Taste of Heaven	Munson's Chocolates
Don Aslett's Cleaning Center	Totally Chocolate
Duluth Trading Co.	Vitamin Shoppe, The
Eagle River Nordic	Vitamin World

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6"

Head to Foot:
10.5"

Quad/Graphics (NYSE: QUAD) is a leading global printer and media channel integrator that is redefining print in today's multichannel media world by helping marketers and publishers capitalize on print's ability to complement and connect with other media channels to drive business results.

For more information on effective strategies to trim postal costs without compromising the effectiveness of your marketing efforts, email: postalsolutions@qg.com.