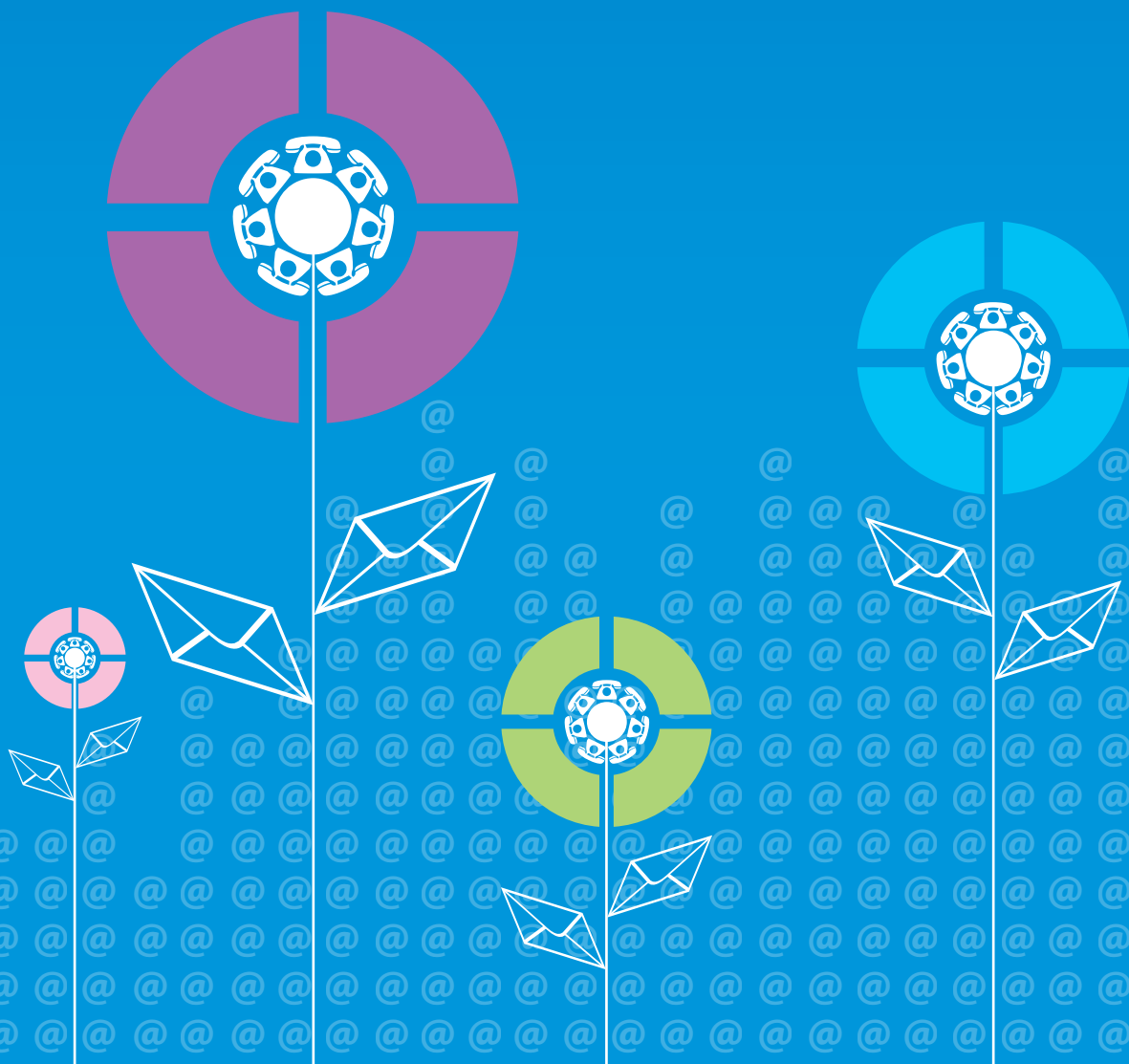




Your Handy Guide to
Growing Your Business
with Business Data
and Direct Marketing



thomsonlocal.com



This is the latest
in our series of
“Handy Guides to
Advertising”

Welcome

In this edition, we look at the key areas of direct marketing that all businesses should be using to increase their brand awareness, generate leads and win new customers.

The growth of social media platforms in recent years has transformed the way in which businesses can market themselves. However, for businesses that want to deliver tangible results and a positive return on investment, direct marketing is still much more useful. Using **email marketing, direct mail** and **telemarketing** channels, supported by good quality business data lists, are all tried and tested methods of B2B lead generation that should still be the core of your marketing strategy.

We hope you find this guide a useful tool for improving your business data and direct marketing knowledge and guiding you on where best to invest your marketing resources in 2012.

If you would like further information on direct marketing, please get in touch with us free on **0800 955 8630** to find out about our range of new direct marketing packages. They've been specifically designed to help businesses like yours increase awareness and deliver revenue from an integrated marketing campaign.

Yours sincerely,

Raj Kakar-Clayton

Commercial Director

thomsonlocal.com, Direct Marketing Services



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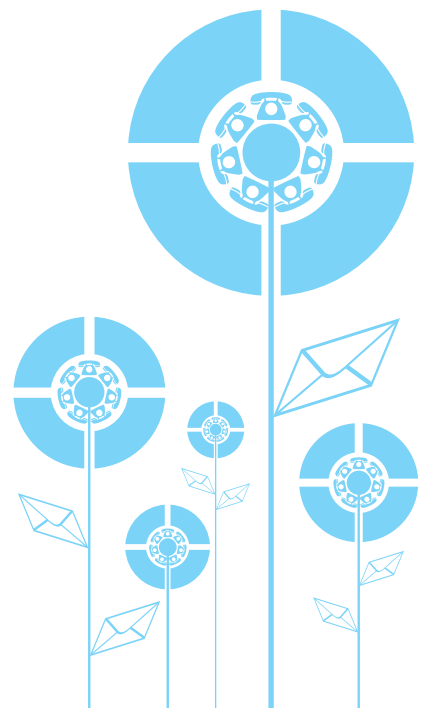
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When it comes to
communication, **74%**
of adults prefer email

*View from the Digital Inbox 2011,
Merkle - 2011*

B2B Email Marketing: **Still the King of the Digital Channels**

Social media has become a force to be reckoned with in digital marketing. There are billions of users on the most popular social networking websites and this popularity has created one of the biggest, interconnected marketplaces on the planet. What was once thought to be a fad has now become a potential revenue generator for businesses and most marketing campaigns now have social elements.

According to AllTwitter, the microblogging site is also increasingly being used to generate business leads. Some 34 per cent of the firms it surveyed said they had used the site to connect with potential clients (State of Digital Marketing Report, Webmarketing123 - 2011). So the importance of social networking in the world of business to business marketing is clear, which is why many firms are investing heavily in social marketing.

Social media is not the silver bullet, however

Social media is still a new marketing channel, however, and its relatively unproven record and sketchy return-on-investment metrics make it much less useful than email marketing. Also, despite its huge reach, social media doesn't yet match email as a form of communication - particularly in the world of business to business marketing.

Social strategies also throw up a number of other problems for marketers - not least, they are much more difficult to keep track of. Tracking social interactions and measuring their impact on a firm's bottom line is difficult. What's more, email is still the dominant method of communication for professionals as it is direct, efficient and designed with business communication in mind.

Need help with your direct marketing?

Our database has
750,000 opt-in business email addresses which
you can target.

Email marketing is far superior

Marketing stats surrounding email marketing speak for themselves. Some 71 per cent of businesses used B2B email marketing as a core element of their promotional strategies (How US Marketers Use Email, Forrester - May 27th 2011).

And when it comes to communication, 74 per cent of adults prefer email (View from the Digital Inbox 2011, Merkle - 2011). The same report also showed that 63 per cent of mobile email users check their inboxes on the move at least once per day.

What is more pertinent, however, is the stickiness of email marketing campaigns. If your business produces an interesting, sector-relevant email marketing campaign, it is likely to win potential clients over and keep them reading your email content. Marketing expert ExactTarget found that 94 per cent of daily email users subscribe to at least one marketing mailing list (Subscribers, Fans and Followers: The Social Profile, ExactTarget - 2010).

These impressive email marketing stats show that email is in many ways better than social media when it comes to promotional activities. People are far more trusting of email marketing because it has been around much longer. It is more reliable in terms of return-on-investment and it offers much better targeting potential when compared with social campaigns, which often have to be aimed at your entire subscriber base as opposed to individuals.

What does this mean when it comes to email campaign design?

The key things to take away from these stats is that a carefully crafted email marketing campaign with engaging content and a clear message will result in a higher response. So, email is a great way of starting up relationships with potential business to business clients, something which can then be built upon using social media.

The figures for mobile usage are interesting as well. More people check their emails on the move than check their social media profiles. This means mobile users are a core target market for email marketers. This has a knock-on effect for email design, as the small screens of smartphones and tablets mean your message must be carefully designed if they are to be rendered correctly. In fact as many as 50 per cent of email messages do not render correctly on a mobile device (Email Marketing Council Blog - 2007) and with business people increasingly checking in on their work email inbox on the move, this means 50 per cent of those messages may simply end up being deleted.



Demand for
high-quality business lists in
digital and non-digital campaigns
has been boosted by the rise in
multi-platform marketing

Business Data Lists: **Essential for Campaign Success**

Business data lists are the single most important factor in the success of business to business direct marketing campaigns. Despite changes to how marketing is carried out - thanks to the digital revolution - the bottom line is that B2B marketing, whatever guise it takes, relies on rock solid data.

In the early days of social media marketers were happy to talk about putting the technology ahead of every other digital channel. But predictions that social media would become the top digital channel never bore fruit. In fact the rise of social media has simply strengthened the reputation of tried and tested techniques that already have a proven return on investment. Integration is the new buzz word as marketers try and leverage the latest technologies while keeping hold of the core aspects of marketing that will guarantee conversions, sales and increased profits.

Top of the list are business data lists themselves. Far from being abandoned, they have become increasingly important to marketing professionals. Their success lies in the fact that they are the best means of generating new leads, as well as a sound way of maintaining business to business relationships. Demand for high-quality business lists in both digital and non-digital campaigns has been boosted by the ascent of multi-platform marketing.

Why does your business need B2B data lists?

Database marketing is an interactive process that is undoubtedly aided by modern technology. Boiled down to its basic form it involves using information gathered about potential prospects and clients to generate leads. It helps build relationships and is the cornerstone of repeat custom and growth. However, database marketing can be time consuming and costly - unless you buy in reliable, verified business lists from a reputable provider. Gathering information yourself sounds easy - but getting the right information in useful quantities is easier said than done.

The case for ready-to-use business lists is clear. Businesses often have difficulty collating the right data themselves. What's more, of those that do collate their own client data, many find that accessibility quickly becomes a problem - particularly across departments. Data is simply no good if it is difficult to use because it is poorly segmented, unverified and incomplete.

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We make over
10,000 calls every working day
to keep our database up-to-date
so we can deliver you market leading
business data

In fact a recent study conducted by IBM has shown that many marketing professionals are simply not ready for the data explosion that is about to occur. In its "Insights From the Global Chief Marketing Officer Study" (published in October 2011), the firm noted that businesses were not doing enough to address the issue of big data and its meaningful use in B2B marketing.

Advanced analytics and compelling metrics are the key to successful decision making, IBM claimed, adding that solid use of business data and effective monitoring of campaigns results in better accountability and an easier to define return-on-investment.

But theory and practice seem to be at odds and many companies are failing to take advantage of the significant benefits that business data can bring.

So what is the solution?

Businesses need to adopt business lists if they are to remain competitive, that much is clear. But setting up the necessary infrastructure can be tricky.

The easiest solution is to buy in verified business lists. The number of firms using such lists has been steadily increasing over the past decade. However, many firms still have reservations about the quality of data they were being given access to - highlighting the importance of picking a reputable provider.

One of the key stipulations that firms have is that their marketing partner maintains their data and keeps abreast of the latest technologies affecting information collection and segmentation. Firms that choose the wrong vendor can end up with poor quality business lists that are an impediment to effective marketing.

How to pick a reputable data provider

First of all check that the business you are partnering with is accredited - thomsonlocal.com boasts Direct Marketing Association (DMA) membership, which is an industry seal of approval that guarantees the firm adheres to business list and direct marketing best practice.

Make sure that the data you receive is fresh, up to date and sector-relevant. It is always good to find out where the information that you will soon be using came from. A reputable, DMA-registered provider will have an answer to this question..



Five Tips for Buying Business Data

The benefits of business lists are many, but how can your firm guarantee the data you buy in is of the highest quality? Here are five questions that you should always ask when looking for new business data to bolster your marketing campaigns:



Is the provider reputable? – There are hundreds of companies offering business lists and the quality of data they provide varies dramatically. A good way to check if a business list provider can deliver what they have promised is to see if they are members of the Direct Marketing Association (DMA), which has exacting standards when it comes to marketing best practice.



Where do they get their data from? – Is your business data partner getting its business information direct from the companies themselves, or are they buying it off another firm and just re-selling it? You need to know where your business data comes from and a reputable provider will tell you.



How up-to-date is the data? – Outdated business lists can do more harm than good. If you want to avoid alienating potential clients make sure that the business you buy in has been verified recently.



What information am I getting? – It is vital you know exactly what you are paying for. A good business list will contain relevant company names, general company information such as addresses, Senior Decision maker contact details for key decision makers - including phone numbers and postal addresses - and how many people are employed by the firm.



How is the data formatted? – Getting a string of business names and contact numbers can be of little use if the data is poorly presented and time-consuming to use. Database-friendly information that can be easily adapted for mailshot activities is a vital part of any good business list.

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Direct Mail expenditure rose dramatically in 2010 -
increasing by 5.8%

*Winterberry Group Outlook 2011:
What to Expect in Direct and Digital Marketing - 2011*

B2B Direct Mail: **Increase Awareness and Generate Leads**

Many marketing professionals have been swept up in the shift to digital. Email, social media and search marketing were seen as the antidote to expensive physical marketing campaigns and it was this low-cost preconception that was the key driver of the digital marketing revolution. However, digital channels have their limitations too and these cons should be weighed up against the pros before you decide which marketing avenues to pursue.

Direct mail to the rescue

One of the key problems with digital marketing is that the marketplace is saturated. Everyone is trying to get their message heard online - be it via email, pay-per-click or SEO. However, abandoning direct mail marketing simply limits your audience and is ill-advised. This has never been more true, as the biggest trend in marketing at the moment is campaign integration. Businesses are desperately trying to combine the various channels available to them into a coherent, holistic whole that will boost return-on-investment - and that means a return to direct mail marketing.

According to the Direct Marketing Association (DMA) 52 per cent of all mail sent is promotional material (DMA 2010 Statistical Fact Book, 2010). This means that people expect marketing messages to arrive by post.

It is not just the popularity of direct mail that makes it an obvious choice for marketing professionals, it is the fact that it is very successful when it comes to generating responses.

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Business Managers open
82% of all direct mail
advertising they receive

DMIS Response Rates Survey - 2005

Direct mail can guarantee return on investment

Recent figures from the DMIS show that business to business direct mail marketing is extremely effective. More than two-thirds of business managers also say, that mail is a very useful B2B marketing tool when compared with other channels.

Then there is the response rate for direct mail marketing - which is extremely high. 36 per cent of business leaders surveyed by the DMIS said they had responded to direct mail marketing material in the past month (DMIS Response Rates Survey, 2005). The average response rate, while lower, is nonetheless impressive - standing at 11.6 per cent. But campaign response rates can easily rise above 30 per cent if direct mail is used effectively.

To achieve these levels of success, however, you are going to have to make the targeting of your direct mail messages a top priority and that means relying on top-quality, up-to-date business lists.

Getting hold of the right data to bolster your direct mail marketing campaign

Like any other form of marketing, solid data underpins successful direct mail strategies. The reason response rates are so high for direct mail is because the data needed for this form of marketing often needs to be bought in from a third party. Rather than relying on internal, often patchy, databases that are poorly organised and of limited use when it comes to generating new B2B leads, opting for third-party data will ensure returns are maximised.

However, picking a reputable supplier is vital, as out-of-date contacts not only end up costing you financially, but they can undermine your business's reputation. One of the most pertinent stats relating to effective targeting is that one per cent of business managers that respond to B2B direct mail marketing spend in excess of £5,000 (DMIS Response Rates Survey, 2005) - so a well placed promotion can be hugely lucrative.

Not done direct mail before or don't have the time? Let us help with our B2B Direct Mail Service. All you have to do is confirm your mailing list and provide us with your letter or document. You'll benefit from special rates negotiated on your behalf and we do all the liaising with our printer for you.

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When it comes to
communication, **74%**
of adults prefer email

*View from the Digital Inbox 2011,
Merkle - 2011*

Intergrated Marketing: **A Holistic Approach Works Best**

Taking an integrated approach to marketing is a relatively new phenomenon when it comes to digital promotions. Previously, digital marketing was separated from traditional advertising and seen as something of an added extra. This went against one of the key tenets of marketing - that multiple channels need to be used if a campaign is to reach the widest possible audience. But this shift towards a diverse advertising mix means that businesses need to tick a lot of different boxes if they are to achieve marketing success.

But why is it important to have a healthy marketing mix?

For this we just need to look at the stats. Business to business marketing can be effective using a single channel - such as email marketing - but putting all your eggs in one basket will mean you are alienating vast swathes of the population. The below figures show just how important it is to allocate your marketing budget effectively.

Two-thirds of adults now use social media (Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project, 2011) and more than one billion people use email regularly - and that's just taking into account the big email providers Google, Yahoo and Microsoft. The figures are no less mind-boggling for search, with more than three billion searches being conducted every single day via Google (ComScore, December 2011).

However, non-online marketing can reach just as wide an audience. The average person in the UK spends three hours and 45 minutes watching TV every single day (Ofcom, 2004). Radio is even more pervasive, with 92 per cent of the UK population (47.6 million people) tuning in each week (Rajar Data release, February 2012).

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A business list is
the best place to start
when it comes to defining
you target audience

Then there is Direct Mail. Some 600,000 tonnes of promotional material was sent to UK recipients in 2002 (estimate by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2002). While these figures are not recent - the actual number is guaranteed to be much higher today - it shows the important role the direct mail still plays.

So, splitting your marketing budget into numerous channels can be extremely useful, but campaigns need to be well thought out or you will end up spreading yourself too thin.

How to define your marketing mix

There are a number of ways to break down your marketing strategy, but the secret to all of them is being logical. You need to start by clearly defining your target audience. This is particularly important when it comes to integration. It is no use trying to cover all the bases if your target audience is not interested in some channels.

When it comes to corporate clients, a business list is the best place to start when it comes to defining your target audience. A quality business data list will contain a huge array of information that will help you define your target audience and subsequently select the right marketing channels to exploit. All of the following will be included in a decent business list and should be assessed prior to launching a new campaign: Business type, business sector, size of firm, location of firm and the contact details of key decision makers .

The size and earning power of a firm will in many ways dictate how you market to them, as will their geographic location. In terms of more in depth data, the contact details of key decision makers will allow for better-targeted and tailored marketing campaigns - something that can impact on the marketing mix dramatically.

The key to successful integration, however, is to be flexible. You must be willing to alter your marketing mix and respond to new leads and new information quickly and effectively

Let us take care of your marketing mix with our NEW Direct Marketing packages. Our packages have been specially designed to make integrated marketing easy and we have something to suit every budget.

Need help with your direct marketing?

Top 10 Ways to Boost your Direct Marketing Response Rates

When your marketing strategy is up and running and you are covering as many bases as you can with multi-channel campaigns, it won't be long before you want to delve into the figures and see how well your promotions are doing. After all, a strong return on investment (ROI) is what you want from your marketing budget.

The key thing to bear in mind is that there is always room for improvement. However, there are a number of steps you can take to try and improve response.



Use business lists so you are targeting the right people -

Getting the content and design of your promotional material right is vital. But before you even start thinking about layouts and imagery, you need to think about who you are going to send your material to. If you are set on generating new B2B leads then a business list is the best place to start. Not only will a good list offer plenty of contacts, it will boast a huge array of sector-relevant information that will allow for the tailoring of marketing campaigns and improved penetration. Remember a lot of email traffic is spam, so try and avoid getting your messages included in this category by using high-quality business data.



Have a third party manage your data - Storing your email and direct mail business to business marketing lists in house is costly and time consuming. And boosting ROI can be done in two ways - increasing income or reducing outgoings. Letting someone else deal with your business data is a great way of doing the latter. By outsourcing you can let someone else do all the hard work for you - that means no storage costs, and no database management expenditure. Improving deliverability is key, and the best way to do this, according to 64 per cent of marketers is to have well-managed business lists (Econsultancy: Email Marketing Census 2011, 2011).



Get hold of high quality contacts - For marketing campaigns to give you a competitive advantage, they have to stand out. One of the best ways of doing this - before you get to design and delivery - is to ensure you are targeting high-quality contacts.



Make sure you tell recipients what to do - Whether you are sending emails or direct mail, you need a clear call to action. Don't confuse mailing list contacts with unclear promotional material or it will end up in the bin.

**Create a consistent brand for your marketing strategies -**

Marketers need to make sure all their B2B marketing material uses the same branding. Making your messages instantly recognisable will help you get over the first hurdle of targeted marketing - namely getting recipients to read your material. Consistent branding will boost ROI almost instantly.



Hire in a professional designer - Sending emails is easy: anyone can do it: but not everyone can do it well. The number of business email marketing messages that get binned because they are poorly designed is extremely high and every deleted message is a lost lead. So HTML formatted emails is a good way of reducing the number of discarded messages.



Multi-platform testing will boost email open rates - The times of Internet Explorer being the only browser on the market are long gone. Firefox, Opera, Safari and Chrome are just a few of the major alternatives vying for market share. Unfortunately, they all render website pages and emails slightly differently, so you need to test your marketing material on all of them. This is often best done by a third party.

**Make sure you are aware of mobile design limitations -**

Mobile marketing is on the ascent, but many marketers are struggling to keep up with the rapid rate of change. Sending out emails that render badly on mobile devices can create a marketing disaster. When in doubt call in the experts and go mobile in style.



Give recipients the chance to opt out - Opt-in marketing for B2B email is essential. You need to get people's consent or they will simply block your email address. This could result in vast swathes of contacts ending up out of your reach. The same goes for regular subscribers to your email newsletters and promotional messages. They should be given the chance to opt out if they want to - or your company's reputation may suffer.



Use follow-ups to stay in touch - All successful campaigns should include a follow-up. If you want to keep business clients onboard, you need to go the extra mile and make them feel special.

We don't release our opt-in email marketing addresses so we can protect the quality of our data, plus we only send a maximum of one third party email every four days. Carefully controlling access to our email addresses helps us deliver high response rates and low unsubscribes.

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About **thomsonlocal.com**

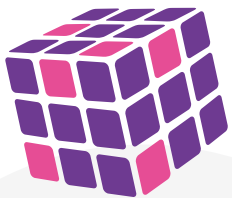
thomsonlocal.com has been operating for over 30 years and has established itself as the leading local media company in the UK, helping people find local businesses, no matter how they look for one.

Today, business listings are available both in print and online following the launch of its local search website, **www.thomsonlocal.com** in 2003. In October 2010, thomsonlocal.com released its first mobile application for iPhone allowing users to search for local businesses whilst on the move. This was followed by mobile apps for Android and Nokia in 2011.

thomsonlocal.com is powered by the most comprehensive database of its kind in the UK with over 1.8 million businesses listed plus additional content such as user reviews and ratings.

Direct Marketing Services is the division of thomsonlocal.com that looks after selling our valuable opt-in business database. We have over 2 million telephone verified business contacts that can be purchased for direct mail and telemarketing activity, as they have all opted-in to receive third party communications. We also have over 750,000 opt-in business email addresses which can be contacted using our fully managed service.

In 2011 thomsonlocal.com was short listed in the Database Marketing Awards in the category of "Outstanding Data Provider - B2B" in recognition of our market leading data quality.



**DATABASE
MARKETING
AWARDS**