

Chapter 5 How to Send Out Mailers that Get Results

Congratulations, you have made it to the point where you are now beginning the process of actually buying really valuable real estate, super cheap.

By the end of this section you should have a working understanding of the five step process for sending out a successful direct mail campaign, which will directly result in the acquisition of inexpensive, marketable, unwanted rural land. How exciting is this?

The five steps are it as follows:

- 1) Obtain a usable list
 - 2) Narrow down the list to the properties that fit your acquisition criteria
 - 3) Choose the template mailer you are going to send out (actual letter)
 - 4) Create a mail merge
- Get your acquisition offers in the mail

5.1 Obtain a Usable List

The first step in this process is to get a list of all of the property owners who have vacant land in the target county that you chose earlier in this process.

There are two places you can get this list; the county assessor or a data/title company. We have long since used a title company instead of sourcing the data directly from the county assessor.

But for the purposes of this program, let's take a look at both. Follow along with the DVD to see the difference in the outcomes of the data collected.

We stopped using data sets directly from the assessors many years ago. There are several reasons for this and they all surround this one simple fact: every county does it differently. Each county has its own separate rules about the format of the stored lists, how the data is sent, cost of the data, and many other variable factors that make it difficult to manage this amount of information.

Instead, we use the data provided by a subsidiary of First American Title (FATCO). I would encourage you to do the same. (Log on to LandAcademy.org and go to the Resources section. There are instructions regarding how to

acquire the dataset from FATCO for the county or counties that you've chosen to work in.)

5.2 Narrow Down the List to the Properties that Fit Your Acquisition Criteria (Data Scrubbing)

*Important note: Many of our students struggle with this portion of the process. Please don't give up. If you need extra help after you've tried to complete this task, watch again. And again. Still not getting it? Contact us. After you've done this for the first time, I'm confident the next one will be a breeze for you.

Follow along with the DVD for detailed, visual instructions, and an example of the entire data gathering process.

Our goal is to get all the properties out of the list that don't fit what you want to buy. It doesn't make sense to send a letter to a strip mall owner to buy his property for \$500.00, right?

Here are the data scrubbing steps we use:

- Remove improved property
- Remove property that is not used for your acquisition criteria (i.e. industrial or farm land)
- Remove property that is not the right size (too small and too large in acres)
- Remove owners who you know will not respond (US government or Rail Roads, etc.)
- Remove property that is assessed too high (quarter acre vacant lot assessed for \$550,000)
- Remove any "eyeball" exceptions

What do we want in the list? We want vacant land with a low assessed value for the area, used as vacant property, not too small or large, and owned by a private party.

5.3 Choose the Template Mailer You are Going to Send Out (Actual letter)

Now that you have a perfect scrubbed list, it's time to choose the type of mailer you want to send out.

All successful real estate investors have strong opinions about the actual piece of mail they send to a property owner. We have tried them all and here is what we found:

- Post Card (cheapest and easiest) with the worst response
- Form Letter (emotional) not my style
- Purchase Agreement (includes price and call to action) best response and attracts the right buyer
- Hundreds of other options

Follow along with the DVD to view an example of each type. GOAL is to CONNECT with your potential seller and HELP them. Be confident of your business, send respectful offers to potentials sellers, and do it RIGHT the first time.

5.4 Create a Mail Merge with Two Final Documents

We send out Purchase Agreements. They are more expensive, but the owners who call you back after receiving the offer mean business. We make up the financial expense in time savings and better deals.

Purchase Agreements or "PAs" should include the following:

ON THE COVER LETTER:

- Your company's full contact information including company name, physical address, phone number, fax number, web address, and email address
- Current Date
- An internal reference number for your use when they call back

- Full name and address (Mr. Jack & Mrs. Jane Smith) of the land owner (or what is provided by the assessor)
- Full Salutation (Dear Mr. and Mrs. Smith)
- Your signature
- Your title (Owner or Manager are best)

THE PURCHASE AGREEMENT: (this is what they are looking at when they call you back on the phone)

- Your company's full contact information including company name, physical address, phone number, fax number, web address, and email address
- An internal reference number for your use when they call back
- Size of the property (acreage)
- APN
- The PRICE you are offering!
- The condition the property needs to fit in for you to buy it (this is your way out if you change your mind)
- The date the offer expires

Follow along with the DVD as I walk you through creating the document and the data needed for a mail merge. Then watch me combine the data into one great file of completed letters ready to be printed and sent!

Mail Merge is a software operation describing the production of multiple (and potentially large numbers) documents from a single template form and a structured data source. The letter may be sent out to many "recipients" with small changes, such as a change of address or a change in the greeting line.

When the letters are ready, your mailing address will be exactly the same on every single piece of mail that is created. But the APN will be different on every single purchase agreement.

DATA (EXCEL)

- Get the raw dataset (For example: All the 5 acre properties in Mohave County, AZ)
- Scrub the data for the information you want to keep and get rid of the rest
- Finalize your Data

TEMPLATE (MSWORD)

- Create your template (or use ours)
- Test it to make sure it works

Create the Mail Merge. I do it in MS Excel & MS Word. You can use these programs on Apple or PC computers. I have examples in the forms section at the end of this education program.

5.5 Get the Whole Thing in the US Postal System

There are many options you can choose when you have completed these two MS word and MS excel files properly.

- Print them off, stick a stamp on the envelopes and send them out (the best way to get your feet wet if you are sending out a few hundred)
- Find a local service who will do this for you (some are free and you are helping people)
- Send the files to a large local printer (this is what we do)
- Use a service like Click2mail or YellowLetters (check the Resources section of LandAcademy.org for discounts)