

FUNDRAISING & PHILANTHROPY AUSTRALASIA

Insight, analysis and inspiration for not-for-profit managers and executives

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The Technology Issue

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New technology pushes out DM boundaries

Recent developments in technology are providing direct marketers with new and exciting creative possibilities, writes **Malcolm Auld**.

In the quest to communicate with customers (commercial sector) and supporters (not-for-profit sector) in more personalised ways, marketers are frothing at the mouth at the possibilities presented by recent developments in technology.

There is currently a renaissance going on in the direct mail world, driven mostly by technology-related factors, and the results being achieved are often much better than those of historical campaigns.

This re-birth began in Australia about 12 months ago, and the catalysts for the resurgent interest in direct mail are:

1. New direct marketing (DM) design software
2. Digital colour printing
3. Changes to privacy laws
4. New Australia Post services
5. Power of personalised messages to build brands

Software such as XMPie, DreamType and Direct Smile are radically altering the creative possibilities for direct mail, particularly how it integrates with websites and other print and electronic media. And high quality, variable-data digital colour printers have made short-run personalised printing cost effective.

The changes in privacy laws in recent years have meant that data held by marketers is now of a much higher quality, enabling better targeting and personalisation. Australia Post has also introduced a number of new services such as Impact Mail, to encourage more creative mail solutions.

The impact of all this activity is the dawning of a new creative era in which print media can now be personalised –

using data, graphics, colour and other variables. As every marketer knows, the personal media are the most powerful for building brands, so the more you can “individualize” your communications to targeted recipients, the better your results.

And given the most important thing in the world to most people is *themselves* – the more you can flatter people with relevant communications reflecting creative use of specific data about them, the better your results and the stronger your branding.

Creative personalisation gets results

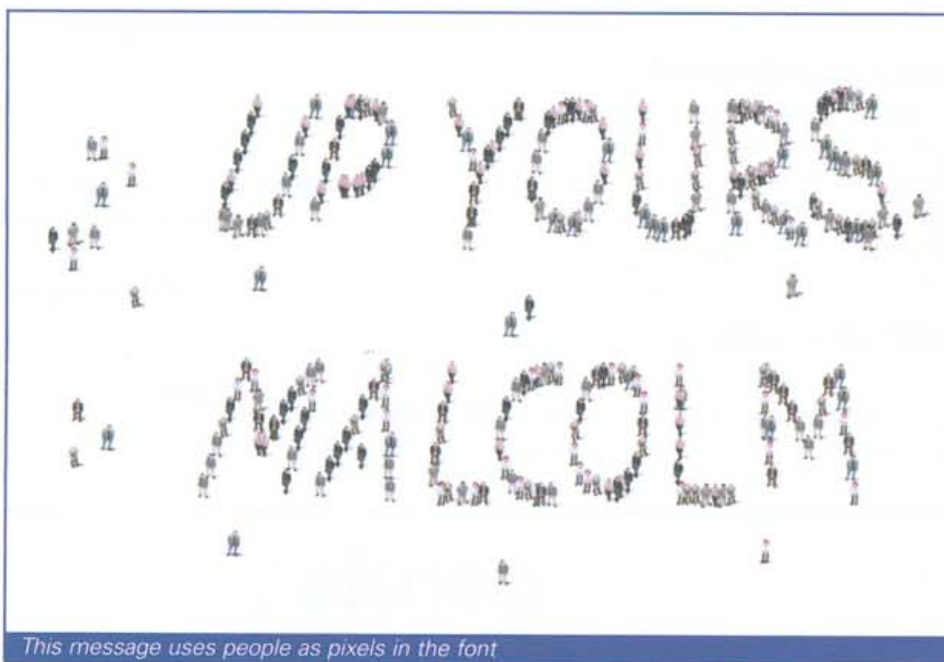
The DreamType and Direct Smile software solutions offer a completely new dimension in personalised print creativity.

You can manufacture your own fonts, or

select from an existing font library. Create pixels using any image you like – for example, flowers, birds, shells, people, or almost anything you can imagine. Then print the fonts on any background you want.

The postcard below was created to promote seminars about *The Direct Mail Renaissance*. It was the first campaign in Australia to use Direct Smile fonts combined with XMPie website personalisation. The font is made of people, and the message included a personalised website link for each postcard recipient, where they could download a PDF of the seminar brochure.

Apart from the creative opportunities, the real power of this technology is the results. Hundreds of people linked to their



This message uses people as pixels in the font

