



RELATIONSHIP MARKETING

Think *Outside* the Mailbox

How *From Your Friends* Can Enhance Your Social Media, E-Mail, & Phone Calls

“To create a steady stream of repeat business and referrals, you need to reach out to your sphere of influence at least four times per month,” says Lisa Malnate, RE/MAX top-producer and Buffini & Co. Mentor. “As part of my own personal marketing plan, I’ve been a *From Your Friends* subscriber for almost 7 years. For me it’s more than just a monthly postcard: it’s my opportunity to make a relevant connection with my sphere at least three times that month, through social media, e-mail, phone calls or personal visits.”



A direct mail program to stay in constant contact with your sphere can be a powerful tool by itself. But *From Your Friends* takes it a step further, allowing you to “think outside the mailbox” and use the items of value you send each month to create a personal connection with your sphere.

“One of the benefits of sending an item of value at a local restaurant or venue is that it provides the opportunity to create a shared experience with your sphere that will help you create a personal connection,” says Malnate. “The monthly postcard is a great way to say ‘thanks’ and create some constant contact, but it’s the face-to-face or at least voice-to-voice conversation that really enhances the relationship.”

Below is an outline of how to “Think Outside The Mailbox” and utilize your *From Your Friends* subscription to make multiple contacts each month with your sphere and improve the effectiveness of your marketing:

The “Coming Soon” Call

A week or so before your next *From Your Friends* mailing, call each of your recipients to let them know what to expect. For example, “Hi, Julie! It’s Jane Smith. I just wanted you to know

that next week you’ll be getting a postcard from me that gives you \$20 off at the Chop House. It’s one of my favorite restaurants, so I hope you get the chance to use it. And if not, please feel free to pass it on to someone else. Thanks!” It may be a voicemail or a just a short, friendly conversation—or it may turn into a longer discussion and the opportunity to ask for a referral.

The Item of Value Postcard

Because of your “coming soon” call, when the *From Your Friends* postcard arrives in the mail, your recipient knows what to watch for, and will understand the true value of what you have sent them, making them more likely to pay attention, to use the offer, or to pass it on to a friend. This second touch is now more powerful than it would have been without the phone call.

The Shared Experience Follow Up

One of the key elements to creating a successful relationship is “having something in common.” Shared experiences offer a basis for conversation and connection. “I send a *From Your Friends* postcard to myself each month,” says Malnate. “We use it to go to dinner or to the featured venue and then I talk about the experience with my sphere. Sometimes I even run into someone from my sphere at the restaurant, giving me

the opportunity for a short personal visit.”

This shared experience follow up can be a short email or a social media posting that says, “Just got back from the Chop House. If you go, be sure to try the Buffalo Ribeye—outstanding! Dinner was great and we saved \$20 with my *From Your Friends* postcard. If you make it to the Chop House to use your postcard, be sure to drop me a note and let me know how your experience was. I have a few extra postcards, let me know if there is someone you know who would like to be on my mailing list.”

Ordering a few extra unmailed postcards to have on hand each month is a great way to expand your sphere. Ask your current recipients if they know anyone who might enjoy receiving the great monthly offers you’re currently sending them. They are more likely to give you the names and addresses of their friends and family when they know you’re going to send them an item of value each month instead of just a solicitation for business.

Are you thinking “outside the mailbox” and using your *From Your Friends* subscription to make multiple contacts with your sphere? We’d love to hear your success stories. Send your experiences to info@fromyourfriends.com.