

**If you use e-mail for sales and marketing, you're not going to like this article.**

Let's say your new neighbor moved in today next door. You want to quickly introduce yourself and make a good first impression; so you decide to take a dozen cookies over as a welcome gift. As you head out the door, you notice there are 176 people already in line at your neighbor's doorstep -- all holding a freshly-baked dozen cookies. Over the next several days, you frequently attempt to communicate with your new neighbor. You stop by in the morning, at noon and in the evening. Yet every time you stop by, there are always over 100 people in line at their doorstep.

Obviously, if you're going to make a good first impression, you should rethink the idea of dropping by with cookies. Your neighbor is simply overwhelmed by the number of people who wish to meet them. In fact, over the next several months, you'll notice that this problem never subsides and every day there are more and more people at their doorstep offering cookies.

As crazy as this may sound, it bears a strong resemblance to the e-mail scenario your prospects face each and every day. Regardless of how well written your messages are and how compelling your offer is, you're still only one of the 176 emails the average prospect receives each working day. In fact, 2.8 million e-mails are sent every second of the day. That means that every single day over 247 billion e-mails are transmitted; and, to make matters worse, most studies indicate that well over 80% of all e-mail is treated as spam and deleted without being opened.

The fact is that your prospect has less time in 2010 to see your e-mail because an additional 2.5 billion text messages are being transmitted every day. By the end of the year, the number of transmitted text messages is purported to increase by 107%.

Using e-mail as a prospecting tool may be affordable, but it is an extremely ineffective tactic. Let's be honest, we love e-mail because it's a heck of a lot easier than picking up the phone and calling a total stranger to seek an appointment. The hardest question we have to ask ourselves is, "Do I use e-mail because it's an effective tool, or do I like it because it is easier than making those calls that get you the appointment."

After training, my clients achieve a sales appointment with 53.5% of the prospects they target, simply by using a straightforward combination of phone calls and creative direct mail. Compare that with the current email average that generates 1.5 sales per 1,000 emails. E-mail is a very useful tool, but mainly for following up with a client after a sales call or a phone conversation. The client now knows you and will not view your e-mail as unsolicited spam.

In 2010, e-mail alone gives a whole new meaning to the old phrase, "You're One In a Million!"