



# YOUR KEY TO BETTER DIRECT MAIL

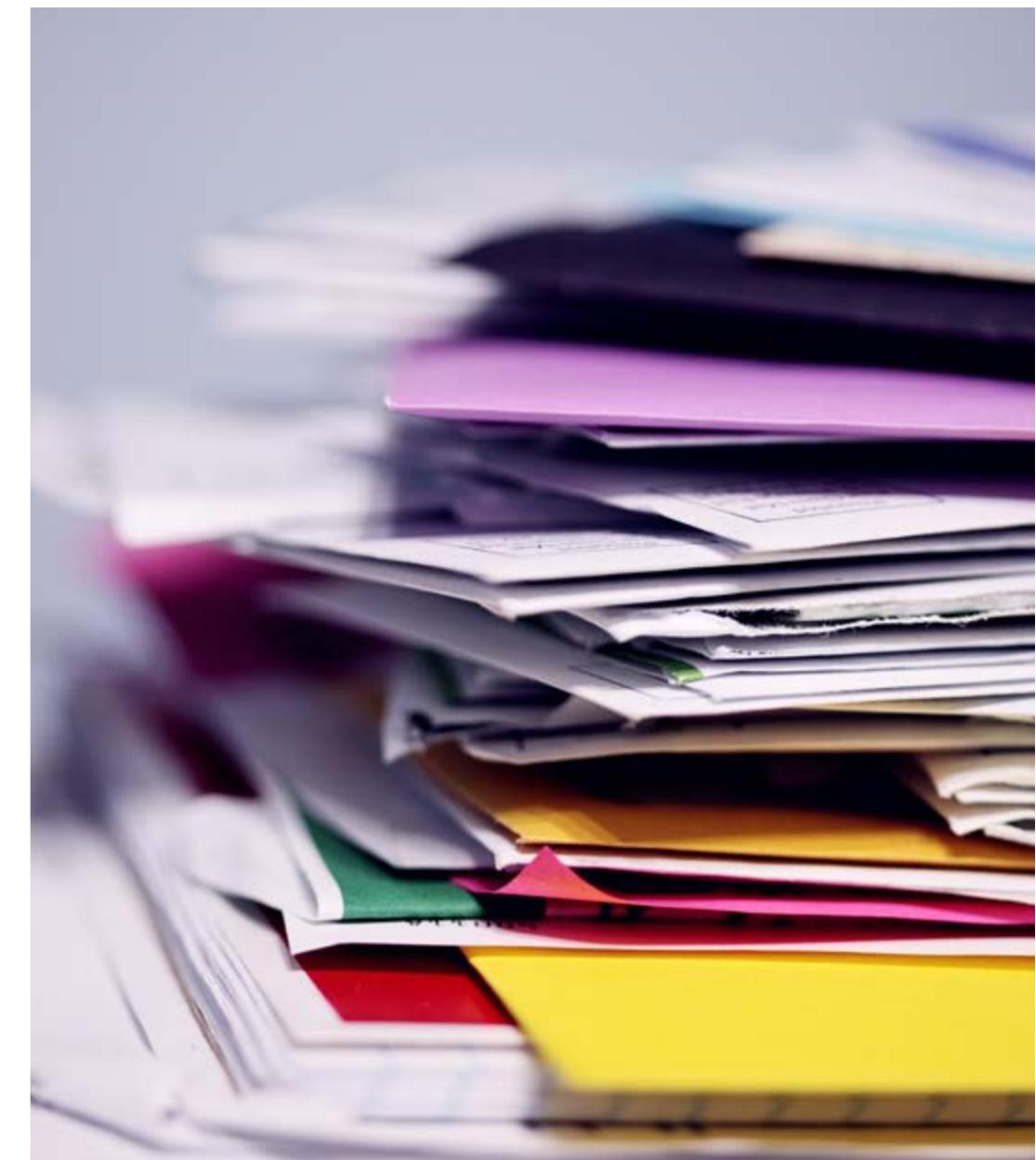
19 time proven tactics for  
maximising engagement.

# **In today's fractured media landscape, attention is the most valuable currency a brand can earn.**

Digital messages compete in an environment of endless scrolling, banner blindness, and millisecond impressions. Direct mail is different. When someone opens your mailing, you don't get seconds of their attention—you get minutes. That makes direct mail one of the most attention-efficient channels available to marketers today.

## **The question is: how do you make a mailing as engaging as it can be?**

Over the past 25 years, Red C has studied how people interact with direct mail—what makes them open it, what holds their attention, and what drives them to act. Based on this research and experience, we've developed a framework to help you maximise engagement and create more effective, profitable direct mail.





## CATCH

**How to capture  
attention and  
get your mailing  
opened**



## CONSIDER

**How to make an instant  
impression and keep  
your message clear  
and compelling**



## CONVERT

**How to inspire  
action and turn  
attention into  
response**

**WE CALL IT THE DIRECT MAIL ENGAGEMENT MODEL.**

**The model focuses on 3 critical moments where you can deepen engagement and drive response:**



## CATCH

**How to capture attention and get your mailing opened**



## CONSIDER

**How to make an instant impression and keep your message clear and compelling**



## CONVERT

**How to inspire action and turn attention into response**

# Time-tested tactics for boosting response

On the following pages, you'll discover proven tactics for each stage—practical techniques to help you create direct mail that commands attention, builds consideration, and converts engagement into results.

If you would like to create more responsive, more effective direct mail packs, get in touch with Red C today. Call 0161 872 1361 or email Steve White at [swhite@redcmarketing.com](mailto:swhite@redcmarketing.com)

# CATCH



**How to overcome the  
first hurdle and get  
your mailing opened.**

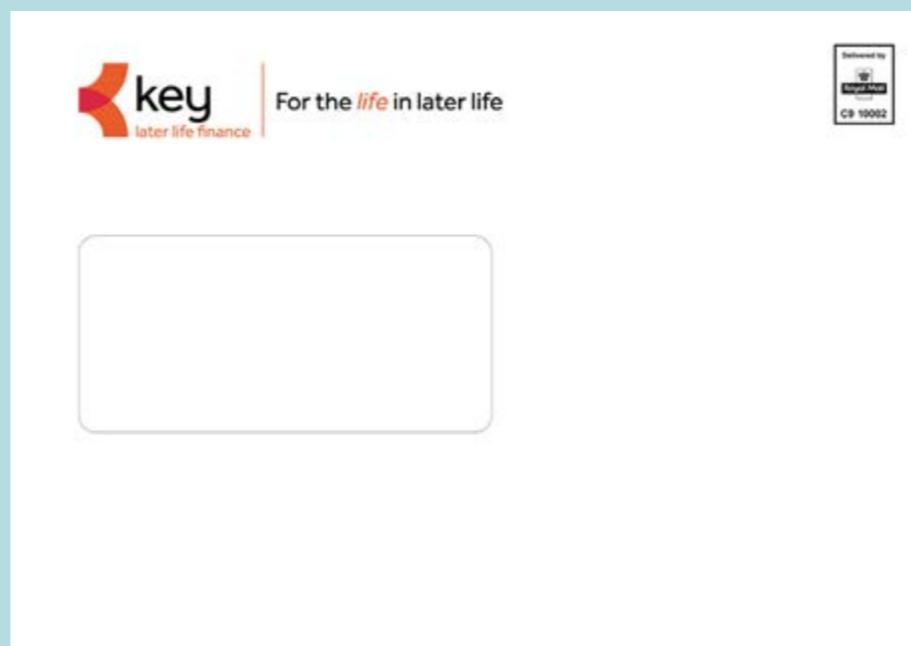
# THE FIRST HURDLE

The first stage in the persuasive process is getting your recipient to open the envelope. So your first decision is whether the envelope will be plain or printed.

Plain envelopes incur no design or printing costs, making them the cost-effective option. But be careful. You risk disappointing your recipient when they open it and find a marketing message instead of something more serious.

## A stronger tactic is to 'put your best foot forward'

The people you most want to open your envelope are those who are most likely to be attracted to your offer once inside. So make your strongest proposition on the envelope using a single-minded, benefit-led headline... on both sides, don't forget the reverse of the envelope.



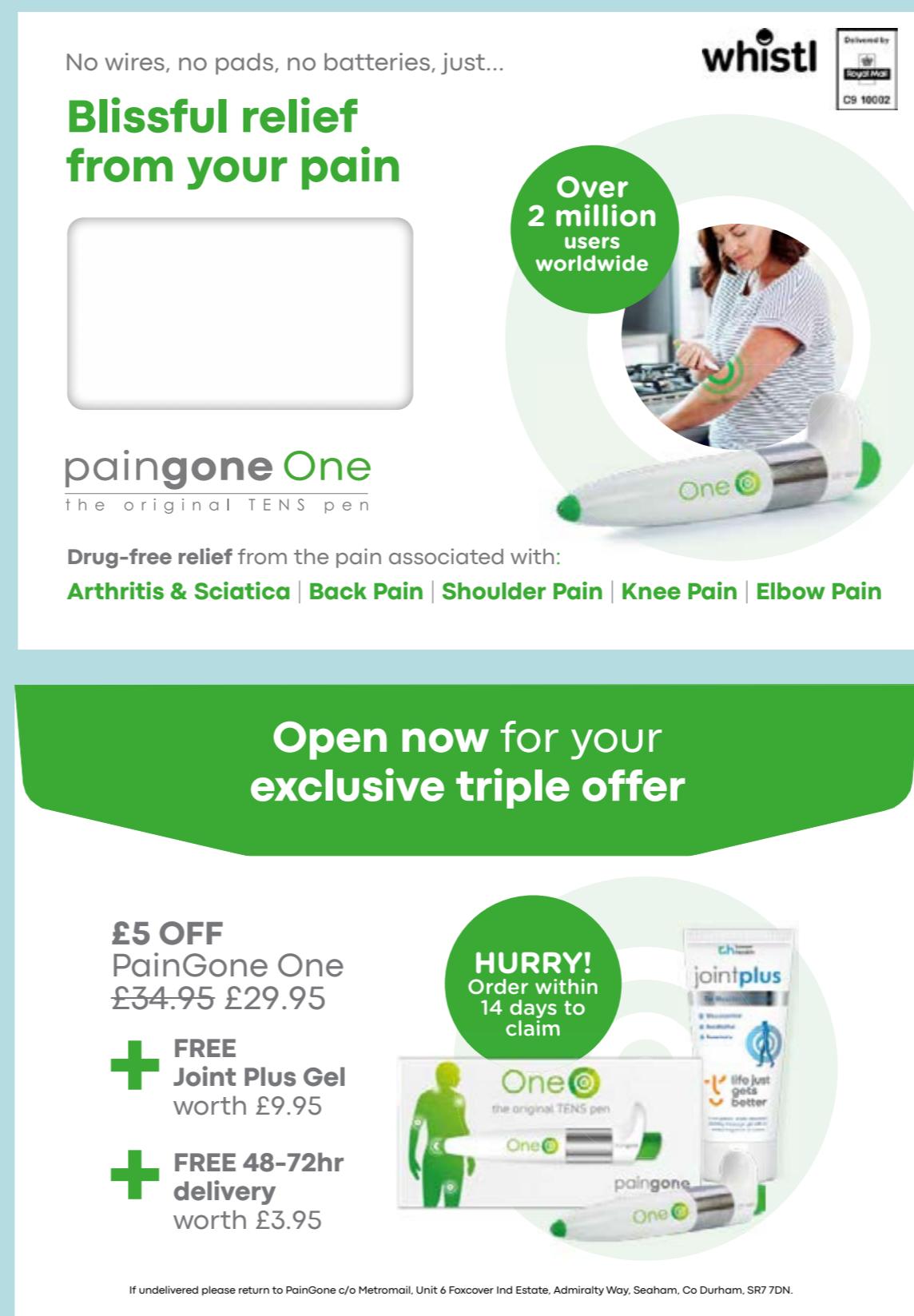
We conducted an envelope test for equity release specialist Key Later Life. The brand was running a plain white outer to save on print costs. However, in tests, our printed envelope delivered a significant uplift in response.

# THE FIRST HURDLE

## Overcoming inertia

However compelling the headline you also need to overcome inertia, so give recipients reasons to open your envelope immediately. For example:

- If your product or service includes an offer, give it a deadline
- If your prices are only valid for a while, or if your stocks are limited, say so
- Use an extra window to give the reader a glimpse of the offer or benefit, tempting them to open



Look at this hardworking envelope for leading natural wellness specialist, Tower Health.

The front promises a specific, emotional benefit to the reader – blissful relief from pain.

The reverse presents a compelling offer with a tight deadline to encourage immediate action.

# THE FIRST HURDLE

## Add intrigue and involvement

Anything that gets your prospects more involved in your message will help improve response. 3D mailings will always get opened by their intrigued recipients, and in B2B marketing the cost is easily offset by the value of the sale.



For Current Lighting Solutions, we mailed a miniature grow kit to prospects, using 'teaser' messages on the outer to intrigue the reader and encourage the open.

The mailing helped open up a valuable pipeline of profitable new leads for the brand's new partnership programme.



# THE FIRST HURDLE

## Dramatise the proposition

The beauty of mail is that you can use the format to really bring your proposition to life from the outset. Ask yourself: how could the shape of the package, or the way it opens, influence response?

For martech brand ResponseTap, we targeted prospects with a prize incentive—a 24-hour trip to Paris for two. The highly successful mailing was specially designed to look like a pair of Eurostar tickets, guaranteeing it got opened.



# CONSIDER



**How to keep your message  
clear and compelling so  
your reader considers it.**

# BEYOND THE 30-SECOND SCAN

Most of your recipients will spend 30 seconds scanning the mailing and assessing your offer. In that short timeframe, they will decide whether it's relevant, whether they can afford it, and whether they want it enough to consider it further. You must give them compelling reasons to stay engaged.

## Get them nodding

Try to create a high nod factor rating for your pack... a series of small yes's which create the climate for a big yes (committing to buy) later.



Mrs Sample  
Sample Street  
Sample Town  
Sample City  
AB12 3CD

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

**Blissful drug-free, proven pain relief** Try it today risk-free

Dear fellow pain sufferer

Living with pain is so frustrating, isn't it? When you've tried all the pills, creams, and exercises. When you've done everything your doctor or physio told you to, even paid for private treatments, but you're still suffering. It wears you down. If you put up with joint and back pain, arthritis, sciatica, or cervical spondylosis... you should try Paingone One. It's a proven, natural treatment used by over 2 million pain sufferers worldwide. Because it works.



Look at the opening paragraph of this letter for leading natural wellness specialist, Tower Health.

By empathising with the reader and showing you understand their problem, you have a better chance of persuading them that you can provide the solution.

## BEYOND THE 30-SECOND SCAN

### Chunk your message to aid readership

Another technique for extending the time spent reading the pack is to include extras. Small inserts are a useful tool for chunking up your message and getting the reader to focus on a specific aspect of your offer.



**This 6-page leaflet presents the same pieces of information in multiple ways. Whether they read the promotional copy, the set of FAQs, or the customer testimonials, the reader will gain a solid understanding of the product's features and benefits.**

**Read why 9 out of 10 people who try PainGone One keep it**

We've had HUNDREDS of letters just like these from people happy to let us know that PainGone One REALLY WORKS.

**Arthritis in the hips**  
"At first I used the pen five times a day, but now I only use it twice once in the morning and again at night. I am partially disabled and so I can see that much harder and so I can't thank PainGone enough." **J.P. Foskett**

**Sciatica**  
"I have had cervical spondylosis since 1993 and I am in continual pain. The great advantage of the PainGone One is that I can use it without help and it gives immediate benefits within minutes. I would recommend PainGone One to anyone who suffers from continual chronic pain or for other users such as sports injuries and general aches and pains." **From Arthritis Research Campaign website**

**Osteoarthritis in the knees & hips**  
"I suffer from acute knee pain and PainGone took 3 to 4 days to give relief. It's wonderful not to have to take pain killers. I have recommended it to my osteopath." **Mrs Hollie**

**Knee pain**  
"I have demonstrated the device to some of my colleagues with outstanding results, one reported that her knees were pain free for the first time in two weeks. I continue to have success with demonstrations, perhaps I'll give up nursing and be a rep. Thanks again." **Sister N.Ovens BSc.RGN SCM DN**

**Spinal arthritis & tennis elbow**  
"Amongst other things I suffer from osteoarthritis of the whole of my spine, and even though I have been taking a high dosage of anti-inflammatory drugs, plus eight strong pain killers a day, I am never out of pain. I was recommended PainGone One by a friend who mentioned it to my Doctor and he said 'It's worth a try.' It certainly was! I ordered one and from the start it gave relief from the pain. I am able to manage now on at least half my pain killers, less on a good day, by using PainGone One. I will use it in two places along each side of my spine for the best results. A few friends have shown interest themselves. One in particular used my pen on her tennis elbow and after days of pain had immediate relief for the evening and night. I will certainly be passing on the results and information to my doctor as I am sure many others would benefit from the use of this pen." **SE Grant**

**Pssst! Flip to the back page to read what the media are saying about PainGone One**

## BEYOND THE 30-SECOND SCAN

### Allow for different reading sequences

Although over half of your readers will go to the letter first, just under half will start elsewhere, and may never get to the letter. So, it is a good idea to repeat and restate the key message and call-to-action in several places.



What we wanted from Key Later Life prospects was an enquiry.

So, we wrote a long-ish letter spelling out the benefits and overcoming objections.

key  
later life finance

For the life in later life

Mrs Sample  
Sample Street  
Sample Town  
Sample City  
AB12 5CD

Dear <Sample Name>, 12/01/2023

**Has your home turned into a goldmine?**

Here's how you can unlock tax free cash and enjoy later life to the full.

Properties in M41 have released **£123,688\*** in tax-free cash in the past 12 months

Why a Key Lifetime Mortgage could be right for you

So, how does it work?

No pressure – if it's not right for you, we say so

Ask for our FREE Guide to Later Life Finances

Read over 15,620 reviews on Trustpilot

Yours FREE

Get your FREE GUIDE to Later Life Finances

Call free on: 0808 252 9769

or visit [KeyLaterLifeFinance.co.uk/MyLaterLife](http://KeyLaterLifeFinance.co.uk/MyLaterLife)

But we also included this tiny little flyer, which gave the reader 2 simple reasons to get in touch immediately.



key  
later life finance

For the life in later life

See how much you could release with our **FREE** property wealth calculator

No obligation to proceed

[KeyLaterLifeFinance.co.uk/MyTaxFreeCash](http://KeyLaterLifeFinance.co.uk/MyTaxFreeCash)

5-star Trustpilot rated | Expert advice | Award-winning service

KeyLaterLifeFinance.co.uk/MyLaterLife'. The bottom right corner features logos for the Equity Release Council and the Financial Services Register."/>

Get your **FREE** GUIDE to Later Life Finances

Call free on: 0808 252 9769

Or, visit [KeyLaterLifeFinance.co.uk/MyLaterLife](http://KeyLaterLifeFinance.co.uk/MyLaterLife)

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Member of a member of the  
Equity Release Council

MIS  
Paper from  
Sustainable  
Forests  
PB07-049918

Equity Release | Mortgages | Wills & LPAs

## BEYOND THE 30-SECOND SCAN

### Use data to personalise your message

Perhaps the biggest driver of direct mail engagement is relevance. The more relevant you can make your message to your reader, the greater your chance of gaining and holding their attention.



**Forest Holidays' customers often book a return break at a park they've stayed at before. So, we created this cost-effective, personalised 10-page brochure, using propensity data. With messages like 'Fancy staying at Sherwood Forest again?' and 'If you liked it there, you'll love the Forest of Dean' the mailing delivered a big upturn in bookings.**



## BEYOND THE 30-SECOND SCAN

### Know the value of a good offer

A good offer should give the reader all the motivation they need to take action. It adds another reason why they should get in touch right away. The more you can do to make your offer feel tangible, the better.



**Shearings wanted to reward its VIP customers – who travel several times a year – with an exclusive offer. So, we created a mailing offering loyal customers priority treatment via an exclusive pin badge.**

**Feedback was overwhelmingly positive... with recipients' friends even contacting Shearings to request a pin badge!**

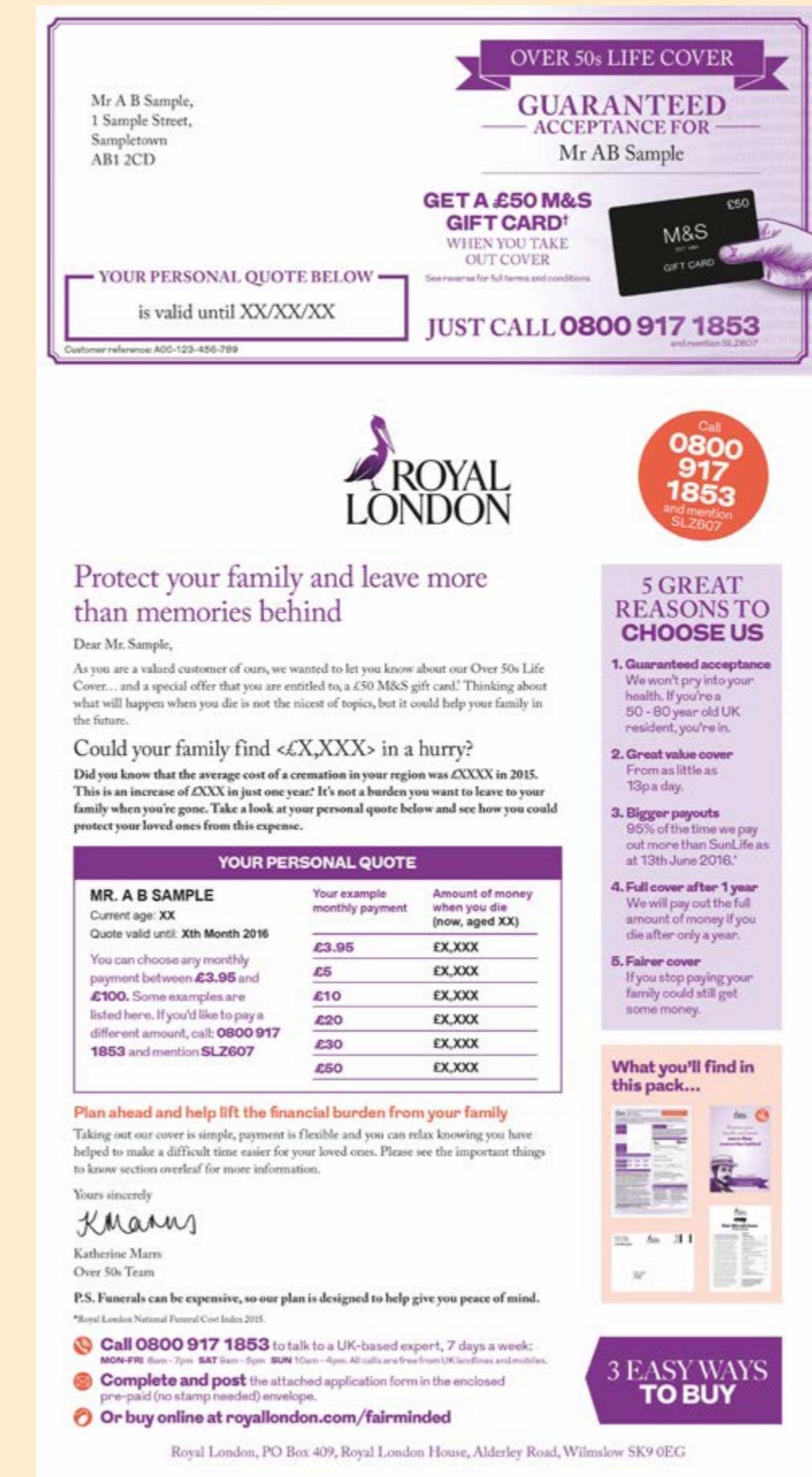
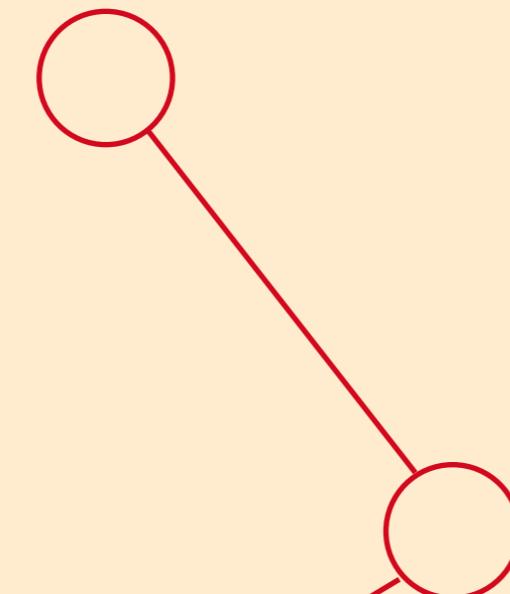
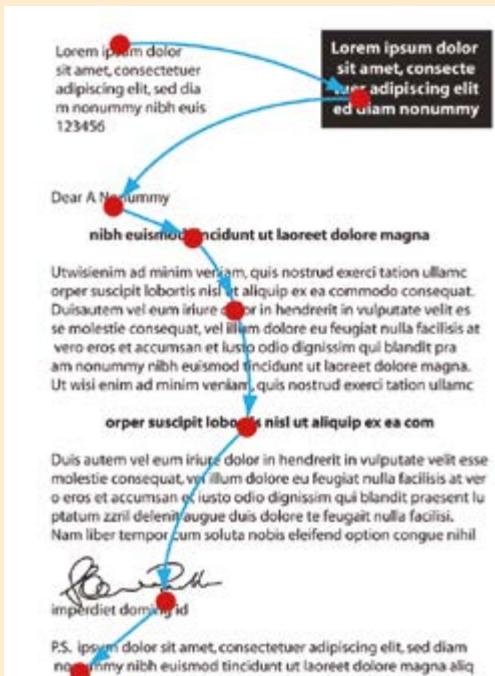


# ACCOMMODATE SCAN READING

To really maximise engagement, you must design your pack to support scanning. For example:

- People naturally fix on pictures, captions, headlines and sub-heads, panels of bullet points and graphic devices such as 'Johnson boxes'
- People 'zoom in' on personalised text such as use of their name or parts of their address
- People commonly read the opening paragraph and then 'skip' via the sub-heads down to the signature (who is writing to me?) and the PS

Would your offer be fully explained with this reading sequence?



If your readers were to take no more than a brief look over your mailing, would they get your proposition and what you want them to do?

Look at the layout of this letter we created for Royal London.

Even at a glance, the reader can see instantly what's on offer, why they should consider it, and what they need to do to get it.

# NOW PERSUADE ME

The longer your reader spends with your mailing, the more likely they are to be interested. Now you need to persuade them. Expand on each of your key benefits to provide more detail and reassure the reader that they are about to make a good decision.

## Overcoming objections

Your readers have different needs and concerns. Your job is to present the most compelling case to act. That means thinking like a salesperson, addressing all of the possible information needs, and overcoming all the possible objections one by one.

## Use confidence boosters

Testimonials help overcome objections, because they are credible. Q & A panels also work, because they articulate the reader's concerns. Guarantees, explanatory copy about craftsmanship or quality control, and company history sections can all reassure the potential customer, too.



There are many misconceptions about using equity release that prevent people from benefiting from Key Later Life's products.

We've produced a variety of confidence boosters to help reassure prospects. For example, this 8-page FAQ-style leaflet debunks some of the most common equity release myths.



**Get the facts about equity release.**

Unlocking some of the value in their property has helped thousands of homeowners give their finances a much-needed boost. But surprisingly, there are still a lot of misconceptions about using equity release.

It's time to sort the fact from the fiction. Here are some of the most common equity release myths debunked.

**Myth #1:** You won't own your own home anymore.

**The truth:** You'll always own 100% of your home, when you take out a Key lifetime mortgage.

**Myth #2:** You'll always own 100% of your home.

**The truth:** A lifetime mortgage is a loan secured against your home. It doesn't involve giving up home ownership. So, you can feel safe in the knowledge that your biggest asset will remain your own.

**Myth #3:** Equity release is complicated.

**The truth:** With us, we help to make the process simple and straightforward.

**Myth #4:** Your children could inherit your equity release debt.

**The truth:** Your children can't inherit any debt from your equity release.

**Myth #5:** You're stuck with the same plan forever.

**The truth:** Despite its name, a lifetime mortgage doesn't have to last a lifetime.

**Myth #6:** You and your partner will be forced to move out if you go into long-term care.

**The truth:** You and your partner can stay in your home as long as you wish - even if one of you moves into long-term care.

**Myth #7:** You can only release equity as a single lump sum.

**The truth:** We offer something called a drawdown lifetime mortgage that's designed to boost your finances, when you need it.

**Ask for your FREE Guide to Later Life Finances, call now on 0800 953 3865**

Or visit: [www.KeyLaterLifeFinance.co.uk/SendGuide](http://www.KeyLaterLifeFinance.co.uk/SendGuide)

**It costs you nothing to find out more**

## NOW PERSUADE ME

### BOOSTER CHECKLIST

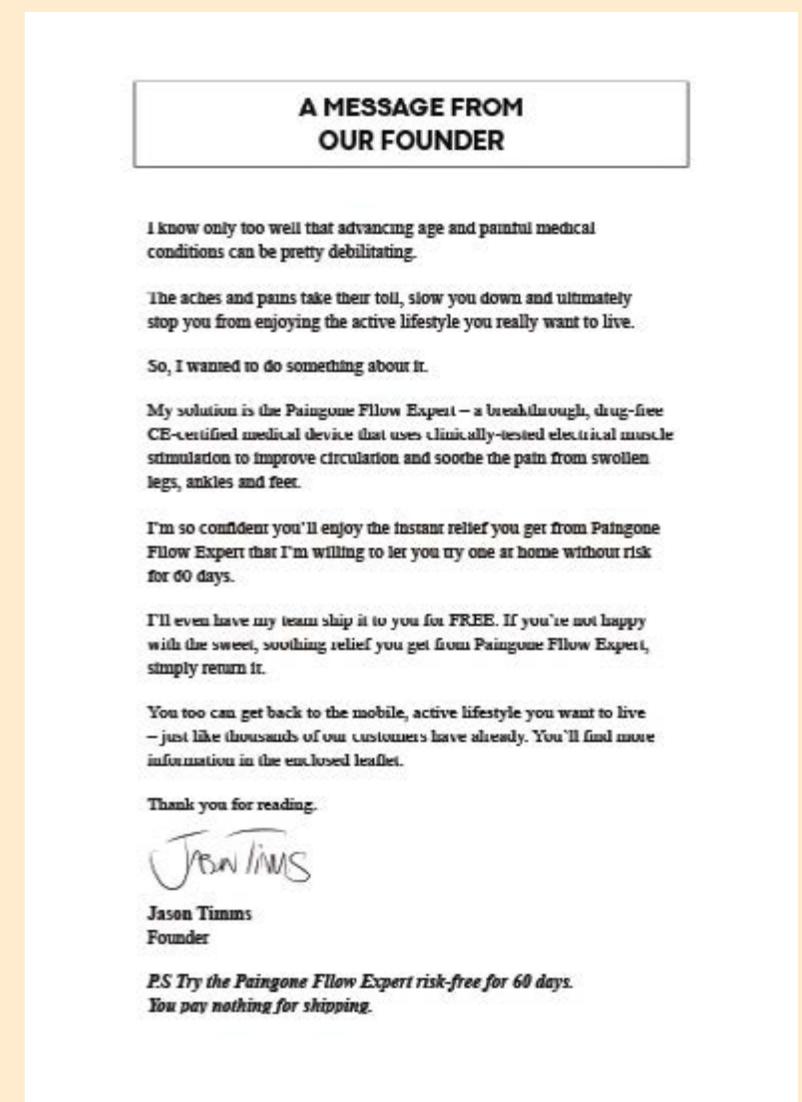
Testimonials	✓
Independent statements (Press, Industry Bodies)	✓
Guarantees	✓
Money back disclaimers	✓
Frequently Asked Questions	✓
Send no money now messages	✓
Step-by-step guides (to responding)	✓
Contact details - telephone number, address, website	✓
Official accreditation, membership bodies	✓

### The 'don't say no' device or Director's Letter

This usually takes the form of a sincere, compelling message from an authority figure. It may focus on one specific benefit or summarise all of the reasons to take up the offer, but it reads in a non-promotional way. We've rarely known this device to fail to uplift response.



Note the tone of the director's letter above and the lift letter opposite. Both sound polite, personal, and sincere, offering a gentle nudge to place an order.



# CONVERT



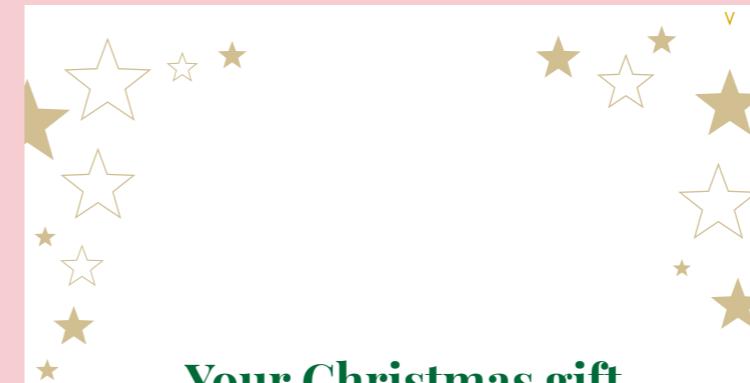
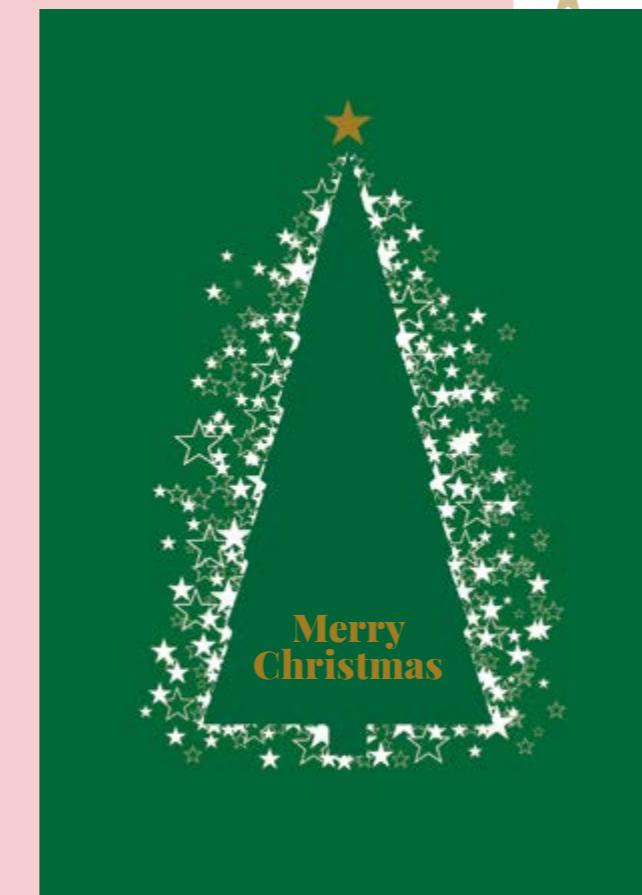
**What you need to do  
to inspire action.**

# THE END GAME

**At this point, your reader is ready to accept your offer. You have persuaded them to say YES. But it is a qualified yes. The direct marketer's greatest enemy, INERTIA, begins to take hold! Here are a few simple ways to get things moving.**

## Amp up your call-to-action

It's vital you make it clear to the reader what you want them to do. The more compelling you make it, the more likely the reader is to act.



## Your Christmas gift



A gift to spend on someone special  
(including you!)



To,

It means the world to us that you're a Beaverbrooks Club Member. So, let us be the first to wish you a Merry Christmas! And to thank you, we're giving you a special early Christmas gift.

Wishing you a  
Merry Christmas

Get £50 off when you spend £200 or more in-store or online. See the back of your gift card for more details on how to redeem.

And because it's the season of giving, we've also gifted 100 cards with £1,000. See if you're a winner at [beaverbrooks.co.uk/club-offer](http://beaverbrooks.co.uk/club-offer)

Have a wonderful Christmas.  
With love,

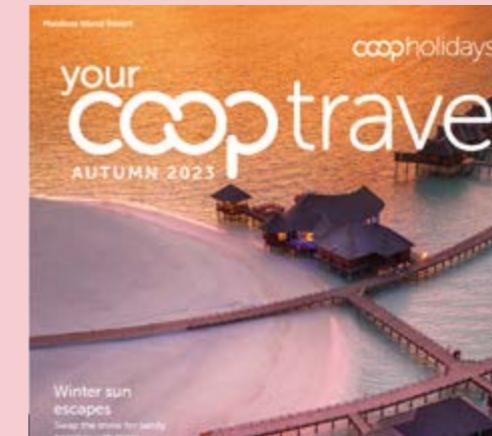
*The Beaverbrooks family*

We created this festive Christmas card mailer for Beaverbrooks. Rather than a standard 'shop our Christmas collection and save £50' message, the mailer presents the reader with a giftcard 'to spend on someone special (including you!)' and the chance to win £1,000.

# THE END GAME

## Use a QR code

QR code readers are now a standard feature on smartphones. Your reader can simply scan the code you put on your mailing and get taken straight to the content you want them to see.



**We tested sending  
Your Coop  
Travel magazine  
customers a roll-  
fold mailer with a  
QR code inside.**

Winter sun escapes  
Save the date for family beach holidays with these featuring winter sunsets.

Christmas markets  
From Europe's biggest, known but just as magical Christmas markets.

All-inclusive Holidays  
Say goodbye to one-size-fits-all holidays and hello to luxury escapes tailored to you.

Touring & Adventure  
Want to see the New Seven Wonders of the World? Our tours take you there.

Be enchanted by Europe all year round

The cities of Europe offer endless charm at any time of the year. Think cobblestone alleys with delectable dining options that come alive in the summer, grand palaces, world-class museums and unrivaled Christmas markets that turn cities into true winter wonderlands.

Popular destinations such as Prague are much-loved for good reason. A stroll across Charles Bridge offers panoramic views of medieval Prague across the Vltava River. On one side is Prague Castle and the enchanting Golden Lane lined with colourful 16th-century houses, on the other is the famous Old Town Square, where the gothic spires of the Church of Our Lady Before Tyn dominate the magical scene.

Then there are the lesser considered cities such as Warsaw and Wroclaw in Poland. The most majestic of Poland's destinations, Warsaw is a treasure trove of palaces, medieval churches and museums, with the red-brick Royal Castle the crowning glory. Should you visit Poland closer to Christmas, Wroclaw is not to be missed. Alpine huts and dazzling lights fill the Main Market Square, as does the delicious aromas of Polish cuisine.

If you're mulling over a European city break, our online magazine has plenty more destination inspiration for any time of the year, including a wrap-up of the Christmas Markets you won't want to miss. If somewhere gives you tingly feet, just get in touch with our Travel Experts at Your Coop Travel.

Old Town, Warsaw

Playa El Valle, Dominican Republic

Experience more from all-inclusive

From the dreamy islands of the Caribbean to the jungle-fringed beaches of Thailand, all-inclusive travel delivers the stress-free, luxurious experience you didn't know you needed.

With Co-op Holidays, all-inclusive is far from a one-size-fits-all holiday package. Rather, it's a luxury, bespoke style of travel where you can delight in world-class cuisine, have once-in-a-lifetime experiences, and explore the most incredible destinations across the globe.

Classic car, Cuba

Playa El Valle, Dominican Republic

Take a look at our online magazine to see more of what you can experience on an all-inclusive holiday with us.

Experience more from all-inclusive

From the dreamy islands of the Caribbean to the jungle-fringed beaches of Thailand, all-inclusive travel delivers the stress-free, luxurious experience you didn't know you needed.

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Classic car, Cuba

Amsterdam Canal, the Netherlands

Rail travel is on the rise

Sustainable, relaxing and convenient – more and more travellers are enjoying the big benefits of rail travel. Compared with flying, rail travel helps you to lower your carbon footprint. With Eurostar you also get spacious seating and generous luggage allowances for a comfortable journey. Plus package deals booked through Co-op Holidays, including hotels and activities, mean all you have to do is put your feet up until it's time for exploring.

If Paris is the only destination currently springing to mind for a holiday by rail, our online magazine puts you on track to discover the delights of Lille, Brussels and Amsterdam with no taking to the air necessary.

Find out how we make holiday planning personal. Scan the QR code to download the full magazine.



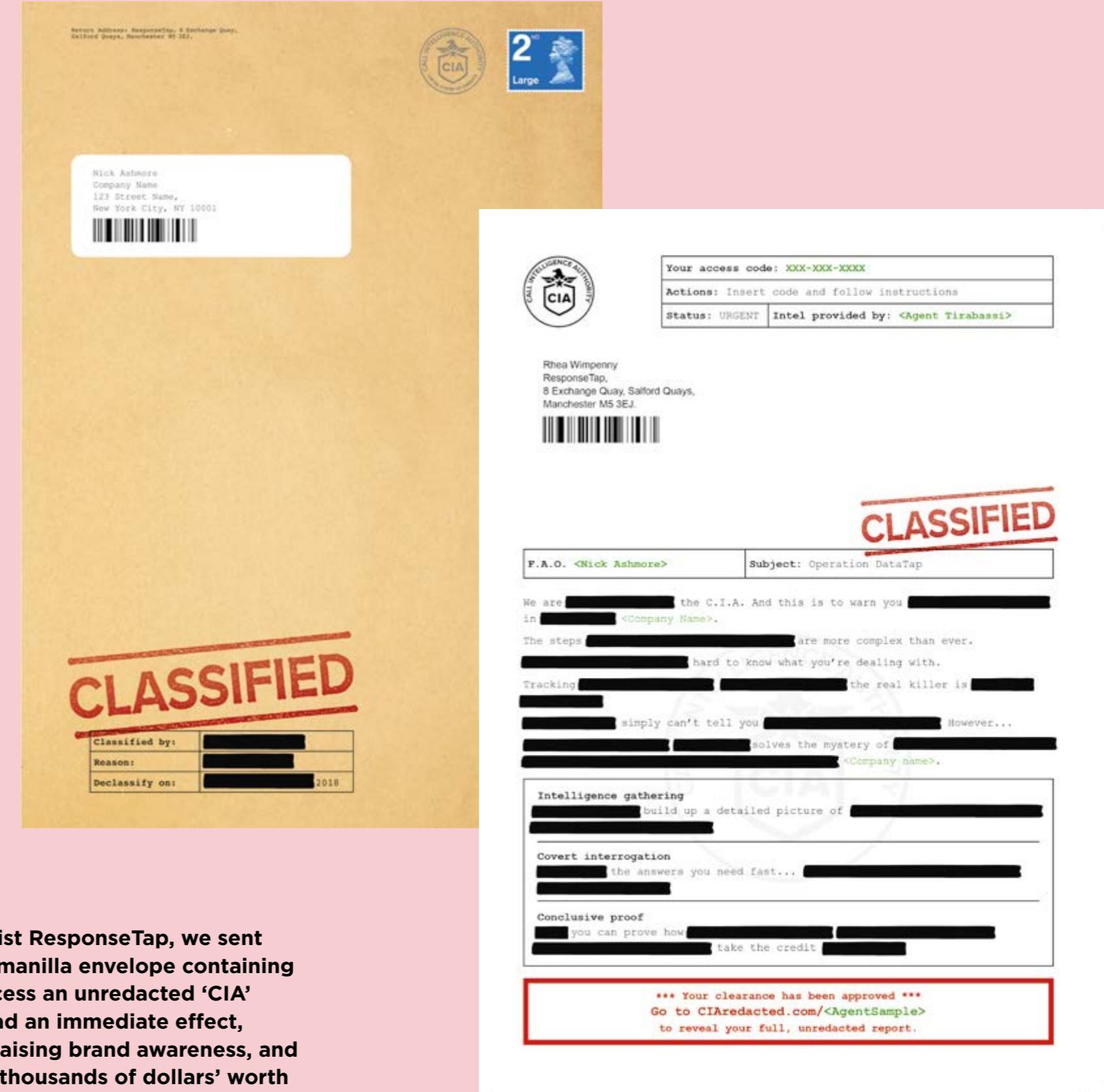
**Once scanned, the code opened an online version of the full magazine.**

**The roll-fold + QR code test performed well, giving the brand a more cost-effective alternative to mailing every customer a full magazine.**

## THE END GAME

### Create a sense of urgency

You don't want action in a few days; you want it right now! So, talk up the product's immediate benefits or imply an imminent loss.



For call tracking specialist ResponseTap, we sent prospects a mysterious manilla envelope containing an urgent request to access an unredacted 'CIA' report. The campaign had an immediate effect, starting conversations, raising brand awareness, and generating hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of qualified marketing leads.

# THE END GAME

## Justify the price

Muster every possible benefit and stack them up against the price. If possible, use price guarantees, or promises, especially one that increases the urgency such as 'Prices fixed until...'

A red curved arrow pointing to the right, indicating a continuation or next step.

Look how hard this order form works. Instantly, the reader can understand everything they get, including precisely how much they save. The 60-day trial period provides reassurance and helps justify the price, too.

## THE END GAME

### Make it easy on the reader

Don't make the response mechanic the last thing you consider

Make the URL for your landing page simple but compelling...include a QR code too

On your website, make the offer prominent and provide clear navigation from the home page

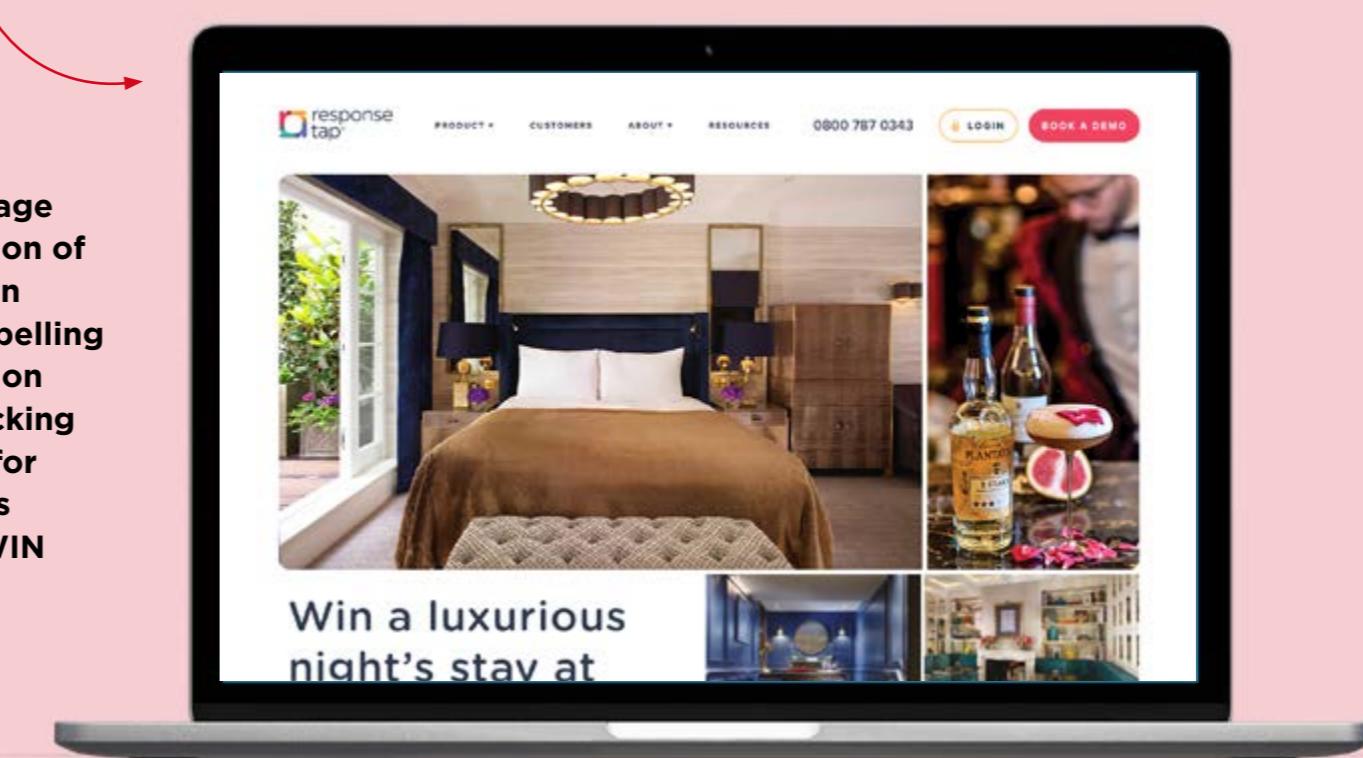
Guide the reader through the checkout process step-by-step - make clear what they have to do

Offer the widest possible range of payment options

If you would like to create more responsive, more effective direct mail packs, get in touch with Red C today. Call 0161 872 1361 or email Steve White at [swhite@redcmarketing.com](mailto:swhite@redcmarketing.com)



Make your landing page URL a simple extension of the URL for your main website - using compelling words. For example, on this pack for call tracking specialists, the URL for the landing page was [ResponseTap.com/WIN](http://ResponseTap.com/WIN)





## HOW TO MAKE HEADLINES MAGNETIC

9 pro-tips for writing more attention-grabbing and engaging headlines (plus 1 simple way to cheat).

[READ MORE >](#)



## ADVENTURES IN TRAVEL MARKETING

Here's what we've learned about uplifting results for travel brands over two decades.

[READ MORE >](#)



## COPYWRITING FOR EMAIL

How to capture attention, sustain interest and encourage action with your emails.

[READ MORE >](#)