

DEVELOPING A COURSE IN DIRECT RESPONSE MARKETING

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Direct Response Marketing is currently a \$100 billion industry, growing at a rate estimated at between 14-16% per year. Academic courses in this area of marketing were offered at only 16 colleges or universities in the entire country in 1980. Yet this industry has proven so profitable that mail order divisions have been established and are currently operating in more than half of the Fortune 500 companies including among many others, American Airlines, Time-Life Books, Hewlett-Packard, American Express, and Gulf Oil. Documented rags-to-riches stories of entrepreneurial success in this industry are numerous. In fact, direct response marketing has probably created more overnight millionaires than any other industry.

The phenomenal growth and entrepreneurial success of direct response marketing over recent years has created a tremendous demand for university educated students who are as familiar with the theories, processes and operations of the direct response industry as other students are with the fields of retailing, import-export, or transportation.

This paper discusses the development and teaching of an undergraduate course entitled, "Mail Order/Direct Mail Marketing" at the upper division undergraduate level at California State University, Los Angeles. The syllabus of the course is provided and analyzed along with an evaluation of the course by the students and changes made as a result of experiences with the initial class.