

“Where’s the beef?”

– Clara Peller, 1984 for Wendy’s

The target market for recruiting new adult collectors is the 45 to 65 age group. In order to identify how we can reach this group two things need to be accomplished. First we need to develop a strong demographic template about this group.

And what better way to do this than to develop a survey to be answered by our own 45 to 65 year old base of APS members. The data sought should include: professional work background, education, income, and most importantly when they took up the hobby and what was the attraction and what benefits have they received from this experience.

This information will tell us the groups we need to pursue. Based on our own respondents’ answers we should be able to identify individuals that we can profile or build case studies around when we start a marketing campaign to reach our target group.

Next we need to raise money—maybe as much as \$250,000. This can be accomplished using a fund raising prospectus that I developed for the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society several years ago and was implemented by Joe Crosby. Our initial goal was \$50,000 and we finished with over \$75,000 if my memory serves me right. Based on our data from the survey there should be a great list of potential contributors in the respondent pool. It may also be necessary to raise this amount of money annually. Fortunately the APS has about a 91% retention rate.

Once we have the survey results and the fund raising in high gear it is time to identify a public relations firm suitable for our needs. They will need to develop a strategy and media vehicles for reaching our target market and introducing them to stamp and postal history collecting.

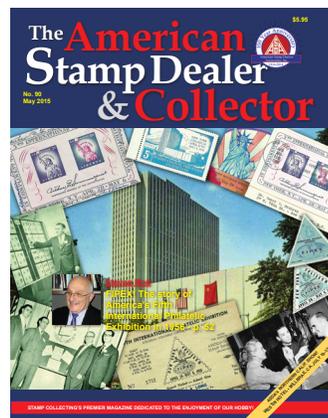
My past experience tells me that direct mail with a built in response vehicle may be the best approach. The mailing could include testimonials from our survey respondents. Traditional print media would be a secondary vehicle. Since we would be using a di-

rect response approach it would be important to use trained professional telemarketers to follow up on the responses and secure the new memberships. The respondents would have already received an information packet prior to the direct contact.

I realize that this is an outside the box approach to our declining membership opportunity. But something has to be done to reverse the trend. If the APS is going to add an executive director by StampShow 2015, his or her Number One mission has to be developing membership.

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