

Zip Code Phonebook - THE NEW NEIGHBORHOOD PHONEBOOK

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Zip Code Phonebook

THE NEW NEIGHBORHOOD PHONEBOOK

Yellow Pages, a California-based research company has been extensively doing studies on U.S. ZIP (Zone Improvement Program) Codes. They can now predict, with certain percentage of accuracy, what you ate for breakfast based on your zip code.

ZIP Codes are the smallest, most organized accumulation of information by which we can evaluate the demographic flavor of a given area.

From a marketing standpoint, most retail businesses use ZIP codes along with the Perretto Principle that 80% of your customers reside within the ZIP codes that connect to your collection. In theory, they live no more than 7 miles from where you are.

A CHANGING MARKETPLACE

The phonebook we have grown accustomed to was developed over 30 years ago. The only way it has grown in in terms of thickness, weight, and aesthetic design.

From a marketing perspective, except for its dominance and near monopoly, it has been rendered useless by a more mobile and more efficient market.

When the Yellow Pages were first introduced, the world of "malls", "strip malls", "executive centers", and "postal & mail box centers" were unknown to American consumers. Today, it is easier for us to dial directory assistance than to use the phonebook.

USE OLD PATTERNS

To make it easy for advertisers and consumers to swallow something new, make it look like it's old. So, use simple patterns and designs borrowed from old phonebooks, including rates charged for your territory. Establish your advertising rates based on the number of homes and businesses your ZIP Code phonebook is going to.

You can have as many ZIP Codes covered, just make sure you do not pile up a marketplace too large you are practically competing with the phone company. The best rule of thumb is to break the phone companies general distribution area into 7 phonebooks.

GTE used to have what they called "The Neighborhood Phonebook". I think the reason it died is that it broke down its neighborhood either very conceptually or too similarly to the way all other phonebooks do. Advertisers want solid numbers. ZIP Codes are solid. Just ask the postal service.