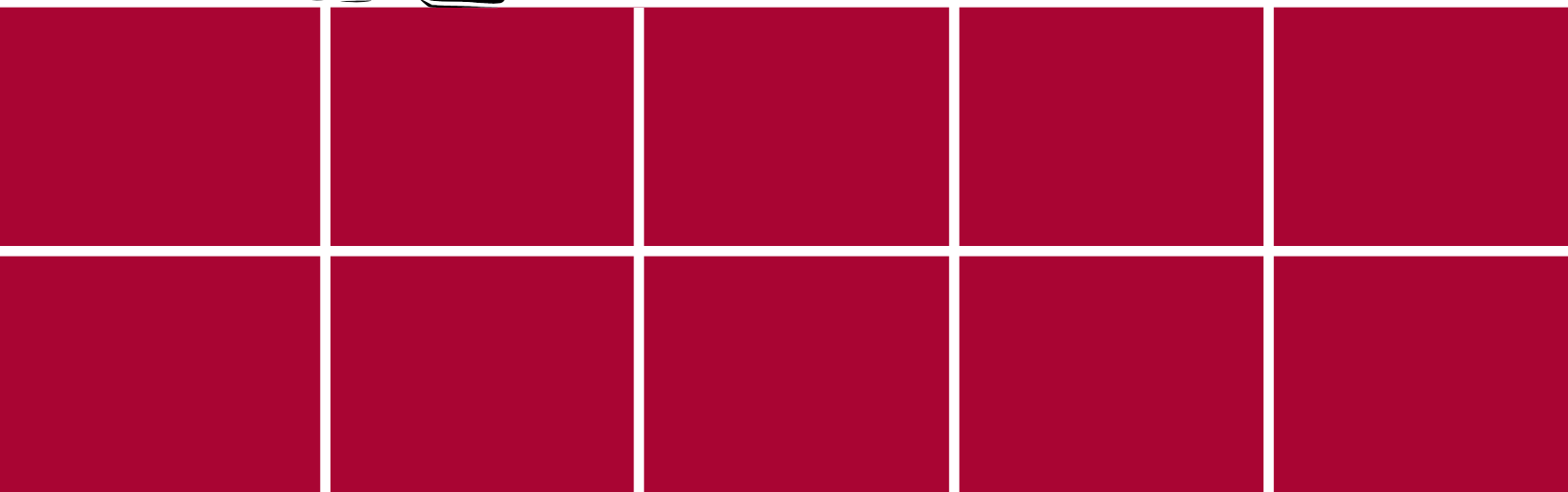




Cataloger's Efficiency Evaluator:

*How does
your business
measure up?*



Cataloger's Efficiency Evaluator:

Answer 20 key questions and see how your catalog business measures up

If you're like most catalog executives, you've probably wondered how your business stacks up to others in your industry. While no business is *exactly* like any other, we've developed some general guidelines that can give you a close idea of how effectively your company operates compared to the most productive mail order catalog firms.

This self-evaluation is easy and takes only a few minutes. First, print this form...then answer all 20 questions by circling the number that best reflects your accurate assessment of your company's current performance.

(It's best to be candid & honest in your answers. If you fudge or waffle, you get a higher score...but the value of this important self-appraisal will be diminished significantly.)

When you've answered each question, add all circled numbers to create your score, and write the total in the box provided. Then, refer to the Business Efficiency Scoring guide. You'll see instantly how your company measures up.

Ready? Let's get started.

Identify hurdles to profitability & efficiency, and you'll improve your catalog's opportunities for success.



Planning

- 1** Have you created & implemented a unique selling proposition (USP), one that causes your company to stand out in a unique & positive way in the minds of your prospects and customers?

Yes		<i>Partially</i>		No
5	4	3	2	1

- 2** Do you create annual and monthly sales & expense budgets to improve the quality of your business forecasting and cost controls?

Yes		<i>Sometimes</i>		No
5	4	3	2	1

- 3** Do you put your annual marketing and operating strategies and plan in writing to help focus key staff on important business objectives?

Yes		<i>Partially</i>		No
5	4	3	2	1

Marketing

- 4** Do you segment your house list, allowing you to effectively manage your catalog mailings?
- | | | | | |
|-----|---|------------------|---|-----------|
| Yes | | <i>Sometimes</i> | | <i>No</i> |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
- 6** Is your catalog copy of high, professional quality, effectively answering every product question a customer might logically wonder about?
- | | | | | |
|-----|---|------------------|---|-----------|
| Yes | | <i>Sometimes</i> | | <i>No</i> |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
- 8** Do you work as hard at making your online catalog (website) an effective, growing profit center as you do your paper catalog?
- | | | | | |
|-----|---|------------------|---|-----------|
| Yes | | <i>Partially</i> | | <i>No</i> |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
- 10** Do you have a planned program for collecting customer testimonials and using them effectively in your catalog and website?
- | | | | | |
|-----|---|------------------|---|-----------|
| Yes | | <i>Sometimes</i> | | <i>No</i> |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
- 5** Do you mail catalogs to your best customers at least 6-8 times per year?
- | | | | | |
|-----|---|------------------|---|-----------|
| Yes | | <i>Sometimes</i> | | <i>No</i> |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
- 7** Do you promote your catalog products with professional-quality photographs that show items clearly and attractively?
- | | | | | |
|-----|---|------------------|---|-----------|
| Yes | | <i>Sometimes</i> | | <i>No</i> |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
- 9** Do you regularly test special offers to discover new ways of increasing your revenue per thousand catalogs mailed?
- | | | | | |
|-----|---|------------------|---|-----------|
| Yes | | <i>Sometimes</i> | | <i>No</i> |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
- 11** Do you use high-visibility space in your catalog to sell the customer on the intangible benefits of dealing with your company (e.g. guarantee, gift packaging, credit cards honored, quantity discounts, special offers & services, etc.)?
- | | | | | |
|-----|---|------------------|---|-----------|
| Yes | | <i>Sometimes</i> | | <i>No</i> |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Merchandising

- 12** Do you use square-inch analysis to carefully measure the profit generated by each catalog product?
- | | | | | |
|-----|---|------------------|---|-----------|
| Yes | | <i>Sometimes</i> | | <i>No</i> |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
- 13** Does your merchandising effort uncover at least two breakthrough new products each time you publish a new catalog?
- | | | | | |
|-----|---|------------------|---|-----------|
| Yes | | <i>Sometimes</i> | | <i>No</i> |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Financial

- 14** Do your financials reflect a gross profit margin of at least 50%?
- | | | | | |
|-----|---|------------------|---|-----------|
| Yes | | <i>Sometimes</i> | | <i>No</i> |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
- 16** Have you exceeded your annual sales goal during the past 2 consecutive fiscal years?
- | | | | | |
|-----|---|------------------|---|-----------|
| Yes | | <i>Partially</i> | | <i>No</i> |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
- 15** Do you invest at least 20-25% of your gross sales in catalog & web marketing?
- | | | | | |
|-----|---|------------------|---|-----------|
| Yes | | <i>Sometimes</i> | | <i>No</i> |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
- 17** Have you earned more profit than you planned during each of the past 2 consecutive years?
- | | | | | |
|-----|---|------------------|---|-----------|
| Yes | | <i>Partially</i> | | <i>No</i> |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Operations

18 Do you train your customer-contact employees to impress customers with their courtesy & professionalism, as well as take orders effectively?

Yes		Sometimes		No
5	4	3	2	1

20 Do you conduct formal surveys at least once a year, asking directly what customers like — and don't like — about your products and service?

Yes		Sometimes		No
5	4	3	2	1

19 Do you monitor & record call center representative sales and service presentations for evaluation and training purposes?

Yes		Sometimes		No
5	4	3	2	1

Efficiency Point TOTAL

How To Score Your Catalog Business Self-Evaluation

- ▶ Add all circled numbers to tally your total score.
- ▶ Write Efficiency Point total above.
- ▶ Refer to Scoring Guide.

Cataloger's Efficiency Evaluator Scoring Guide: Where Do You & Your Company Stand?

Total Points

100-85 Excellent

Give yourself a giant, well-deserved pat on the back! You're running your catalog operation like the best professionals in the business. You've obviously learned that success in cataloging means paying attention to a thousand tiny details, and giving customers what they want, how and when they want it. But don't relax now...keep up the good work.

Total Points

84-70 Good

Nice going. You're doing a lot of things right, and running a catalog business that's likely more efficient & productive than many of your competitors. However, there's still plenty you & your staff can do to get better. To determine where to start your improvement plans, focus on self-evaluation questions on which you had lower scores.

Total Points

69-50 Needs Improvement

You're currently operating at a level of efficiency that's average, or slightly below. The bad news: You're leaving considerable money on the table, and not reaping all the best benefits of being a business owner. The good news: Implementing needed improvements in your catalog marketing & operations can lead to dramatic positive changes.

Total Points

49-20 Poor

First off, you're to be commended for your honesty in completing this self-evaluation. While you have much work to do in analyzing and restructuring your business, odds are you can be successful. To get off on the right foot in your renovation efforts, you might want to consider enlisting the help of a qualified catalog advisor.



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