

Making Direct Mail More Effective

Commercial Letter Looks to Empower Geographics to Add Valuable Location Information to Customers' Lists



Commercial Letter, Inc. is a full service direct mail company, offering everything needed to design, print and execute a direct mail marketing campaign. Its customers include top businesses in industries such as education, travel and entertainment.

Vernon Carter, list marketing manager at Commercial Letter, turns to Empower Geographics to help one of Commercial Letter's clients with location analysis. The client offers educational testing and training courses. The job is "proximity matching" — in this case a fancy way of answering the question "What's the nearest training center to each student?"

It might sound like a simple question, but the answer requires sophisticated spatial processing, especially considering that some of the client's lists contain 500,000 prospective students.

"To do the job, we get two files from our client, one of their training center locations and one with student names and addresses," Carter said. "We turn the files over to Empower and get back a file of students, and for each student record the closest training centers are appended."

Now when students get a mailer, the locations of one to three nearby training centers will be printed on it, making it easier for students to attend classes.

To identify the closest training centers, Empower "geocodes" both the training center and student files. That means assigning latitude and longitude coordinates to each address. Then Empower uses its software on both files to perform a proximity search around each student record, extending out until the three closest training centers are found.

"The data we get back from Empower is great," said Carter. "And our client is very pleased with the results and the extra services we can offer them." Carter has also been impressed with Empower's flexibility and turnaround time.

"Empower listens to us, they understand what we want, and they're experts at spatial processing our files."

"They've been able to accommodate last minute changes to the job and a 500,000 record file they recently processed took only a few days time." Carter stated that Empower processed about 25 jobs last year and expects to do at least that many this year. Commercial Letter is also planning to purchase MapInfo software through Empower. "We want to help our clients target their lists even more," Carter said. "We can do this for clients by mapping their customer locations and overlaying demographics and other data to better identify the best areas for marketing."

Overall, the relationship with Empower has been excellent, Carter concluded. "Empower listens to us, they understand what we want, and they're experts at spatial processing our files."

About Empower Geographics

Empower specializes in making location strategic for business. Centrally located in the Chicago area, we are a flexible, customer-focused organization offering personal, expert attention and the ability to meet any customer needs at any scale. We offer a complete portfolio of mapping software, data products and services to support site selection, customer profiling, marketing, territory alignment, routing, asset management, customer care and other critical business applications.

Empower's services include location analysis, geocoding/data processing, application development, map production, and training.

For More Information

Call 1-888-627-7767

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