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Big Island Idea

A series of direct mail postcards makes a big impression on vacation buyers for Kahakai Estates.

Source: BUILDER Magazine
 Publication date: 2005-01-01

By Rich Binsacca

DESPITE A WHITE-HOT MARKET, THE SECOND-HOME LANDSCAPE on Hawaii's Big Island is pretty competitive. To make its Kahakai Estates project stand out Honolulu-based Stanford Carr Development offered 98 one-acre, home sites (two-thirds of which were luxury spec units), at nearly twice the average lot size, thus setting the tone for an advertising and direct mail campaign headlined by a series of postcards.

Using a database created from prospect cards, the sales team sent interested buyers a postcard entitled "A Big Mahalo" (meaning "thank you") within days of their visit, then sent two more pieces featuring a "Bigger is Better" headline, photo, and brief sales message on a two-week cycle to reinforce the large-lot theme. Telephone calls to prospects the weeks between the postcards and after the last one supplemented the effort. "We wanted to touch [prospects] each week during a 60-day cycle," says Patrick O'Neill, sales and marketing director for Stanford Carr. "We weren't trying to sell anything [with the postcard], just give them a nudge to come back to the [sales] office."

In addition to positive anecdotal feedback, the campaign established Stanford Carr as a sophisticated developer with a sense of humor. It also led to a faster-than-planned sellout, as all 98 lots (offered in scheduled phases) were gone within 16 months.

CAMPAIGN DETAILS


Program: Direct mail (postcard series); **Developer:** Stanford Carr Development, Honolulu; **Cost:** \$200 per month, including postage; **Advertising agency:** The Schiller Agency/Element 8, Honolulu



LOTS OF SUCCESS: A series of direct mail postcards reinforced the project's distinction of offering larger lots while instilling a bit of humor into the sales effort.

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