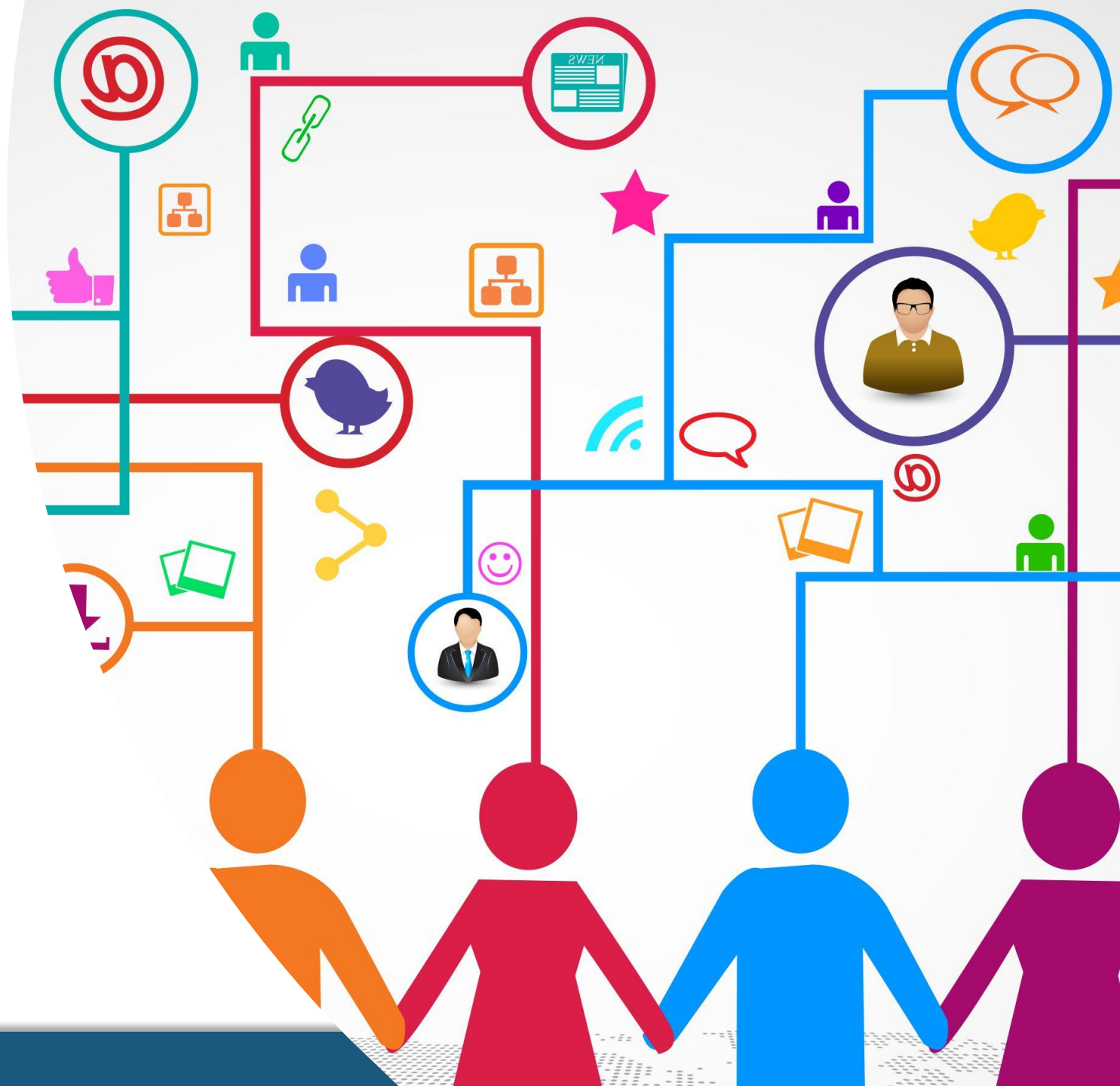# DMAW Production Day: Pre-Press

What you need to know to get your mailing from strategy to ready-to-print.

Step 1: Scheduling

Now more than ever, production needs to be involved in the process from the very start.

Ways Production Can Help In The Strategy Process

- Look for postal or production savings

- Suggest data and DP instructions to ensure the project is executed as planned

- Ensure the project can be completed as designed

  - *Meets postal regulations*

  - *All pieces will insert into the envelope correctly*

  - *No hidden costs for oversized, thick or heavy packages*

Important Dates To Include In Your Schedule:
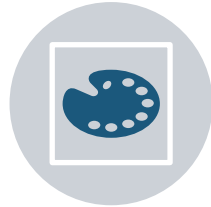
Preliminary art date

Final art release date

Data counts due to production team

Data due date

Budget due date

Mail date/in-home date

Agency Sample Schedule - Appeals

Maildate 6/23	
Full Strategy Approvals	3/6
Copy to client	3/20
Balance of art to client	4/5
Data Request	4/13
Final Copy & Art Approved	4/26
Data due to Mailshop	5/15
Postage Due to mailshop	6/23

Sample Renewal Production Schedule

- ➢ 5/24 – Art for Envelopes due
- ➢ 6/8 – Balance of Art due
- ➢ 6/14 – Data and DP Instructions Due
- ➢ 6/22 – Dumps and Setups sent to client for review
- ➢ 6/26 – Approvals needed on Dumps and Setups
- ➢ 6/28 – Insertions Due
- ➢ 7/17 – Mail Date

Agency Sample Schedule - Acquisition

Maildate 7/17	
Full Strategy Approvals	4/3
Copy to client	4/17
Outside lists ordered	4/24
House file suppression list delivered	5/17
Final Copy & Art Approved	5/23
Balance of art to client	5/8
Merge Perge completed	6/5
Data due to Mailshop	6/15
Postage Due to mailshop	7/5

Sample Acquisition Production Schedule

- 5/25 – Envelope Art Due
- 6/1 – Balance of Art Due
- 6/23 – Data and DP Instructions Due
- 7/5 – Dumps and Setups sent to client for review
- 7/7 – Approvals needed on Dumps and Setups
- 7/13 – Insertions Due
- 7/31 – Mail Date (Drop 1)

Step 2: Budgeting

Budgets

Be upfront about what you need – *including any limitations.*

Questions to think about:

- *Should postage be included in the budgeted price?*

- *Do you want to see print overs or have them rolled into the current quantity?*

- *If you are using inventory, do you need to see those costs added to the budget?*

- *Do you need roll out costs for any tests?*
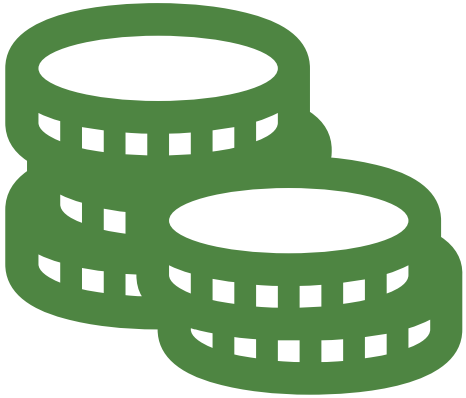
REMEMBER:
The earlier you ask for budget numbers the less accurate they may be.
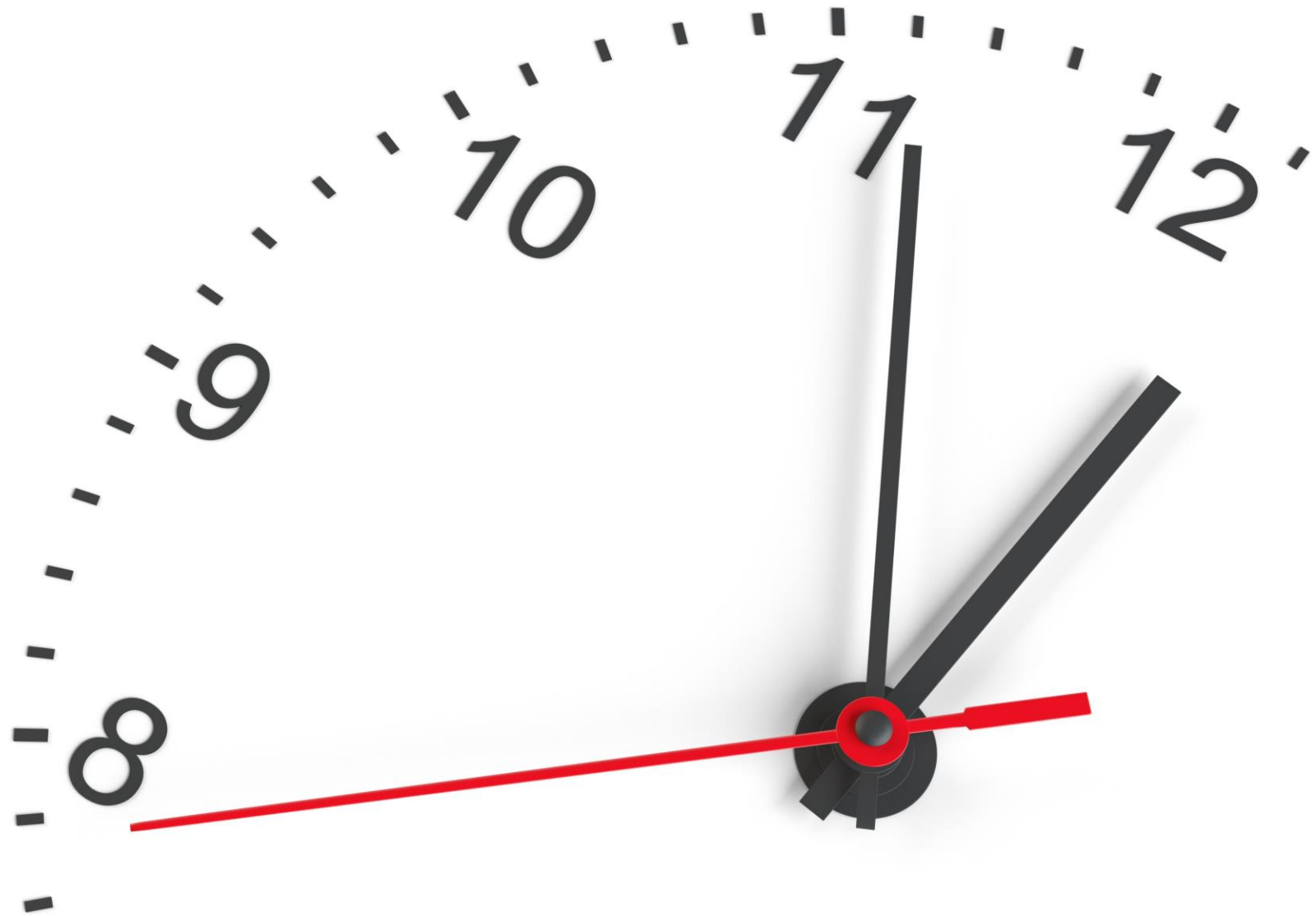
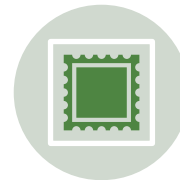# What does Production Need to Know to Build a Budget?

Size and specs of each printed piece.

How many inks and if there are bleeds.

Personalization needs.

Postage treatment.

Expected quantity of names (in total and per package.)

Additional data processing needs.

What If Something Changes Before Going To Press?

1

Alert your production partner to the changes as quickly as possible.

2

Ask if the change will affect the pricing/sourcing of suppliers. *Don't assume that it will not matter to the budget.*

3

Request a new budget (if necessary).

4

If the charges will not fit into an already approved budget, regroup as a team.

Step 3: Ready To Start The Process

Prepping Art For Release

Make sure all finished pieces match the descriptions used in the budget

Make sure each version of the art is labeled and easily identified – especially when 2 versions are very similar
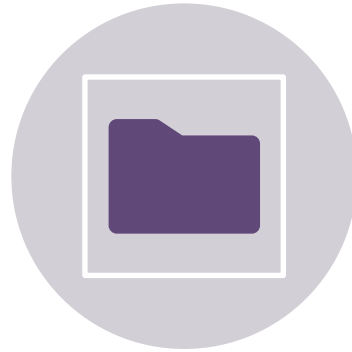
Be sure to include PDFs showing both preprint versions and an FPO versions (when personalization is needed)

Prepping Data For Release

MAKE SURE THE DATA FILE(S) ARE LABELED CLEARLY.

INCLUDE A FILE LAYOUT FOR EACH DATA FILE.

MAKE SURE THAT ALL VARIABLE FIELDS FROM THE FPO TEXT ARE INCLUDED IN THE DATA.

Send Data Processing Instructions That Include:

- What data is used for each package: segmentation, source codes

- Any special needs for the data – NCOA, Merge Purge, CASS, Ask Calculations

- Where and how FPO copy is to be applied

- Seed instructions

- Sample instructions

Three Takeaways

- **Takeaway #1:** Make sure you include your production team in the process of creating a schedule.

- **Takeaway #2:** The earlier you ask for a budget, the more likely you will need updated numbers when you get ready to mail.

- **Takeaway #3:** Make sure you have all of the required items before you release art or data. Not having these items can cause you to push the production schedule back and even result in missed mail dates.

Questions?

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