

POWER OF PRINT

Direct Mail Trends In 2022: The Highlights

Business trends are a result of shifts in attitudes, values, technologies and the economic landscape that collectively drive enterprise-level strategic decisions. For the print industry, the 2022 trends tell a strong story for direct mail. If you desire a more in-depth look, please read our companion piece, “Direct Mail Trends 2022: A Deeper Dive.”

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60%
of Millennial consumers to try a new business, store or product.

Direct mail surges because digitally fatigued remote workers seek more tangible connections.

In 2022 remote workers will spend nearly
8hrs
per day online resulting in virtual fatigue.

As we surpass two full years of the pandemic, its concentric effects are still rippling across the marketplace, but the news isn't all bad. A significant result is that more businesses have begun relying on direct mail to drive attention, retention and results. A prime factor is the tectonic shift by companies to more hybrid and remote work options, leading to increased digital fatigue.

DIGITAL FATIGUE IS HERE TO STAY

As businesses increasingly embrace employees working offsite, studies show this will morph into the new normal. According to Pew Research¹ 71% of employees are now working from home.

Of these, 54% want to continue to do so – a startling pre-pandemic increase of 34%. This suggests online meetings will be a way of life. Statista² predicts that in 2022 remote workers will spend almost 8 hours a day online. This also means virtual fatigue³ is inevitable, resulting in consumers seeking more tangible connections. Rather than the glare of a computer screen, increasingly they will emotionally engage with print-on-paper options.

DIRECT MAIL GETS ATTENTION AND RESULTS

Because of this digital fatigue direct mail has surged;⁴ marketers understand its growing allure in a more fractured, isolated world. High-quality print direct mailers jump out, grab attention, as they elicit longer attention spans, leading to improved emotional – and financial – results.

Younger consumers are especially responsive to direct mail, with 60% of Millennials⁵ motivated to try a new business, store or product because of a direct mail piece. Forty-six percent of Millennials⁶ are inspired to go online and seek more product information online. Direct mail open rates can reach up to 90%⁷ compared to 23% for email.

COGNITIVE/EMOTIONAL RESPONSES TO OMNICHANNEL MARKETING: PHYSICAL + DIGITAL

According to a recent Harvard Business Review article,⁸ neuroscience can help change how companies think about opportunities. Specifically, in generating big data about critical moments of consumer decision-making. One such study was conducted by Canada Post in 2021.⁹

This study collected data about the response-driven power of direct mail including: if its tactical response influences the way people interact with direct mail, its role in the purchase journey

and its influences on customer behavior. Their findings showed that direct mail out-performed digital in attention, recall and engagement. Further, direct mail is easier to understand, more persuasive and far more likely to motivate results.¹⁰

With flexible formats and highly targeted personalization, print direct mail is not only a tool for customer acquisition, but an important touchpoint throughout the customer journey.

FOUR KEY DIRECT MAIL TRENDS IN 2022¹¹

1. Data is king. Companies will use this data to create direct mail that targets specific – and more motivated – customer segments.
2. Omni-channel is key. Studies show consumers use at least three marketing channels throughout their purchase cycle. As a highly effective option, direct mail should be one of these channels.
3. Automation is growing. Direct mail printers are increasingly investing in ways to improve productivity and reduce market erosion.
4. Good design is essential. It's especially important to Millennials and GenX consumers, with other motivating factors being paper quality and relevant messaging.

THE FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT

This year is prime time for direct mail. With the move to a remote workforce, the rise in digital fatigue and the continued decline in USPS volume, direct mail will grow exponentially. In its role as a collaborative partner with other channels, direct mail reinforces each, making responses stronger for all. And as part of a digitally



integrated mix, direct mail will prove even more powerful. Find out more about types of digital integration – informed delivery, QR codes, physical retargeting – in our adjunct article, “Direct Mail Trends 2022: A Deeper Dive.”

To paraphrase Maureen Powers, President of RRD Direct Marketing Group: “Direct mail acts as a personalized storefront and a vehicle to drive customers to the brand website. With flexible formats and highly targeted personalization, print direct mail is not only a tool for customer acquisition, but an important touchpoint throughout the customer journey. We expect this to continue as a growing trend through 2022.”

— Source: 1, 4, 11: “Direct Mail Printing Outlook for 2022: Still Remains a Shining Star,” Printing Impressions Jan. 2022

— Source 2: Statista, 2021

— Source 3: Monster.com, 2021

— Source 5, 6: Association of National Advertisers

— Source 7: Vericast Awareness-to-Action Study is an ongoing, fielded in conjunction with Prospect Insights & Analytics, a global market research company

— Source 8: “Neuroscience Is Going to Change How Businesses Understand Their Customers,” Harvard Business Review, Feb.08, 2019

— Source 9, 10: Canada Post Neuroscience Research into the Power of Direct Mail, 2021



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