

Mail and the Internet

PARTNER UP...

30% more dollars are spent by multimedia shoppers than single-media shoppers.

37% of e-commerce dollars come from catalog recipients.

41% of Americans shop using both catalogs and the Internet.

Insight 1: Mail and the Internet just click.

Mail and the Internet offer two distinctly different flavors. And apparently consumers like a little of both. Indeed, research proves mail and Internet communications generate the best results working as a media team. The key is finding the right balance.

Mail

Grabs consumers' undivided attention — in fact, they spend up to 30 minutes with their mail on any given occasion. Mail also gets into the hands (literally) of your prospect, has staying power in the home, and can be passed along to others.

E-mail

Just hit send, and it arrives almost instantaneously. E-mail is also interactive and provides a quick outlet for impulsive shoppers.

Mailbox vs. inbox...the ultimate “boxing” match, right? Well-seasoned marketers know it's not about choosing sides. By integrating both mail and the Internet into your media mix, you can command the attention of your audience where they live, work, and play. Studies show that consumers who interact with brands over multiple media channels display more loyalty and **spend 30% more** than those who shop using a single media channel.

The bottom line: E-mail complements rather than competes with mail as a means of reaching your audience and compelling them to respond. Blending the distinct flavors of both into one powerful marketing strategy will help you achieve high-impact results...even shake things up.

Insight 2: Mail links consumers to your Web site.

Looking for a high-speed connection to your best online customers? Then take another look at mail. Mail is used most often by industry leaders to drive Web site traffic over e-mail, print, and online advertising. There are a number of mail tactics to link consumers to your Web site that keep them clicking...and shopping:

Postcards

A postcard is a simple and affordable format that gets your message immediate attention. Motivate customers to go online by including an offer and measure the results.

Catalogs

More and more online retail sites use catalogs to amp up their sales. Research shows mail-based catalogs have a significant impact on attracting customers to a retailer's Web site. In fact, **41%** of Americans shop using both catalogs and the Internet. Studies also show catalog recipients:

- Account for **22% of Web site traffic**, but **37% of retailers' Web sales**
- Make **15% more** transactions than those who did not receive catalogs
- Spend **16% more** than those who did not receive catalogs
- Are nearly **twice as likely** to make an online purchase

Multimedia Mail

Another innovative idea is the integration of CDs and DVDs into one interactive mail package. With a CD or DVD, one click can lead consumers to more information or purchase options online.

Getting the right hook up

In order to reinforce your main message, mail and e-mail should have the same look and feel and campaign consistency. Let your communication pull double duty by putting your Web address on all mailed communications and making sure your phone number is on every Web page. By integrating your mail and e-mail efforts, you will give both messages a greater impact — and get more customers to your Web site faster.

The bottom line: From their home to your home page, mail motivates customers to visit a site more often, stay longer, and spend more money while shopping. Surprised? Don't be. There's no doubt customers enjoy the user-friendly aspect of retailers' Web sites. But, as research clearly demonstrates, consumers enjoy browsing through mail first.

Insight 3: Mail opens the digital lines of communication.

Today, consumers approach mail and the Internet with two very different mind-sets. E-mail has taken over as the primary channel for personal correspondence (excluding birthdays and holidays). That said, consumers are more apt to ignore and click unsolicited e-mails over to the trash — especially from brands they don't recognize or feel are irrelevant. A report released by DoubleClick.com in March 2005 found that **59%** of respondents feel that "knowing and trusting the sender" is a factor in opening and reading an e-mail. But, with mail, consumers are more open to discovery. They take the time to sort through and consider their offers.

Think about it

Marketers even use mail to get permission to open up an e-mail relationship with their customers. Your e-mail message will have a much better chance of getting read by customers

who invite you in. And, considering about **62%** of the e-mail U.S. consumers receive per week is spam or unsolicited, getting permission through mail is one of the most effective ways to get your audience to open those e-mails you've worked so hard to develop. And, once you've established an e-mail connection, you can keep your customers coming back to your site more often with an integrated mail and e-mail campaign.

The bottom line: Consumers rely on e-mail as a useful tool to manage their personal lives. But, compared to the mail, they are less likely to take the time to read Internet offers and retail messages. Don't forget: The best way to continue an ongoing relationship with your customers is through — you guessed it — the mailbox.

BRING SOMETHING NEW TO THE TABLE. MAIL.

As you see, connecting your off-line and online efforts into one powerful strategy just makes sense. Smartly leverage both mail and the Internet, and you'll not only help bring up your sales and drive more traffic to your Web site but also enhance the experience consumers have with your brand. Today's consumers may be fully immersed in the Internet, but the research shows that they still love to get their mail.

Bring something new to the table — enhance your communication results by integrating mail.

Catalogs eBay created its first-ever catalog to entice readers to its online retail site. The holiday catalog was distributed to several million eBay members in November 2004, and eBay saw a dramatic climb in sales. *"The catalog is the latest tactic we're using in an integrated campaign,"* said Michael Dearing, eBay general merchandising manager. *"We used the print medium during the holidays to keep eBay top of mind and drive readers to our Web site."*

Multimedia Mail 21 CD, Inc. produced a mini CD for a North Carolina coastal resort area. Compared to prior mailings, the results were a 300% increase in reservation inquiries over the next three months. The multimedia mailer also had a 16% response rate.

About Mail and the Internet: These findings are taken from proprietary U.S. Postal Service® research, including the "Value of Mail" research conducted by InnoMedia and the comScore "Multi-Channel Catalog and Credit Card Acquisition studies." The following insights are also based on the DMA's "State of the E-Commerce Industry Report" and articles from various publications, including *Crain Communications*, *Target Marketing*, and *DM News*. In this discussion, we focus on mail and its working relationship with the Internet: how mail drives more consumers to your Web site, enhances a user's online experience, and seamlessly integrates with e-mail to strengthen your marketing efforts.

Create twice the impact.

They surf and chat. Blog and bid. Upload, download, scan, browse, post, flame, IM, zap, and share. And, if there's any time left, they may squeeze in a game or two of Chicken Invaders. Today's consumers are up to their earphones in ever-evolving technology. Nearly everything they need to find, view, hear, and know is a click away. So traditional mail (that thing that's delivered to their doors) must be *passé*, right? Actually, no.

In fact, recent studies by the U.S. Postal Service and a number of independent research groups found that consumers — even heavy Internet users — continue to view mail as a highly relevant and significant part of their lives. It provides a physical and tangible quality consumers find lacking in their electronic communications. But that's not all. The studies also showed that mail, working side by side with digital media, can have a substantial impact on the use of commercial Web sites.