

The Role of Mail

CONSUMERS LIKE TO...

Relax.

48% read Mail to unwind.

Save.

42% look to Mail for financial savings.

Learn.

38% use Mail to stay informed.

Buy.

64% order from Mail received within the last month.

Based on a nationwide survey of 1,500 consumers and supplemented with 54 in-depth interviews, the Mail Moment research unveiled that: People welcome Mail into their homes, they look forward to seeing what it offers and they spend an average of 30 minutes reading it. This paper focuses on the functions of Mail in American households: how consumers perceive it, how they use it and how it complements their Web-based shopping.

Research into the Role of Mail in American households has produced a simple yet powerful lesson for today's marketing professionals:

When you want consumers to pay attention, pay attention to how consumers use their Mail.

Insight 1

Mail helps consumers accomplish three jobs.

Mail has become a vital part of people's lives. Every day as they sort through their Mail, consumers look for content that helps them manage and carry out household activities. According to the study, they want Mail to assist them with three specific home-related jobs:

Job 1. Browsing for new consumption. With the busy lifestyles of today's consumers, Mail has become the "new window-shopping." They are willing to make time to browse through their Mail to see what's new and consider products that may enhance their lives.

Job 2. Managing the home. Each household has what could be called a CEO of the Household. Mail provides information and offers that help the CEO manage household duties, including scheduling home maintenance, arranging children's activities and remembering health-care appointments.

Job 3. Overseeing finances. From opening and paying bills and reviewing account statements to clipping coupons and saving money, Mail helps consumers oversee financial matters and get the most out of the household budget.

The take-away: Be cognizant of how people use Mail – and be aware that they “window-shop” for new products, services and events. Your initiatives have a much better chance of breaking through and connecting with consumers when *the message is relevant to household tasks and centers on at least one of these three jobs.*

Insight 2

Mail satisfies emotional needs.

Consumers are also looking to satisfy certain emotional needs or desires when interacting with Mail. What’s more, they seek different types of emotional satisfaction with each Mail job:

Job 1. Browsing for new consumption:

- Relax and unwind.
- Stay in touch with what’s going on.
- Indulge or enrich oneself.

Job 2. Managing the home:

- Simplify life.
- Feel in control.
- Be efficient.

Job 3. Overseeing finances:

- Feel good about spending less.
- Be prepared to take care of responsibilities.
- Make things easier.

The take-away: Once you identify the job category of your message, be sure it delivers on one or more of the emotional needs the consumer seeks. This will help engage the recipient in your mailing.

Insight 3

The Role of Mail remains vital in the Internet age.

The study found that even Internet users find significant value in Mail and use it to perform the jobs above. In addition, consumers have different mind-sets toward Mail and the Internet. With Mail, they are more open to discovery. When online, they are frequently more goal-directed, devoting time to finding a predetermined product.

Research also revealed that the two mediums work together, with consumers using Mail catalogs to assist with online shopping. Typically, people are more “Web active” when they receive a catalog.

- They made 16% more site visits.
- They viewed 22% more pages.
- They spent 15% more time at the site.

The take-away: Smartly leverage both mediums to help boost your sales. Mail complements Internet shopping and drives Web traffic. And Mail's "discovering" quality allows your products to be considered by consumers who did not know about them or didn't realize they had the need for your products – driving them to your Web site to learn more. Despite the Internet's growth, Mail retains a distinct and important role.

THE ROLE OF MAIL CAN HELP YOUR MESSAGE TAKE CENTER STAGE.

As you can see, Mail plays a vital role with today's consumers. Its primary function is to help with three household-related jobs – browsing for new consumption, managing the home and overseeing finances. By making your Mail fit more naturally into these jobs – and providing the emotional satisfaction people desire from their Mail – you can reach your target on a richer, deeper, more meaningful level.

05ADMBRO121

©2008 United States Postal Service. Eagle symbol and logotype are registered trademarks of the United States Postal Service. **usps.com**