How to Complement Your Digital Marketing Strategy with Print

What role should print marketing play in your marketing plans? As digital media explodes it is tempting to minimize the value and importance of print marketing or even do away with it altogether. NOT SO FAST. Print continues to play a shifting but very important role in reaching your customers in both a branding and marketing capacity. No longer the primary focus of many marketing strategies its value is indisputable. Data suggests customers respond well to a combination of marketing platforms.

Close attention to print ads has more than doubled since 2009-10, from **23% to 49%** in 2020. Ad recall for print news brands has increased by **67%** between 2009-10 and 2019-20. (Newsworks, 2020). Combining digital and direct mail yields a **400%** increase in the effectiveness of online campaigns. There are a few things that every brand manager and marketer should consider when preparing their marketing budget and assigning resources to each specific marketing channel. Although digital information is processed faster than print, retention is significantly lower than it is for print. Digital ads are retained for seconds, whereas print is retained for 10 to 15 days.

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- 52% *of Recipients read direct mail postcards.*
- 84% *of Millennials take the time to look through their mail.*
- 64% *would rather scan for useful info in the mail than email.*

Tips for Successful Cross Channel Campaigns:

1. A Two-way Street: Opt-Ins

Print combined with digital serves multiple purposes, it increases the number of senses stimulated, increases perceived value, brand perception, and retention.

Sync your digital and print marketing efforts to direct your print audiences between both mediums helping you grow a complete and accurate data base for your campaigns. These branded mailers can include catalogs, product brochures, newsletters, and exclusive offers.

2. Use print to Promote Your Social Media Reviews

Your team puts a lot of time and energy into managing social media accounts and creating great experiences for customers.

Why confine positive comments to your digital format?

Including social media reviews and comments on print materials like in a newspaper ad or direct mailer accomplishes a few tasks. For instance, it:

- Let's customers know the positive things others are saying about the company
- Adds an element of social proof
- Increases brand awareness
- Showcases your online community and presence to offline customers

3. Place QR Codes on Print Materials

The Quick Response Code, or QR code, invented in 1994, was first introduced for use to consumers in 2010. However, its acceptance and broad use took years to become part of consumer behavior. As mobile applications have improved and cell phone technology has developed, the barriers to use have disappeared. Today most smartphones incorporate QR code scanners as a part of a phone's basic features. The use of QR codes in restaurants during the COVID-19 pandemic helped them become an accepted part of consumer behavior. Including QR codes and personalized tracking URLs on print materials is a way to link and track offline and online activities.

These codes and tracking links can lead to a dedicated landing page and are a clear way to understand who is using the information from your print campaigns including customer segments such as demographics, geography, and purchase history.

4. Use Calls-To-Action on Print Materials

Print marketing doesn't have to focus solely on informing customers.

Including specific calls to action, or prompts to follow you on social media, puts print to work for your digital strategy.

Calls-to-action can be as standard or novel as you'd like.

Netflix prompted users to use Snapchat to share images with friends with signs that allowed users to Faceswap with popular show characters.

5. Increase Response Rate by 135%- Variable Data Printing

Variable data printing can be used to customize mail based on a customer's past purchases or print personalized items for promotions, sweepstakes, and giveaways.

The easiest, and perhaps most impactful, way to use variable data printing in your marketing strategy is by personalizing materials with a customer's name.

This seems like a small detail, but including a person's full name in color on direct mail can increase response rates by 135%.

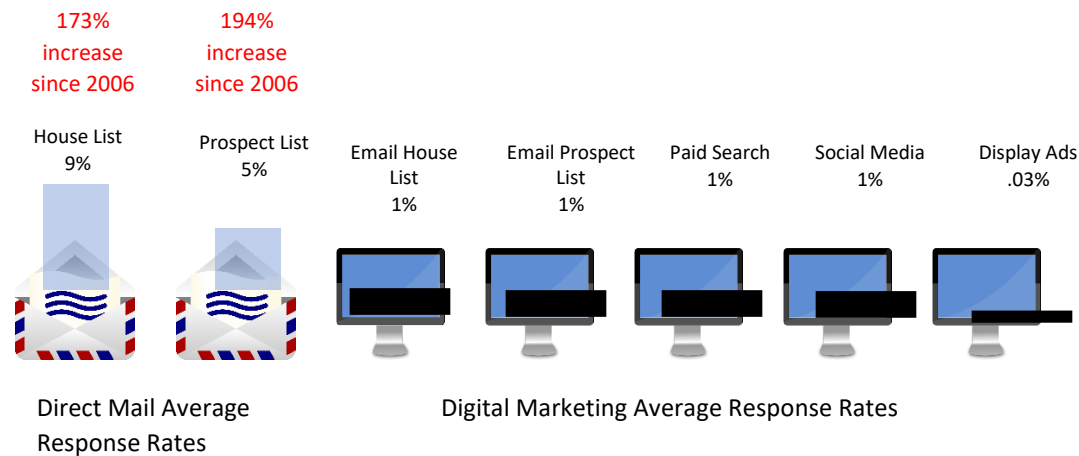**6. Standout- Direct Mail Gets Attention and Response Rates Are on the Rise**

We are constantly bombarded with, ads, content, and messaging, most coming at us digitally. The digital space is crowded, the mail box is not.

107 Emails is the number most people receive daily
63 Display ads are seen by most people daily
2 Direct Mail pieces per person per day

Direct mail is the most effective marketing channel for new customer acquisition and customer retention.

173%
increase
since 2006

194%
increase
since 2006

House List
9%

Prospect List
5%

Email House
List
1%

Email Prospect
List
1%

Paid Search
1%

Social Media
1%

Display Ads
.03%

Direct Mail Average
Response Rates

Digital Marketing Average Response Rates

House lists garner a 9% response rate on average, while prospect lists receive an average response rate of 5%. Boasting a 173% increase since 2006 for house lists and a whopping 194% increase since 2006 for prospect lists.

Compare direct mail response rates to digital: email, social media, and paid searches offer a 1% return, and display ads average a response rate of 0.3%. Clearly direct mail is far more effective at driving new and return business while the digital space is efficient at driving brand awareness and remarketing.

7. Include Campaign Hashtags on Print

Use print in your hashtag campaigns. Add the campaign hashtag to your print collateral. This approach is another way to direct all marketing channels toward a single campaign. Using campaign hashtags along with a call-to-action to share it on social media combines both strategies and increases campaigns impact.

Indiana University used this approach with newly-admitted college students by including the hashtag #IUSaidYes on their acceptance letter packages. Excited students shared images of their acceptance letters and attached the hashtag to their posts. There are thousands of posts on Instagram with the hashtag.

8. Don't Forget to Maximize your Social Media Efforts on Your In-Store-Displays and Print.
Prompt your customers to take action and at the same time help them cognitively connect your social media, in store displays, direct mail, and other channels of your campaign.

Target, routinely and successfully incorporates hashtag messaging in their print, in store displays, and messaging encouraging customers to post a selfie with a campaign-specific hashtag. There are thousands of posts on different social media platforms using #TARGETDOG.

Getting Print and Digital Messaging Right

Just using print and digital together does not guarantee a successful put come. Below are a few tips to help you get it right.:

- **Consistency is Key-** Using both print and digital increases the number of touches with your audience. Carefully constructing and executing a campaign using consistent messaging and imagery across all platforms is critical to maximizing results.
- **Team Work is Essential-** To ensure consistency on all channels your print and digital team should work together through out the process. Open communication, free exchange of ideas, and a shared strategic consensus. Then be sure all stay om brand and messaging throughout execution.

Print and digital marketing may take different forms, engage customers differently, and have some shared and some different goals, however, when they work together, they can maximize reach, retention, action, engagement, and outcome. Working together print and digital will direct, and engage your customer and help keep your company top of mind.

Keep these tips on hand for easy reference! Download this E-Book Now!

Sources

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