

Direct Mail Drives Online Sales

**Information Retention:
How Our Brains Prefer to
Read in Print vs. Digital**

**Pro Tips: Designing for Print
In a Digital World**

- **Consumers Likely To Distrust Brands That Communicate Only by Digital**
- **Consumers Are More Likely to Pay Attention to Print Ads than Digital Ads**
- **More Consumers Expect Personalized Communications**



DISTINCTLY PRINT

What every graphic designer needs to know about designing for print in a digital-first world.

In today's world of websites, social media, and mobile apps, digital design often takes center stage. But as more brands rediscover the value of print—for its permanence, tactile presence, and credibility—it's important for designers to understand it. Designing for print isn't just about using higher resolution. Print requires a different mindset and a deeper understanding of how ink interacts with paper.

Let's explore what makes print design distinct.



RESOLUTION AND COLOR: Beyond the Screen

Digital design uses RGB color and low-resolution images, typically 72 to 150 dpi. On screens, colors appear bright and consistent. But print is more complicated. You'll



work in CMYK mode, and files must be designed at 300 dpi or higher to ensure sharpness. Without proper planning, colors can shift based on the press, paper stock, and ink, so talk to us in advance if you need to hit brand colors or match colors across projects.



LAYOUT: Precision Matters

In digital design, layouts are flexible and responsive. However, print deals in fixed dimensions, and you'll need to account for bleeds, trim lines, and safe zones to ensure nothing vital



gets cut off. Build in bleed from the start (usually 1/8") and use print templates to guide safe design areas.



INTERACTIVITY: Tangible Experiences

Digital design offers interaction through clicks, hovers, and animations. Print delivers tactile engagement differently, using elements such as textured papers, die-cuts, pop-ups, and dimensional designs. Want to add a digital touch? Drive interaction through QR codes, personalized URLs, or even augmented reality, blending the best of both worlds.



TYPOGRAPHY: Finer Control

Web design requires safe fonts and screen-friendly scaling. In print, you can use high-end, custom fonts and have precise control over alignment, spacing, and legibility. Text won't shift depending on the browser or device.



THE EXPERIENCE: Lasting Impact

Print has a physical presence that digital can't replicate. A well-designed brochure or direct mail piece feels intentional, permanent, and personal. Recipients cannot dismiss it with a swipe. It's held, opened, and remembered. Use print strategically—for pieces you want customers to keep, share, or reflect on.

As a designer, expanding into print gives you new tools for storytelling, expression, and client impact. Learn the nuances, embrace the process, and don't underestimate the staying power of ink on paper.

Make it Personal

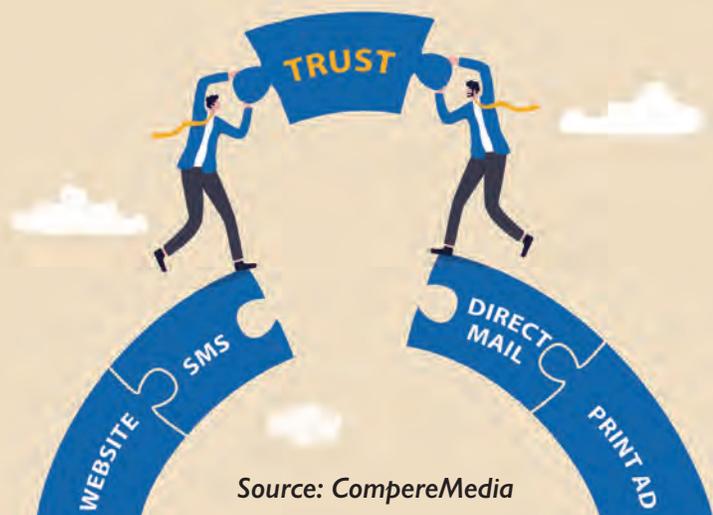
71% of consumers expect personalized communications from brands.



Source: McKinsey & Co.

Gain Trust with Mail

39% of consumers are unlikely to trust a brand that only engages using digital channels.



Source: CompereMedia

Promoting Purchases

Data proves direct mail drives online sales.

In today's digital world, direct mail might seem like a relic. Who's checking their mailbox when they have a phone in their hand? But here's the reality: Direct mail is a powerful tool for driving people online.

Whether someone is making a purchase or browsing a restaurant's menu, direct mail can play a critical role in getting them there. It may feel counterintuitive, but the data tell a compelling story.



Why Direct Mail Still Works, Especially During the Holidays

One of the best times to study shopping behavior is during the holiday season, when a majority of purchases move online. According to Bain & Co., 76% of holiday shoppers planned to do at least half of their shopping online last year.



What prompted those online purchases? For nearly 20% of shoppers, the answer was direct mail (Wunderkind, 2025). That's a significant influence, especially for a channel many think is fading.

Who's Responding—and Why?

So, who is most influenced by direct mail? The answer might surprise you:



- Gen Z – 23%
- Boomers – 18%
- Millennials – 16%
- Gen X – 10%

Yes, Gen Z topped the list, despite being the most digitally immersed generation. But studies consistently

show that Gen Z appreciates physical mail. According to Keypoint Intelligence, they're even more likely than Millennials (43% vs. 36%) to check their mailbox every day. Even more striking: 51% of Gen Z said they had made a purchase in the last six months as a result of receiving direct mail.

Gender also plays a role: Men were nearly twice as likely as women to make an online purchase after receiving a mail piece (21% vs. 12%).

Turning Insights into Action

So what motivates people to respond to a direct mail offer?



While discounts remain popular, "free shipping" topped the list of the most desired non-discount offers (61%), followed by:

- Loyalty points (14%)
- Bonus gifts (13%)
- Free returns/exchanges (8%)

These incentives can be powerful motivators, especially when placed front and center in your messaging.

Final Takeaway

As you plan your next promotion—holiday or not—don't underestimate the power of direct mail to drive online action. And remember: bold offers, vibrant visuals, and value-focused messaging go a long way, especially with Gen Z.

So go ahead! Put that postcard to work.



HOME

UP TO 50% OFF
SALE



Making Connections

Research shows our brains still prefer information on paper.

We've seen the headlines before: print outperforms digital regarding comprehension and retention. But with every new study, the evidence gets stronger. The most recent research—this time from Teachers College at Columbia University—offers fresh proof that our brains are wired to absorb information more deeply from the printed page.

While the study focused on middle schoolers, its implications went far beyond the classroom.

What Did Researchers Discover?

In a study published in PLOS in May 2024, educational neuroscientists at Columbia's Teachers College explored how students process information differently depending on whether they read in print or on a screen.

Researchers worked with 59 middle school students from the New York metro area, asking them to read a series of passages—some on laptops and others on printed pages. After each reading, students were prompted to evaluate words



as related or unrelated to the texts they'd read.

Using high-density electroencephalography (EEG) to scan brain activity, the researchers discovered something striking:

Students engaged more deeply with printed text, creating richer mental representations and making more meaningful connections.

By contrast, digital text comprehension was notably shallower, and students' brains had to work harder to piece together meaning.

What This Means for Marketers

So, what does this have to do with marketing? Just as students digest literature differently depending on the format, consumers absorb



marketing messages differently depending on the format, too.

Think About It:

- Direct mail piece vs. an email.
- Printed brochure vs. a LinkedIn message.
- Physical catalog vs. a digital one.

Sure, digital communications are fast, inexpensive, and scalable. But are they effective when you need someone to truly engage, understand, and remember?



Print may give you the edge if your message requires deeper thinking, explaining a complex product, introducing a financial service, or conveying trust in a healthcare brand. Just as students' brains build stronger connections with print, your customers' brains do, too.

The key isn't to abandon digital. It's to use the right tool for the job. If you're promoting a flash sale or sending a quick reminder, digital might be perfect. But if you're telling a story, educating a buyer, or trying to build long-term trust, consider going back to print.

Welcome to the latest issue of *Goodway Profit*. This newsletter is designed to provide you with information that will keep your 1:1 print campaigns cutting-edge and profitable.

Learn about how people engage and retain more information with printed text vs. digital text.



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About This Issue

PAPER

#100 Endurance gloss text

EQUIPMENT

Canon i300 Inkjet Press

DESIGN PROGRAMS

Adobe InDesign
Adobe Illustrator
Adobe Photoshop

FONT FAMILIES

ITC Avant Garde Gothic Pro
Chaparral Pro
Gill Sans Nova
Myriad Pro

Focused on Print

55% of consumers are more likely to pay attention to print ads than digital ones.



Source: Vericast