

DIRECT FORUM

July 2021

VOLUME 17 ISSUE 7

Direct Forum is a free email newsletter containing useful direct marketing tips, news updates and how-to information. It's convenient, informative and I am not trying to sell you anything!

1. Direct Marketing trends: what's new, what's changed and what's been improved.

2. If digital is the wave of the future, then why are these digital firms using direct mail?

3. Brilliant idea of the month: Donation Dollars

Direct Marketing trends: what's new, what's changed and what's been improved.

Let us start with what's changed.

The printing industry has come a long way from simply applying ink on paper. Today print provides a myriad of options from personalization to digital inkjet technology.

MORE SOPHISTICATED PRINTING METHODS.

Today, print and tech can truly form an innovative partnership for brands, as demonstrated by this example.

Case in point: McDonald's 'McTrax' case study. McDonald's in Netherlands used conductive ink and Bluetooth technology. Not a direct mail example per se, but McDonald's hit a high note to do just that with printed place mats. The fast food giant harnessed the power of conductive print and Bluetooth technology to trigger creativity in their young customers with 'McTrax'.



Watch the video, however make sure you turn on the English translation to see how they attracted worldwide media attention and generated over 35 million...

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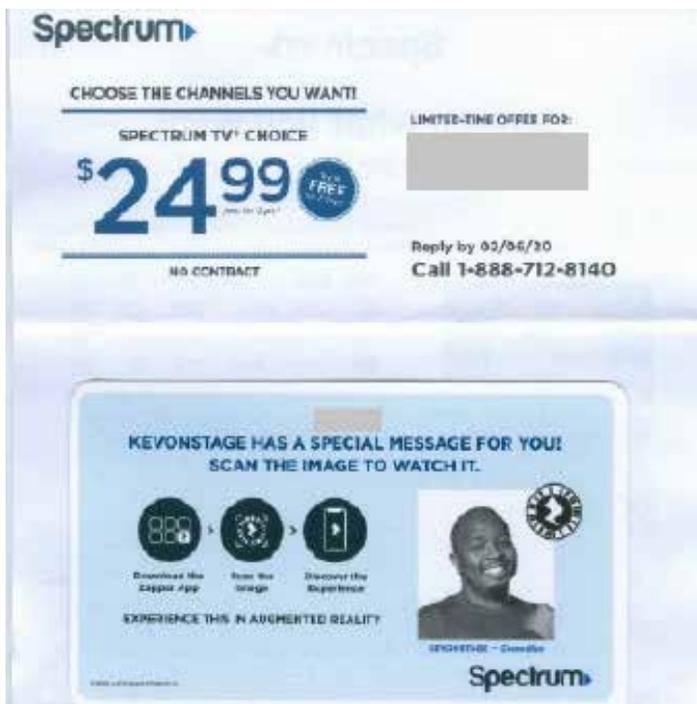
Twitter impressions by transforming a dull, physical in-store paper object into a creative keepsake.

LINK: <https://youtu.be/X6zPbogDPgU>

AUGMENTED REALITY.

Adding virtual content on top of print with an app-enabled image offers a customer a message that plays when the piece is scanned.

Case in point: The package for Spectrum that allows you to view a message from Kevenstone when you scan the image.



In the what's been improved section, I would put QR Codes, the number one change that will help marketers reach more customers.

EXPANSION OF QR CODES.

QR codes came of age in the US especially during the pandemic. Once considered a gimmick, consumers now appreciate the functional benefits of QR codes and are increasingly using them for engaging with brands, according to a new study from The Drum/YouGov.

What's more, 59% of respondents say they will view QR codes as a permanent part of using their phones in the future.

Some of the factors driving the greater use of QR codes in the US are:



- **USPS campaign discounts.** In recent years, marketers have enjoyed 2% postage cost breaks for campaigns that include a QR code. However, compared to when

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they were first introduced in mail, they now have more stringent requirements to demonstrate their value in creating a better consumer experience.

- More awareness of the value of multichannel mail. When incorporated into a mail piece in a way that makes sense—i.e., it actually provides a benefit for the customer, something that ties together the physical and digital worlds.
- More comfort and familiarity with QR codes. QR codes are being used in signage, restaurant menus, and print ads to provide helpful information that's up-to-date, high-tech, and contactless at the same time.

Case in point: direct mail works even better when creatively paired with the right technology. Take the Dare to be tender campaign from European chocolate brand Milka. The company sold chocolate bars that were missing a single piece.

Customers who purchased them were encouraged to visit a website via a QR code, which gave them the option to claim the piece for themselves or to dare to be tender and have Milka mail the piece of chocolate to a selected friend or family member with a personalized message. This winning combination of technology, creativity and direct mail was the core of an integrated campaign that warmed people's hearts. That's the emotional value right there.



VOICE ACTIVATED CALL TO ACTION.

This new technology allows marketers to connect their mail piece to a smart speaker interaction device. This multimedia channel allows the customer journey experience to be enhanced by adding an audible device that allows prospects to request a text to complete the transaction.

Google research also indicated that voice assistants are starting to play a much bigger role in our everyday lives. They found that 70% of their users said digital assistants

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simplify their lives, 80% said they would like to engage with brands via their digital assistants, and 37% of their users leverage their digital assistants for at least one shopping-related activity.

Surveys show that over a quarter of all American adults now own at least one voice assistant device. In the US, a voice-activated response solution, called ‘Respond Fast’, was launched last year. The concept makes it easier than ever for an audience to respond to an offer or message via their Amazon Alexa or Google assistants. The voice activated call to action (VACTA) can be easily integrated into a direct mail campaign to provide a convenient response mechanism.

The recipient just asks their smart speaker to “Launch Respond Fast” and then when prompted, they quote the simple offer name or code provided in the mailing to activate. Watch the video below to see how it works.

LINK: <https://youtu.be/WAaABVb3r4s>

Finally, in the what's new section are the following items:

PROGRAMMATIC OR TRIGGERED MAIL.

I featured this in my last newsletter with two examples. Today, anyone with Salesforce or Hubspot or a WordPress site and a free afternoon can design and program

triggered direct mailers that will automatically be mailed (at scale!) to new leads, new customers, new website visitors, visitors who abandoned a shopping cart, visitors who never signed up for your newsletter—you name it.

Once again, here’s how programmatic mail works:



1. A new customer visits a company’s website for information.

2. Then that action immediately triggers a direct mail response.



3. Now, instead of an email, a pre-printed message is mailed out as a personal communication to that customer.

4. Today’s digital printing allows for this quick, personalised turnaround.



5. The mail piece often arrives at the customer’s residence within 24 to 48 hours.

6. The arrival of the mail piece prompts reconsideration by the customer, and a decision when they decide to move.



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ADDING SENSORY FEATURES TO YOUR MAIL.

Adding things like haptic coatings, foiling, embossing, and even scent will help enhance the response of your direct mail piece. Your mail can stand out in the customer’s mailbox by tapping into basic human senses like sight, touch, and smell. After all, only direct mail has the ability to create a sensory experience to which no other medium comes even close.

Case in point: German tire retailer ATU had a challenge that weighed heavily on their minds—a weight limit for their mail piece.

Using creative thinking, they used sight as a sensory device by cutting tire shapes out of the envelope. This reduced the weight and created a standout visual for recipients to engage with.

ATU rolled it all together with a simple message on the envelope that read, “New summer tires needed?” The campaign was a big success and proved that challenges can be solved with the right creativity, and making an impact with direct mail media doesn’t have to be expensive or complicated.



Even mailing a large lumpy package will trigger a response.

Case in point: This piece from UNICEF for Halloween.



INTERACTIVE DIRECT MAIL.

An interactive Direct Mail piece will not only grab your consumers’ attention but it can also engage them long enough to make a purchase.

Case in point: Audi mailed a cube to targeted prospects that would be activated when the prospect pushed a button on it which said START ENGINE. Within 90 minutes of pushing the button a car for a test drive would appear at the front door of the prospect.



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If digital is the wave of the future, then why are these digital firms using direct mail?

Direct mail has long been an important channel for traditional marketers, but it turns out that it's also vital in helping distributors and top digital providers grow as well.

In the debate between direct mail vs. internet marketing, are these digital brands that use direct marketing —proving that direct mail is a vibrant medium?

You be the judge!

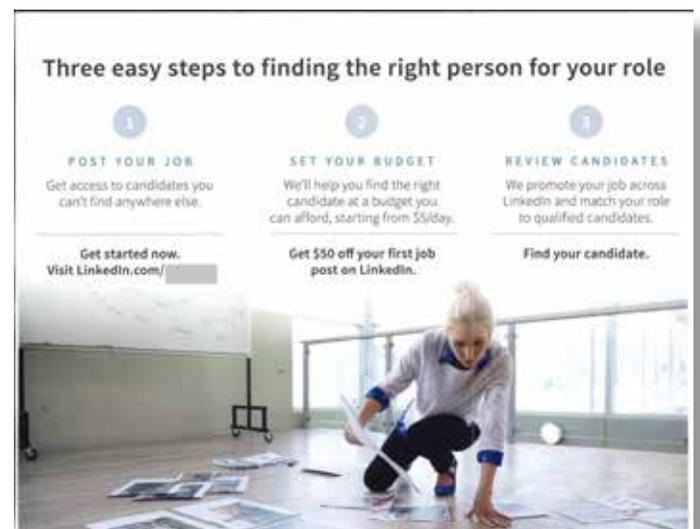
Mail has been a part of Google direct marketing for over 15 years, and it's stayed remarkably consistent.



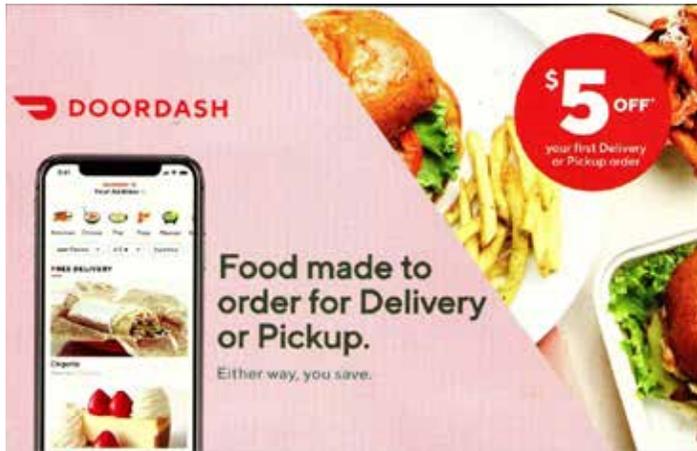
LinkedIn has used direct mail to explain the step-by-step process of posting a job as below.



And, also how to find the right person for a job.



Doordash mailed this postcard with a \$5 discount offer.



Adobe offers an exclusive price for students and teachers, by mailing this piece to colleges and universities.



The retail giant, Amazon sells millions of products as well as serves as a marketplace for many companies of all kinds online. Amazon direct mail, though, carefully focuses on some key areas that build loyalty.



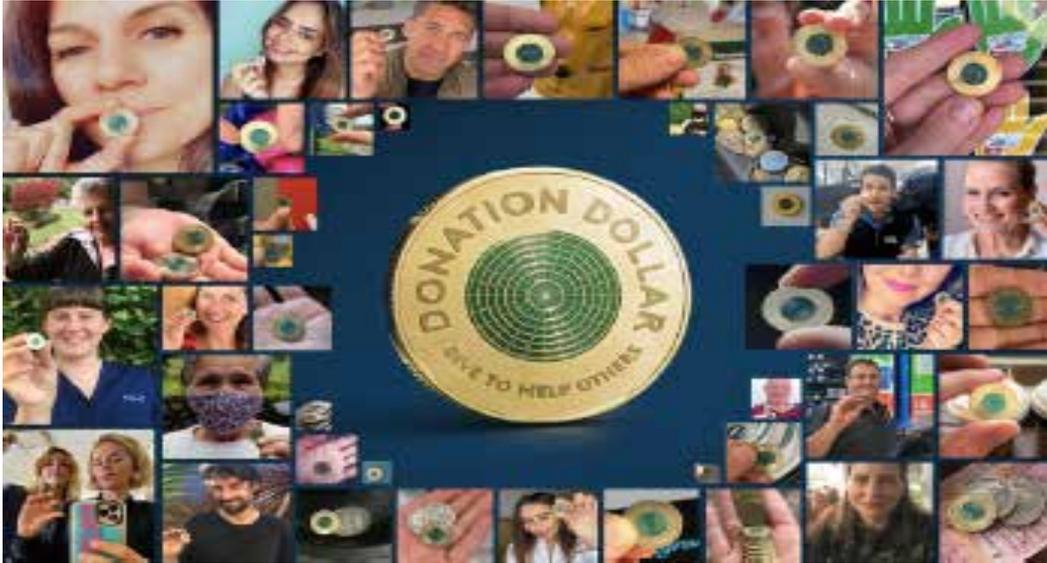
These digital companies know that not everyone is a digital-first consumer. They also know that mail works.

But even more important, they know that mail stands out when people are exposed to a barrage of messages on online channels every single day.

So, the lesson here—for all those who doubt the effectiveness of direct mail in the digital age—is that direct mail works.

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Brilliant idea of the month: Donation Dollars.



The Australian Mint has come up with a brilliant idea. The digital revolution has changed currency forever. Unfortunately, fewer coins in pockets has unintended consequences. For example, in Australia many charities still rely on coin donations, as do the most disadvantaged.

Donation Dollar is the world's first legal tender currency, designed to be donated and not spent. One was minted for every Australian, creating over 25 million individual daily reminders to give, over and over and over again, and create a generosity loop that should last for generations.

Here's the link: https://youtu.be/l5rKR_M1sqQ

Credits

Client: The Royal Australian Mint

Advertising Agency: Saatchi & Saatchi Australia

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