



PRINT TOUCHES: **THE POWER OF DIRECT MAIL**

INTRODUCTION

Thousands of bits of information surround us every day. Work and everyday life have become more fast-paced. And while digitalization is constantly progressing, direct mail underwent a huge revival and is still highly successful. It creates strong connections and will not automatically end up in spam folders.

Today it is all about reaching customers that have already switched off because of information overload. This eBook shows the key advantages printed direct mail has over other (and digital) advertising channels and how to use that for your next campaign planning.

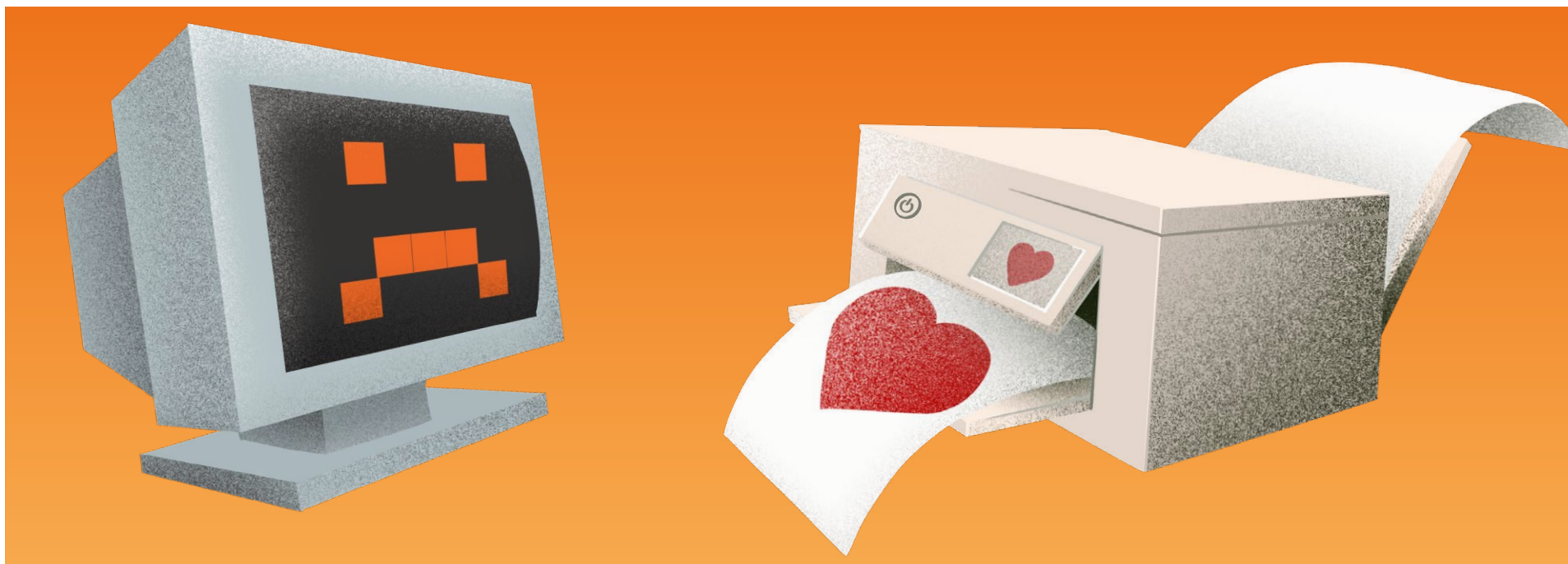


NEUROSCIENTIFIC BACKGROUNDS

On behalf of Royal Mail UK, the Centre for Experimental Consumer Psychology at Bangor University studied consumer behavior with printed direct mail. This involved functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), which provides direct information about brain activity. For the test, subjects were shown the same advertisement, but once on a printed card and once on a screen. The respective brain activities were measured.

The study found that our brains are significantly more stimulated by haptic materials that trigger our sense of touch. The measured brain activities indicated that emotional processing is more engaged with physical materials, such as direct mail, than with digital communication. Stimulus processing takes place in the so-called right retrosplenial cortex, which is involved in processing emotional stimuli and memory.

This means that print products – and therefore direct mailing as well – generate more emotions and also leave “footprints” in our memory. Unlike other forms of advertising, direct mail activates brain areas that are responsible for long-term memory. The research found that 60% of the study participants could remember personalized and creative mailings for a long time, which also enabled them to remember the advertising brands longer.²



THE EFFECT OF PRINTED DIRECT MAIL

The fact that advertising using direct mail is so successful is primarily due to the fact that it reaches the recipient in the form of a printed piece. Print itself works on a wide variety of psychological levels:



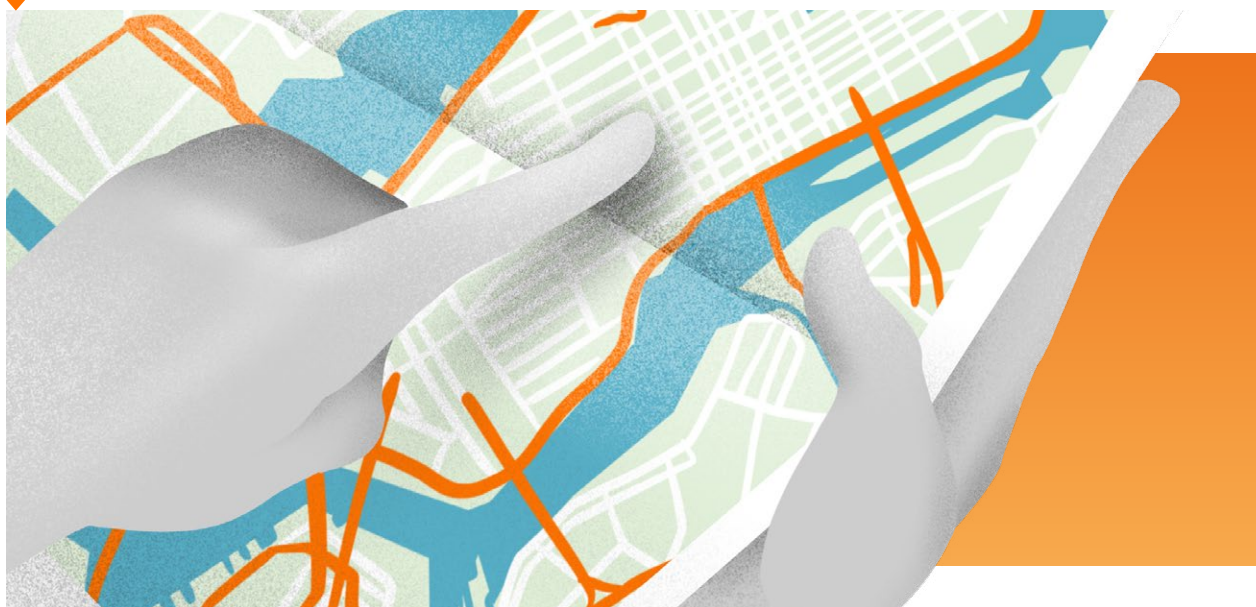
TRUST

Physical messages are perceived as more valuable than digital messages. To hold something in our hands appeals to our sense of touch – as already mentioned – and also stimulates the feeling of owning something. This “endowment effect” described by psychologists can be significantly enhanced with personalized text or images, making direct mail even more successful.

A German study from 2009 also found that 54% of recipients trust printed paper. In the USA, the figure is as high as 82%.

Only recommendations from family and friends are considered more trustworthy. In contrast, only 16% trust online advertising.³

THE EFFECT OF PRINTED DIRECT MAIL

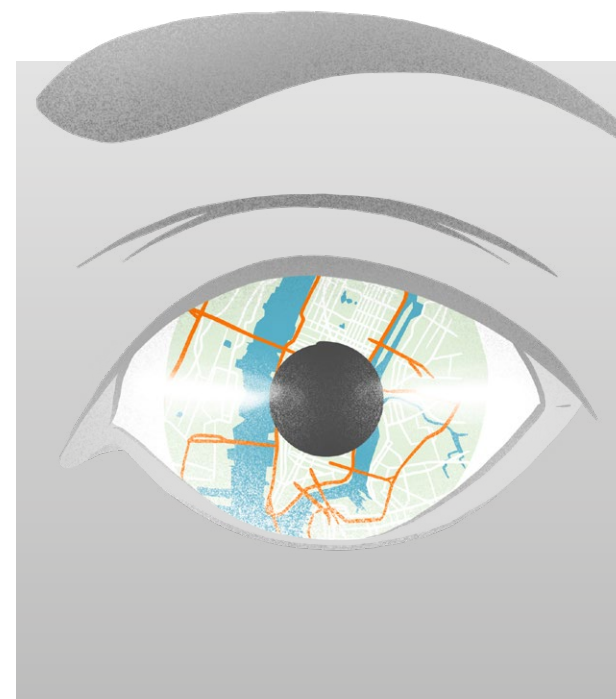


TOUCH

The sense of touch is innate in humans and is thus one of our primal instincts. Print is immediately familiar to us. The more intensively the sense of touch is stimulated, the more strongly the medium is imprinted in the recipient's memory, because 40% of our brain alone is responsible for processing motoric and tactile stimuli. As a result, psychologists conclude that print also has a clear added value compared to digital media: print touches!⁴

SENSORY STIMULI

The most important and decisive factor, however, is the sensory stimulus. It is only through this that a direct mail piece is perceived at all. Colors play an important role here, because on the one hand, they ensure the necessary attention, and on the other hand, they ensure that the direct mailing is remembered. Studies have shown that colored ads are remembered up to 300% more than black and white ads.⁵



Because print pieces in color are also viewed longer, this also leads to higher response rates.

As they include even more interesting visual elements, geographical maps add value to a direct mail piece by grabbing the recipient's attention even more quickly.⁶

THE EFFECT OF PRINTED DIRECT MAIL

MULTI-SENSORY

Printed direct mailings can be used in a versatile and multi-sensory campaign. If other stimuli are added to the haptic stimuli that a printed direct mailing evokes, it leaves even more traces in the brain. Also, enhancing direct mail design with specialty printing techniques make it better remembered. Studies found that direct mail pieces which invite interaction are looked at two to four times longer on average.⁷

Haptically, direct mailings can be enhanced in a variety of ways such as with certain varnishes, die-cutting, embossing or with different functions. Scented coatings can provide further stimuli so that the sense of smell can also be addressed.

Direct mail campaigns that are enhanced in these ways are perceived more intensely by their recipients and are therefore remembered much longer.

Consumers are also often overwhelmed by the amount of digital advertising: we often



only quickly skim digital content and tend to skip certain parts. The term “banner blindness”⁸ first came up in the 1990s: we often unconsciously filter out and ignore online advertising banners. A physical, tangible print product that can be held and brought inside the home creates a completely different connection with the recipient.

Additionally, direct mail can enhance cross media campaigns and link to digital content. It cannot be filtered out automatically, and we are very likely

to pay attention and engage with it. Personalized URLs and QR codes are inviting and encourage interaction with the print product even further. Our cross media location finder, the locrFINDER, easily adds personalized content via QR code: In just a second it shows the closest business location as well as the quickest route from the user’s position on their mobile device. No personalized QR codes are necessary! That offers many possibilities also for print products like EDDM or magazine advertisements which are offset-printed and not personalized.

THE MULTI-CHANNEL MIRACLE

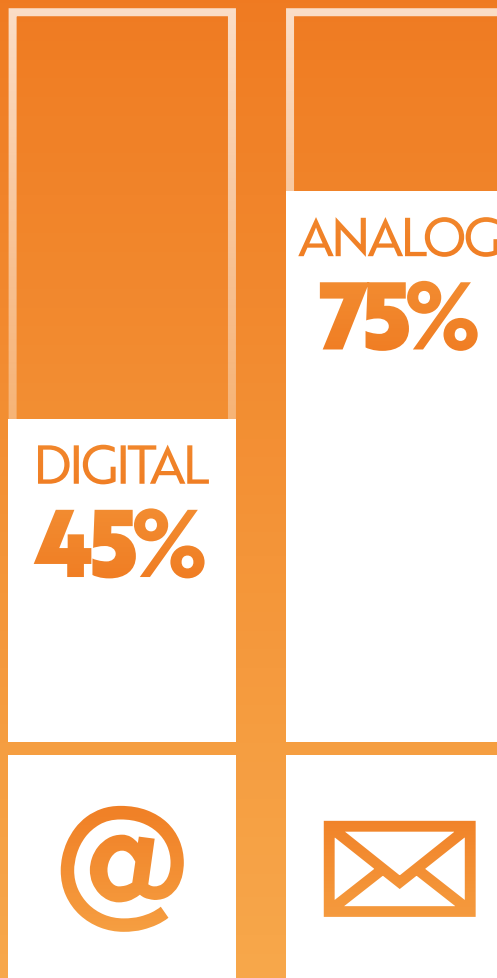
QUICK RECORDING

Direct mail is easy and quick to understand. Unlike digital communications, the brain requires 21% less effort to process direct mail. Simpler and quicker understanding also means that the memory of a direct mailing is recalled more quickly.⁹

Personalized maps are noticed within just 100ms and so also help direct mail advertising to be remembered better in the long term.

Compared with digital media, direct mail performs well across all age groups. The highest response rates were delivered by 30-49 year olds. However, it is striking that the 18-29 age group also responds strongly to direct mailings and are only then followed by 50-64 year olds.

UNAIDED BRAND RECALL¹⁰



According to a study by Royal Mail UK, advertising has a fixed place within a household for 69% of participants. If a direct mail piece is among this mail, which is creatively designed and stands out, there is also a greater chance that it will be noticed more within one's own household and also read by other family members.

This, in turn, also leads to appealing to 15-34 year olds, 71% of whom report that they trust direct mail. In addition, 42% consider it more memorable than other forms of advertising.

As a result, direct mailings are extremely long-lasting, surviving an average of 17 days in a household and thus having a longer lifespan than digital media, which are ephemeral and quickly forgotten or even deleted immediately after receipt.¹⁰

CONCLUSION

A wide range of studies has shown: printed direct mail is highly successful and offers many advantages over other – especially digital – channels. It can be used effectively in the marketing mix and has been proven to increase attention, ROI and response rates many times over.

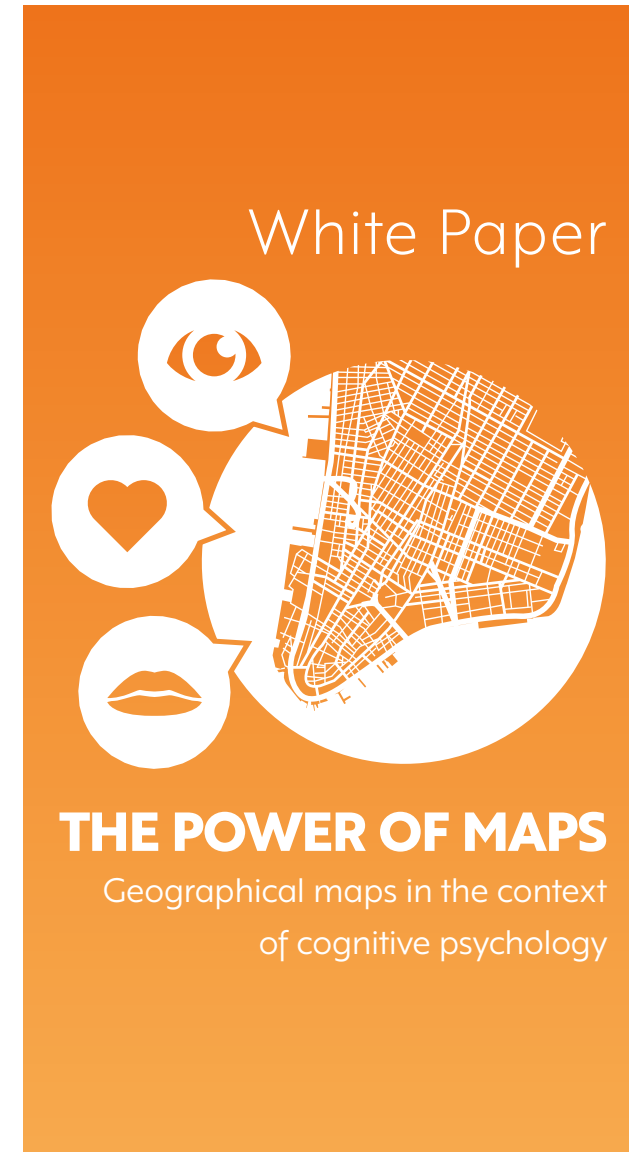
Through color, finishing, multisensory and haptic occurrences – a direct mail piece reaches them much faster, leaves a profound impression and creates connections. Especially in combination with personalized maps, a mailing becomes even more successful.

In our white paper “The Power of Maps” we have examined this phenomenon in more detail. Our associated eBook “Print Moves: The Power of Maps” summarizes all the important points once again. Use our white paper and the associated eBooks as a source of more information to make your campaign a success!

DOWNLOAD THE WHITE PAPER
„THE POWER OF MAPS“ NOW:



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SOURCES

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in virtually every industry. Marketers use our personalized maps and geo-data-based analytics to make better marketing decisions and more efficient campaigns. Our services are also used in photo books and cartographic projects.