



DIRECT MAIL VS. SUSTAINABILITY

INTRODUCTION



The effects of climate change are present in the news on a regular basis, and sustainability is discussed everywhere. That is also noticeable in consumer behavior: Purchase decisions are

increasingly based on their environmental impact.¹ The previous years in particular made many customers rethink their values, and companies reconsider their strategies.² It is critical to make more

sustainable business decisions and communicate these in an understandable and credible way. Companies are expected to provide background information about the origins of their products and to support sustainable buying decisions.

A less wasteful, more environmentally conscious process often also goes hand in hand with saving money, time and effort: Reducing the environmental impact will very likely boost the efficiency of your business. When it comes to marketing, the discussion is often about “print vs. digital” and which would be the more sustainable option. Going digital will “save paper” in the first place, but does not guarantee a sustainable campaign, nor a successful one.

In this ebook we will have a closer look at why it is still a highly successful approach to customers with print products, why digital content might not be the ultimate answer to eco-friendly marketing, and share practical tips and ideas for more sustainable campaigns.

PRINT VS. DIGITAL

To compare printed and digital advertising, or products in general, the specific case and context must be considered. Multiple factors like materials, manufacturing, energy consumption and transportation are involved and affect each other. Let us have a look at emails and letters: Their exact impacts obviously vary

depending on their contents. According to one source, the average carbon emission of an email is estimated at **10g**, the average emissions of a standard letter at **20g** - that looks good for electronic mail.³ But as emails are sent daily on a massive scale, this advantage is not relevant. Digital content in particular seems to leave no

trace, as there is nothing physical, but the hidden impacts add up: Receiving, opening and storing emails consumes resources every time. On top of that, there are usually several electronic devices involved, leading to even more energy consumption, pollution and the usage of finite materials to be considered.



PRINT VS. DIGITAL

Paper is, in contrast, made of wood, a renewable resource. Still, production and transport consumes a lot of energy, water and other resources, which is the largest part of the “environmental footprint” of print products. Paper can be recycled over and over again, many times. The paper recycling rate in the USA was at nearly **70% in 2021** and on a rising trend,⁵ in Germany it is at nearly **80%**.⁶ Recycling paper uses a lot less energy and resources than the production of new paper. Also, the wood used for printing paper is mostly of less quality or from industrial by-products.

Digital printing also opens up new options for more sustainability. Small runs and individual, personalized products can be produced on demand, avoiding unwanted overproduction going to waste. Also, there are no printing plates involved that would eventually be thrown away, as in traditional offset printing. There is a large selection of recycled papers, as well as inks that are less harmful to the environment and suitable for further recycling.⁷



Another highly important aspect to consider is efficiency: The more successful the campaign, the more wisely the

resources will be used. Targeted, effective marketing activities will save costs, free resources and increase the ROI.

DIRECT MAIL



The previous years are called the Direct Mail Renaissance: An Austrian direct marketing study from 2020⁸ showed that **91%** of the customers, who had been sent direct mail, actually read

these. More than half of them even kept their direct mail piece in their homes – a remarkable example for their relevance and wide reach.

Today's direct mail can be targeted and sent out immediately, just like digital advertising, but with much higher results: personalized direct mail makes the most of customer information, collects additional data and is the most interesting and personal customer approach.

Direct mail appeals to different senses, it can be held and brought inside the home. This instantly creates connections and engagement, while emails are easily deleted or marked as spam. Personalized print products are something special, the recipients feel directly addressed and find inviting, relevant content.

Elements like QR codes add another layer of interest and connect printed direct mail with digital content. You can easily create cross media communications and use different channels in the most beneficial way – for your campaign goals, and in terms of sustainability.

TARGETING

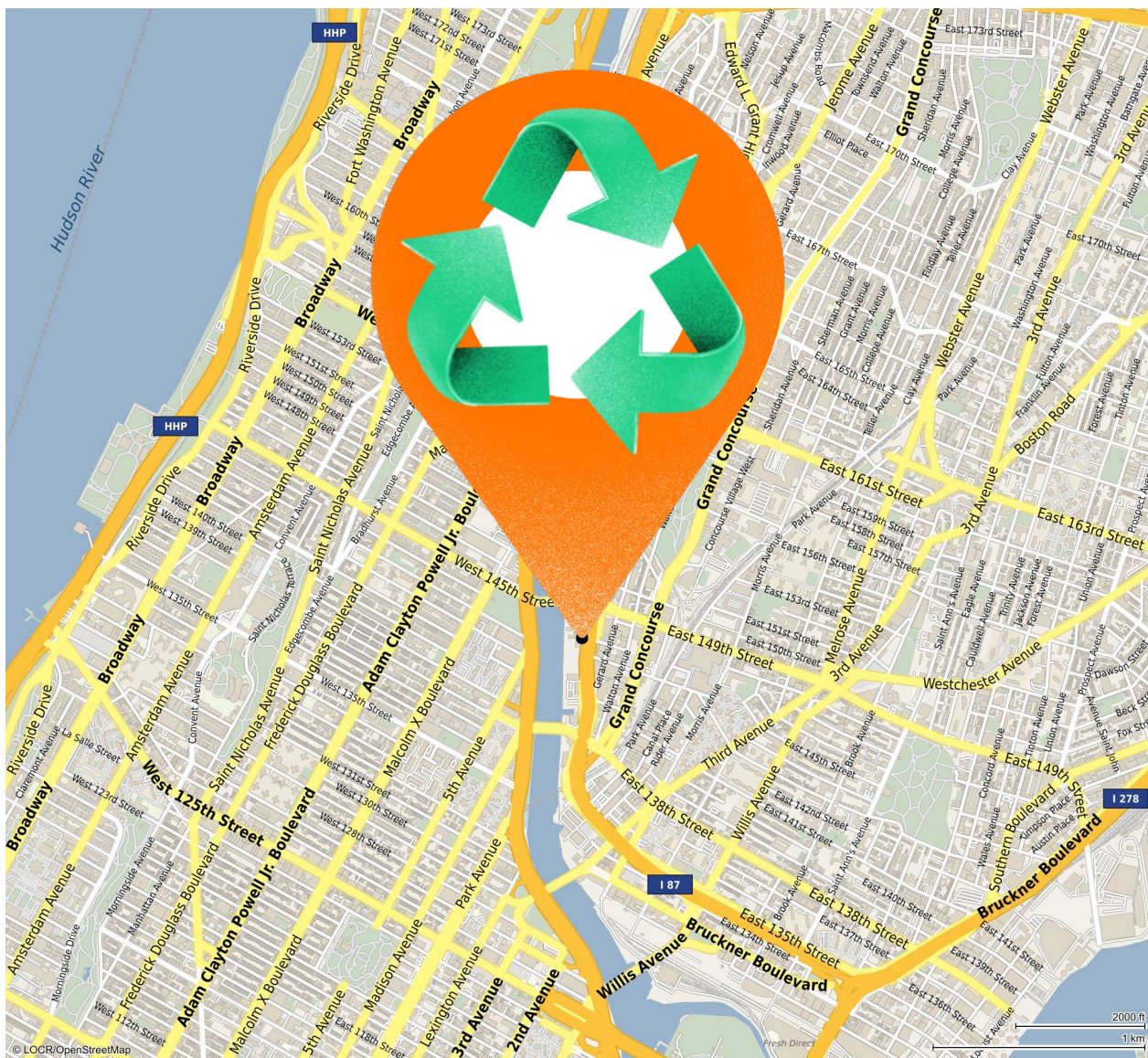


A well planned, carefully defined target audience does not only lead to higher response rates, but also less wasteful campaigns. To make the best use of the resources and materials, the recipients with the highest potential must receive the best offer. Our partners have achieved great results by filtering addresses by

travel time or distance. You can find the prospects who live close to your business and are very likely to respond to your offer, and sort out the ones who live too far away. Also, old, incorrect or doubled addresses can be sorted out to leave you with a clean, highly efficient database that

will save money and resources. At the same time, your reputation will improve, as your recipients receive interesting content that definitely appeals to them. Choosing companies nearby and shopping locally meets the desire of many customers to act more sustainably!

MESSAGE



Successful direct mail is personalized and provides exciting, memorable content, that is easy to understand. This attracts attention and boosts response rates. Personalized maps serve all of these aspects: Based on location data, a unique map for every single address will be created and can be included in your direct mail. The customer immediately recognizes their own familiar neighborhood as well as your business location – the connection is made! You can also provide travel time and distance as well as the quickest route, to give them all the information they need.

MULTI-FUNCTIONAL



There are plenty of options to make your direct mail even more appealing, and to track the results of the campaign. QR codes can link to an online navigation app, further information on your website, newsletters or raffles. Another popular element to motivate customers to respond

to your offer are vouchers or coupon codes. These will simultaneously allow you to track response rates and collect more valuable customer data – this is critical to improve your marketing activities even further and create long-term successful, sustainable campaigns.

CASE STUDY



The UK outlet store chain **De Bradelei** cooperated with the marketing professionals of **Eight Days A Week Print Solutions** for a direct mail campaign with geomarketing elements, and achieved remarkable results. They created a demographic target group profile and mailed to 10,000 recipients. Every direct mail piece included a voucher for a hot beverage as well as a voucher code. For a controlled A/B test, they sent out the direct mail with and without additional geomarketing elements:

Personalized maps with the route to the closest store and the individual driving time. All results were tracked via the vouchers and coupon codes. **The A/B test showed 63% higher response rates** from the recipients who received direct mail with the geomarketing features – an outstanding example of the positive effects of location data usage and a customer approach with personalized print products!

Find the full Case Study “De Bradelei” on our website for all the details!



<https://maps.locr.com/en/blog/case-study/locr-case-study-de-bradelei.html>

READ MORE

What is it about a map?

Download the White Paper “The Power of Maps” and learn why maps are even more efficient than regular images, and why that makes them perfect for marketing.

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



www.locr.com/thepowerofmaps



White Paper

THE POWER OF MAPS
 Geographical maps in the context
 of cognitive psychology

CONTACT US

Find inspiration for your next direct mail campaign! We have sample designs and templates you can use to create your next direct mail. We're also available to talk to you about how to add location value to make your campaign a success.

CONTACT US

North America:

New York

+1-516-449-5154

us@locr.com

Headquarters:

Bültenweg 73, 38106 Braunschweig, Germany

+49(0)531-48269320

info@locr.com

Follow us:

www.facebook.de/locr.services

www.twitter.com/locrmaps

www.linkedin.com/company/locr-maps



SOURCES

¹ 2021, Life Reimagined Study by Accenture https://www.accenture.com/bg-en/insights/strategy/_acnmedia/Thought-Leadership-Assets/PDF-5/Accenture-Life-Reimagined-Full-Report.pdf

² <https://www.onetoone.de/artikel/db/828397frs.html> (german)

³ https://www.onetoone.de/artikel/db/oto_programmaticprinting.195799bma.200239bma.html (german)

⁴ <https://www.xmpie.com/de/how-does-personalization-power-sustainability/>

⁵ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/278254/total-us-paper-and-paperboard-recovery-rate/>

⁶ https://www.onetoone.de/artikel/db/oto_programmaticprinting.195799bma.200239bma.html (german)

⁷ https://www.umdex.de/kern_gmbh_digitaldruck_nachhaltigkeit/ (german)

⁸ <https://at.twosides.info/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2020/10/Dialog-Marketing-Report-2020-1.pdf> (german)