

Direct Mail for the Digital Age

A PFL-Forrester Study

It's painfully clear that business success in the coming years will require more than just state-of-the-art technology. While digital techniques provide "reach," they do not create "engagement." Generating more emails won't close this digital disconnect; in many cases, it makes things worse.

What's a key to overcoming digital fatigue? Adopting an omnichannel approach that includes direct mail.

Most marketers missed direct mail's entry into the digital age. Personalization--the act of delivering a relevant message that has value to the right person at the right time and place--is no longer simply nice to have, but a B2B marketing necessity,



Digital fatigue is on the rise.

Direct Mail in the Digital Age

To help understand more about how this is playing out in business today, PFL commissioned a study by Forrester Consulting, titled, "Hybrid Experiences Bring Direct Mail into The Digital Age." In it, we surveyed 158 B2B marketing leaders in North America to learn more about their thoughts on direct mail.

A primary conclusion of the research: Marketing leaders who adopt direct mail--along with the hybrid experience methodology of connecting people to people in more meaningful and compelling ways--are more successful. They build greater brand affinity and more a profitable business.

Key Findings



Digital fatigue drives marketers to increase

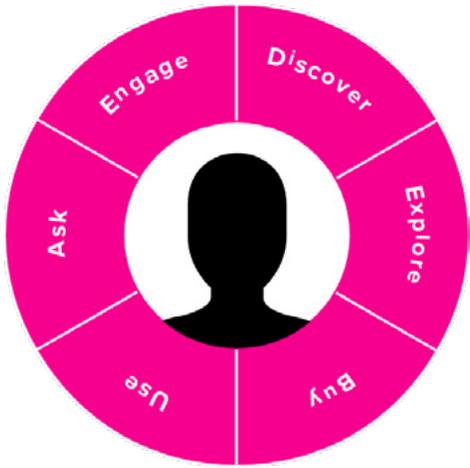


Strategies must evolve with the channel.



Personalization is a critical component





Among other things, it found that marketers tend to react to digital fatigue by turning up the digital volume rather than adopting a more human-centric approach.

“Today, B2B marketers have more digital means and opportunities to engage their customers, but few use these to create the right impact,” Forrester noted. “Indeed, marketers’ overuse of digital touchpoints. . .has trained B2B buyers to duck and cover when marketers reach out, rather than lean in and engage.”

What’s overlooked and underutilized, according to Forrester-PFL research, is the opportunity to break through the digital din with complementary analog experiences. This includes physical mail, product samples and much more.

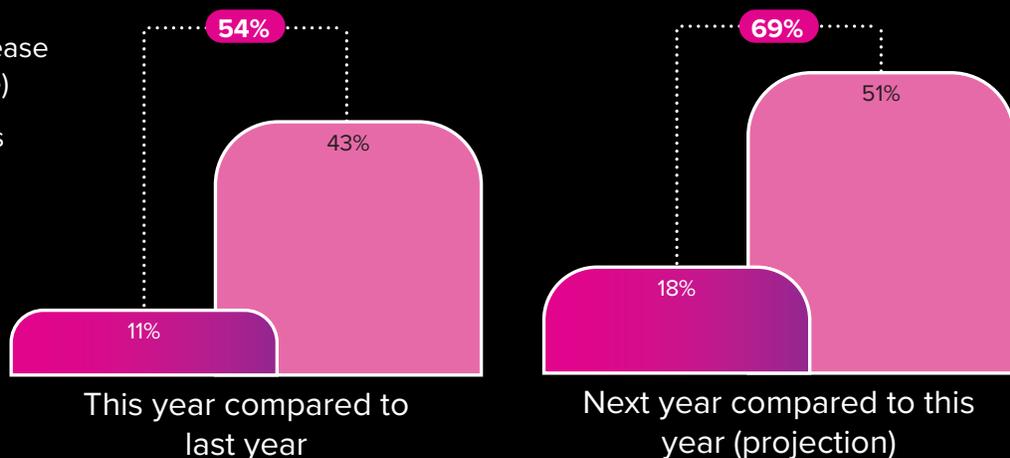
In a world where consumers have more choices than ever—and near zero patience for just anything that doesn’t interest them—adopting a hybrid approach is critical. According to the study, 76 percent of respondents recognize that their buyers are less likely to engage with digital marketing touchpoints than only a year ago. On the other hand, 78 percent report that analog methods are advantageous, and 81 percent admit that they personally are very likely to open a package at work or in a work context.

That’s why, according to Forrester, CMOs are beginning to recognize the power of hybrid marketing. More than half said that they are now increasing their spend on direct mail compared with the previous year. In fact, the trend is gaining momentum. Overall, 69 percent of respondents report plans to increase direct mail spending in 2023, including 18 percent who are expecting a substantial increase of 20 percent or more. That equates to a 27 percent annual increase in direct

“How is your organization’s spend on direct mail changing year to year?”

↑ +27% YoY

- Substantial increase (by 20% or more)
- Increase (by less than 20%)



Among other things, it found that marketers tend to react to digital fatigue by turning up the digital volume rather than adopting a more human-centric approach.

“Today, B2B marketers have more digital means and opportunities to engage their customers, but few use these to create the right impact,” Forrester noted. “Indeed, marketers’ overuse of digital touchpoints. . .has trained B2B buyers to duck and cover when marketers reach out, rather than lean in and engage.”

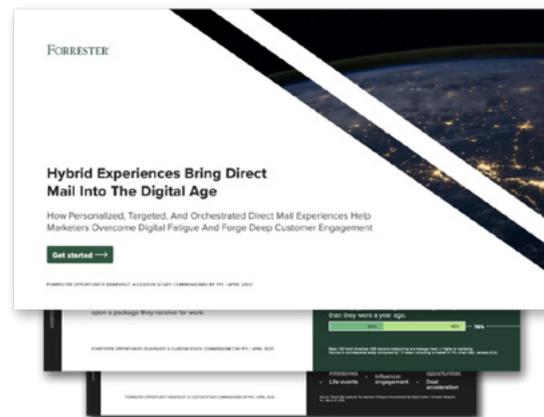
Those that adopt a successful hybrid model gain an ability to scale direct mail delivery up and down based on current budget or practical requirements, automate mail creation and delivery tied to buyer purchase signals and behavior, tie direct mail planning and execution to buyer journey insights, and improve orchestration across marketing channels.

As Forrester put it: “Modern hybrid experiences turn direct mail into a sophisticated, valuable marketing tactic—one that helps marketers deliver buyer experiences that use customer understanding to frame, guide, and enhance interactions based on that person’s history, preferences, context, and intent.”

So, it’s clear that there’s no substitute for treating humans like humans and delivering content that truly matters. A hybrid approach serves as the foundation for this more connected and highly engaged framework. Marketing leaders who successfully budget for and adopt this methodology while plugging in the right technology and level of creativity will connect with customers in more meaningful and compelling ways.

Get Started

[Download the Report](#)



Visit our website to learn more.

 PFL.COM