

Renaissance time for direct mail



Oliver Rees
Managing Partner, Torque

What is direct mail's greatest strength?

Its core principle is the rigour with which direct mail is executed, managed and measured. If you applied the same rigour to other aspects of running a business, you'd be laughing. Also it reaches someone on an individual level.

What are the key challenges for the Australian direct marketing industry?

The lack of quality data and great people. In the UK, even in New Zealand, there are teams of skilled people. We need to develop our own skill sets and level of expertise here in Australia.

Which sectors could be using more direct mail?

Retail, fast-moving consumer goods, pharmaceuticals and automotive. There is a massive opportunity for growth, especially when you consider the vast volume of mail overseas versus the very small quantities here on a per capita basis.

Is there a market that could be better targeted with direct mail?

Great direct mail can communicate very effectively with anyone.



Will Lavender
Founder, Lavender

What are the key challenges for the Australian direct marketing industry?

For marketers to become as sophisticated as the consumers they are targeting. Realising that it's not the corporations that manage the relationship, it's the customers. Then helping those customers to manage the relationship.

How can you see direct mail working with other channels?

It comes back to the customer experience. To make the integrated approach work, companies must co-ordinate their data to offer a single view of the customer. A lot of companies are striving to achieve this but most have a long way to go.

Which sectors could be using more direct mail?

The business-to-business sector could benefit from taking the time to work out who they are talking to and tracking the movements and changes. There needs to be a greater dedication to determining which business-to-business customers are growing, or need to develop, then working with these more.

Is there a market that could be better targeted with direct mail?

The under 25 year olds are marketing savvy and cynical. They're multi tasking and consequently switching off intermittently. Even if they do catch the ad, often they're giving up on the homogenised messages they receive through broadcast media. I think direct mail's potential to deliver relevance must make it more credible.



Melanie Johnstone
Strategic Director, Rocket Science

What are the key challenges for the Australian direct marketing industry?

These days customers are empowered to say "no". As direct mail grows, education is vital to ensure that new users adopt a permission-based approach.

What trends do you see emerging?

Clients are still expecting immediate returns from their direct marketing activity but they also appreciate the role of direct marketing in contributing to their broader business objectives. Managing directors and marketing directors are more interested in, more focussed on, direct marketing.

How can you see direct mail working with other channels?

Mail will become much more of a leader in the areas of finding, keeping and bringing back customers. Other channels will play a support role. The waste factor with other media has strengthened direct mail's appeal.

Is there a market that could be better targeted with direct mail?

Anyone who is being targeted with new media could be better reached by using direct mail to initiate the relationship, with electronic channels as a support. Electronic media tend to be read and then deleted. Mail is a much better way to get into someone's head.