

Direct Mail

More Likely to be Opened than Unsolicited Email

A recent survey by International Communications Research, commissioned by Pitney Bowes, found that 73% of consumers prefer mail for receiving new product announcements or offers from companies they do business with, as compared to 18% for email. Mail was also preferred by 70% of respondents for receiving unsolicited information on products and services from companies with which they are not currently doing business.

For confidential communications such as bills, bank statements and financial reports, 86% of respondents preferred mail as their channel of choice, as compared with 10% for email, identical to the response in the 2004 survey, which also showed consumer preference for mail at 86%.

Stacy DeWalt, Vice President of Vertical Market Development and Marketing, Pitney Bowes Management Services, said "The research... shows that consumers still prefer mail over email... we continue to find that mail is the most effective marketing tool businesses can use when communicating with their customers."

The survey also found that 31% of consumers are less likely to discard unopened mail, including new product brochures, catalogs or other advertising materials, while 53.2% are likely to discard unsolicited emails about new products.

"In an environment crowded with marketing messages, it's important for marketers to utilize the most effective mailstream tools available," said Jeff Marshall, Vice President of Customer Marketing for Pitney Bowes Global Mailstream Solutions. "While mail is the preferred vehicle for reaching consumers, businesses and organizations need to remember that it is critical to target consumers with relevant messages at appropriate times to get a meaningful return-on-investment."

Specific advantages consumers see in mail versus unsolicited email and telephone calls, according to the report, compared with other communications channels, survey respondents found mail to be:

- Less intrusive... doesn't interrupt other activities (45.3%)
- More convenient... can be saved and considered at leisure (40.2%)
- Less high-pressured... lets you consider your decision (30.2%)
- More descriptive... lets you picture the offer (22.7%)
- More persuasive... encourages you to respond (12%)