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# COMPETITIVE MEDIA

## Direct Mail

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Direct mail marketing touches most of us every day, at home and at work. The volume of direct mail consumers receive is so high that many refer to it as “junk mail.” On the other hand, would so many businesses of all sizes use this medium had it not proven effective for them?

In 2013, direct mail garnered a whopping 27.9% of the \$133.2 billion spent on all local media - the highest amount for any single medium (*BIA/Kelsey, 2014*)

By definition, direct mail advertising is the process of sending offers or promotions by mail to current customers or others who may be prospects. Direct mail pieces may include a sales letter, brochure, order form and a prepaid envelope. Some companies advertise in a magazine-format piece or collection of inserts, combining with other companies for a more cost-effective effort.

### OTHER MEDIA: 59

- Digital Audio / Satellite Radio
- Direct Mail
- Internet / Mobile / Social Media
- Local Search
- Newspaper
- Out of Home
- Television / Video

**For Additional Information on Direct Mail Marketing:**

Direct Marketing Association (DMA): <http://thedma.org/>

United States Postal Service (USPS): <https://www.usps.com/business/promotions/direct-mail-brochure.pdf>

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### Advantages

- Mailings can be targeted within specific geographic areas or by interests of recipients
- Messaging can be personalized with the intended recipient's name – well-designed pieces can make the recipient feel that the piece was created expressly for them, engendering a feeling of trust
- Can be cost effective, depending on design and production methods
- There's no limit to the length of the message – can be a few lines on a postcard or a sophisticated package

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- Different copy and design can be employed for the same campaign and the business can easily determine which are most effective in producing responses
- A well-designed direct mail piece makes it easy for prospects to respond by including a response card of a postage-paid envelope for privacy
- Response rates are easily measured – pieces can be coded so the business can determine where customers are coming from
- Flexible – can be as simple as a card of flyer or may contain an actual free product sample
- Businesses can build databases based on responses to mailings, and maintain current database

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### Disadvantages

Cost of designing and producing an effective direct mail advertisement can be high

Timing of distribution is often critical to direct mail campaigns, but design, production and mailing times can be difficult to predict

Targeted mailings are only as good as the mailing list used – addresses can be out of date

Privacy policies – “Do Not Mail” lists

Consumers may find direct mail advertisements intrusive and resent seeing them in the mailbox, resulting in their viewing the business in a negative light. If consumers throw the direct mail piece away, the cost of producing and mailing is wasted – nearly half (44%) of consumers throw away direct mail without ever reading it (AllBusiness.com)

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Success rates for direct mail average in the 1-2% range, according to the Direct Marketing Association and Pinnacle Lists – whether they are requesting more information or placing an order

A single mailing seldom produces results, so multiple mailings over time are required, accumulating costs

The mailbox is typically a cluttered environment – the direct mail piece is delivered with many other pieces

The great amount of direct mail that is tossed has environmental implications, and that fact alone may lead some consumers to object to this form of advertising

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### Plus Radio

Consumers hear only one radio ad at a time, in contrast to the clutter of many pieces of mail delivered at once

Radio generates new customers by branding an advertiser. Consumers who are familiar with a brand may be more receptive to direct mail pieces they find in their mail.

Radio ads run concurrently with a direct mail campaign can educate consumers about the business and direct them to check their mailboxes for more detail, ordering, etc.

Radio Ad Lab and other studies have established that listeners feel a personal connection to the radio stations they tune to, so hearing an ad on radio and finding a direct mail piece in the mailbox for the same business may alleviate the perception that they're receiving "junk" mail.

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**For more information on radio:**

Glossary: <http://www.rab.com/public/reports/buyselfterms.pdf>

FAQs: <http://www.rab.com/whyradio/faq.cfm>

Statistics and Trends: <http://www.rab.com/whyradio/>

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