



# 2022 STATE OF DIRECT MAIL

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Marketers Fold Direct Mail, Gifting Into  
Integrated, Omnichannel Campaigns,  
Automate Processes For Success

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# INTRODUCTION

When *Demand Gen Report* first started [reporting](#) on the benefits of direct mail for B2B organizations in 2018, the strategy brought on tons of buzz to open doors with prospects and generate awareness in an already oversaturated content landscape. It quickly escalated to becoming a bigger — although slightly more expensive — aspect of integrated campaigns, which led to new martech vendors offering to automate and streamline the sending process.

In March 2020 — when the entire world shut down — many were led to believe direct mail was dead because everyone was forced to work from home and sending random packages to people's personal spaces seemed highly unlikely. However, in true B2B fashion, the solutions helping to automate direct mail strategies quickly pivoted to provide users with new ways to reach and engage prospects at their preferred address. As a result, [direct mail turned out to be a key engagement driver](#) that added human touches to marketing campaigns and virtual events at a time that lacked face-to-face engagement.

"From a practitioner's standpoint, direct mail is another way for us to get our message across to folks outside of the normal channels," said Jennifer Leaver, Director of Integrated Marketing at [FullStory](#) and former Senior Global ABM Manager for [Bazaarvoice](#). "A lot of people were hesitant to use direct mail after Covid hit because everyone was working from home and it seemed really hard. But I think it was actually a blessing in disguise."

Fast-forward to today, direct mail is still a key channel to engage prospects, customers and even employees in the digital/hybrid age. It works to build customer loyalty, close deals faster and show client and employee appreciation across all stages of the buyer's journey.

"Direct mail for me on, at least on the ABM front, was the No. 1 driver of marketing source to pipeline and bookings," Leaver added. "And that's direct marketing-sourced dollars. It was a very big component in my overall strategy and it was also a really interesting way for us to connect and get in closer with the sales motion."

While direct mail has been hot for a few years, marketers are ramping up initiatives to fold it into their omnichannel strategies. But don't call it a comeback. [Demand Gen Report's "2022 Demand Generation Benchmark Study"](#) found that 21% of respondents said they're prioritizing direct mail initiatives — a boost from 2021's 15%.

"It's one of those channels where 'what's old is new again,'" said Ryan Campion, Head of Marketing at [Printfection](#). "For a while, direct mail was one of the things where people compared it to shady infomercial type companies, but it has really accelerated tremendously. In the past five years, we've seen a lot of new direct mail and gifting companies enter the space. It's attracted a lot of startup and VC capital investment and Covid really accelerated that."

This report will uncover how modern marketers are leveraging direct mail initiatives in 2022 and beyond, with a focus on:

- Ways to fold direct mail into larger, integrated, omnichannel campaigns;
- The uses of direct mail and gifting to generate interest in and enhance the value of virtual and in-person events and digital experiences;
- How to incorporate direct mail at all stages of the funnel; and
- How brands are integrating direct mail solutions into existing CRMs, marketing automation and ABM tools.

# TAKING AN OMNICHANNEL APPROACH TO DELIGHT TARGET AUDIENCES

The days of one-off campaigns have come to an end. Growth goals and ABM programs are ramping up, and marketers are prioritizing targeting the right buyers with the right content and experiences. *DGR* research found that getting leads through the door and boosting top-of-funnel initiatives are no longer a key focus. Instead, they're taking the time to target in-market, hot leads to generate greater conversion rates and campaign results, which was reflected by 38% of respondents to the ["Demand Generation Benchmark Study."](#)

Direct mail can play a big role in boosting campaign results when incorporated into a greater omnichannel approach.

"Direct mail is part of this omnichannel, integrated approach," said Alex Barca, Director of Demand Generation at [Postal.io](#). "If you're running ABM campaigns or whatever types of campaigns, direct mail should be an integral part of that. Technology has gotten to a place where it doesn't matter where buyers work, because we can verify the address and get it to whatever doorstep we want it to get to. The pandemic really didn't slow things down at all, but I think it's just evolved to a place where it's just part of this omnichannel approach. And I think people are really trying to prove the ROI of their direct mail efforts. That's the next wave of where direct mail is going — to be able to quantify the results."

Incorporating direct mail into larger campaigns provides an added element of delight for target audiences, especially within ABM campaigns. For example, [Identiv](#), a global leader in seamless authentication and security solutions, launched an integrated campaign that aimed to breathe new life into Identiv's social strategy. The "Not Tom Cruise: Mission Possible" campaign featured nine YouTube episodes starring the most recognizable and decorated Tom Cruise impersonator in the world who acted as a spokesperson for the company's video management system product, Velocity Vision.

But beyond the entertaining videos and social initiatives, Identiv sprinkled in an ongoing email sequencing campaign that hyper-targeted prospects in various industries. They also included a unique gift box component that was sent to Identiv's top-50 dealers, which included a top-secret "mission possible" spy case with playful, on-theme pieces, engaging content about Velocity and other gifts and treats, including a Tom Cruise-themed Spotify playlist. Through these efforts, Identiv reached 183K accounts and generated \$2,700,410 in revenue share.

# FIVETRAN ADDS OFFLINE TACTICS TO ABM STRATEGY & SEES ROI IN 6 MONTHS

## **Challenge:** Create & Capture Demand To Drive Qualified Pipeline & Increase Opportunities From The Offline Channel

In the past, demand generation at [Fivetran](#), the global leader in modern data integration, was primarily focused on generating inbound demand (MQLs). As it moved upmarket, Fivetran [added ABM](#) to the mix to engage a small set of target accounts and close larger deals.

ABM isn't an out-of-the-box tactic. It takes time and testing to build a greater strategy around reaching the right audience, with the right message... at the right time, with the right tools. When the Postal Offline Marketing Platform was added to Fivetran's tech stack, it became an integral part of their ABM plays.

"The most important part about Postal is that it's an effective way to catch the attention of key contacts," said Casey Patterson, Manager, ABM at Fivetran. "A close second is that it's very easy to use — not only for the folks sending out gifts, but also for the critical recipients of those gifts. The tool provides a custom, branded experience that seamlessly integrates into Fivetran's go-to-market motion."

Before Postal, the Fivetran sales team was able to gain traction with offline gifting, with each team member manually expensing gifts they sent to prospects and customers — one at a time. This process was tedious for both the sales and marketing teams, and there was no way for the team to attribute ROI to their efforts. Fivetran couldn't see the impact of the offline channel on prospects and customers.

## **Solution:** Automate The Logistics Of Sending Gifts For The Marketing & Sales Teams

Now with Postal, Fivetran enjoys the flexibility of having an Offline Marketing Automation Platform that enables the company to scale and track its gifting efforts for multichannel campaigns. The adoption of Postal at Fivetran has grown — with demand generation, AE, BDR and SDR teams all utilizing the platform.

The sales team now can easily send personalized gifts on a 1:1 basis in addition to the large-scale campaigns run by the demand generation team. Both teams feel confident knowing they can verify recipients' addresses, ensure items are delivered and not waste any of their budget.

Patterson works in collaboration with the sales team to send gifts to target accounts at key points in their purchasing journey. Her team incorporates Postal into outbound BDR cadences to ensure they're infusing gifting into their run-of-business ABM and outbound campaigns using the [Salesforce](#) and [Salesloft](#) integrations.





As Postal admins, the ABM team ensures every user has budget in their account and gifts are approved in the [Postal Marketplace](#). They monitor performance metrics such as email opens, clicks, acceptance rates and the highest performing gifts, all within the [Postal Reporting Dashboard](#).

With this new and improved process, everyone on the team receives a monthly budget, and there are zero bottlenecks between the sales and marketing teams when using the offline channel to boost engagement with prospects and customers. In fact, there's consistency and strategy across teams and throughout the buyer's journey.

## **Results: Fivetran Can Now Track Pipeline Influenced By Offline In ABM Strategy, Achieved ROI In Less Than 6 Months**

Fivetran has taken its offline efforts to new heights across their go-to-market team and has seen incredible results when a Postal touchpoint is included in their campaigns:

- 2.5X open rates;
- 10X click rates;
- 3X lead to opportunity conversion rates;
- 55-80%+ event attendance rate; and
- ROI recognized in 6 months.

"Using Postal helps create excitement and has raised reply and attendance rates to boost my end of quarter quota attainment," said Mikayla Rice-Harvey, Lead SDR at Fivetran.

Rice-Harvey had a prospect that was struggling to move through the sales process, and she couldn't get him to show up for a meeting. To regain her contact's engagement, she employed Postal.

"The prospect let me know he was taking in new foster kids and it was hectic in his house. I sent cookies via Postal and acknowledged how overwhelming that must be," said Rice-Harvey. "He was extremely thankful and emailed letting me know it was a thoughtful and delightful gift. The next day we were on a call and he moved forward with a proof of concept."

In addition to gifting, using Postal gifting pre and post for field events has also proven to be a great success for the Fivetran ABM strategy — offline touchpoints have driven event registration and decreased no shows with events at 55%-80% or higher show rate.

"We create custom campaigns and track the gifts sent to event registrants and event attendees. We've performed A/B testing and noticed that by incorporating gifts into a campaign, we're increasing the day-of show rate significantly," said Marta Giannetti, Sr. Field Marketing Manager at Fivetran.

Through the help of Postal.io's direct mail automation platform, Fivetran is now successfully able to track offline engagement in its ABM strategies, increase ROI and build stronger relationships with its prospects and customers.



# INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY TO BETTER MEASURE, MAKE A CASE FOR DIRECT MAIL

Sending a fancy gift box to a target account list sounds great, but if teams and tools aren't aligned and integrated, marketers are likely to fall short on seeing success with direct mail efforts. Experts agree that without the right technology and without automation, direct mail strategies can be very time-consuming.

"The more you can automate it, the more efficient it can be, the more you can tie it back to ROI and the more you can see the way direct mail is influencing the success of your other campaigns," said Campion.

Postal's Barca agrees, adding that integrating all systems is absolutely critical to delivering omnichannel campaigns.

"You need some sort of technology to do it," she said. "Say you send 50 people a piece of swag or a gift, you put them on a Salesforce campaign and then you can track how many of those people become opportunities and how many of those people became closed-won deals. Then you can say, 'Okay, in the last three months, they received a gift that absolutely had an influence on them, converting into an opportunity or a win.' It's all about making sure your systems are integrated."

For Leaver, integrations with Salesforce, Marketo and 6sense were essential for her direct mail efforts. "Being able to pull in campaign-level activity into the 6sense to show levels of engagement across the personas in any given account was important," she added.

When it comes to measuring success, Leaver focuses on:

- Early-stage funnel metrics;
- Number of opt-ins;
- Engagement (did the recipient take action, scan a QR code, etc.);
- How it translates into meetings being completed and held; and
- How it translates from meeting to opportunity, to creation and so on.

"We were also looking at it from a marketing influence-perspective after an opportunity was created," she added. "So, if a seller was sending out a box or a gift card to help progress a deal, did that help? Did it increase deal velocity? Did it help increase our win rate? So, some of the typical metrics that you look at through like an ABM lens, but just kind of with a direct mail focus."



# INCORPORATING DIRECT MAIL INTO ALL STAGES OF THE FUNNEL

With Ryan Campion, Printfection

Direct mail is no longer just a door opener. For many companies, it has proven to be a key strategy for all stages of the funnel and buyer's journey. To learn more about how to implement gifting in various use cases, *Demand Gen Report* sat down with Printfection's Head of Marketing Ryan Campion... what we got was tons of inspiration for using direct mail in unique ways.

***Demand Gen Report:*** *How has direct mail evolved and modernized over the years? What's changed in the space?*

**Ryan Campion:** What's changed about direct mail is that, in the past, you could send packages to a company's headquarters and have a fairly reliable chance that you're going to reach your target recipient. Now you have no idea if your target person is working at this company headquarters and personal addresses are not easily publicly available. So companies, including Printfection, are able to send a gift to someone via email and you can direct them to a gifting landing page where they can choose what type of item they want. Then they can enter their own shipping address and once that gift gets redeemed, you can have your sales rep follow up with them. We've seen a big shift to that type of gifting strategy where you are enabling someone to tell you where to send a particular item.

***DGR:*** *How are marketers incorporating direct mail into larger campaigns — whether it's a virtual event or in-person event — how are you folding that all into one big omnichannel campaign?*

**Campion:** Recently, we've been doing more webinars, where we feature a customer and have them talk about a particular strategy that they're using direct mail for. To get more people to register for the webinar, we'll say, "Hey, if you register, we'll send you some type of gift." Once they register, then it directs them to the landing page where they can go ahead and grab their gifts to increase registrations.

We have a lot of customers who host virtual events and sometimes it's harder to get the same type of engagement on a virtual event than in-person, so they encourage people to take certain types of call to action. For example, we'll send you a gift if you watch this webinar, request a demo or simply participate in some way. It's nice with virtual attendees, because you just need their email address to have them opt-in for gifts.





There are companies that, at a given time of year, host kickoffs with their sales teams or they're doing quarterly reviews with their customers — that's a good time to incorporate direct mail gifting. We have a lot of customers that will send a nice rewards kit to their customers at the time of renewal, for example, or even when they are onboarding a new customer, they can send them a really beautiful welcome kit that has a variety of different items just to start that relationship off on the right foot. We're seeing people tie direct mail into different stages of a customer's journey, and that's a smart approach to take.

**DGR: Where do you see direct mail fitting into early points in the customer journey?**

**Campion:** Anything you can do to try to get a meeting for your sales team can be highly effective. What you should consider is the average value of your product or service that you're providing. If you're a complex software solution where you're going to get \$400-\$500K from a single sale, then I think you can afford to go a little bit more aggressive with that high-level touch point and offer high-quality gifts. But if you're a more transactional company where you're selling something that has a much lower price point, you can still use direct mail in the early stage, but you'll probably use something that's a little bit less expensive, but still useful.

This applies to events as well. When we go to a trade show, we bring a variety of different level items because a lot of people who come to our booth are just tire kickers. In that case, we give them branded Tide Pens that they can use on their clothes if they get a stain, Chapstick or floss.

**DGR: What does a successful direct mail strategy look like? Do you have any examples you can share?**

**Campion:** Unitrends utilized swag as part of a nurture campaign for its full sales funnel. For the top of the funnel, the company hosted an event called "Backup and Brews," and following the session, people were asked to complete a short, five-question survey. If they completed it, they would get a Yeti mug or a beer glass as a reward. These survey questions were designed to give a sales rep more information about their challenges and pain points so they'd have a much more intelligent follow-up.

Mid-funnel, Unitrends used messaging to incentivize demo requests. The company had messaging like, "Hey, we've got some new swag the marketing team created and we'd love to share it with you." That would encourage prospects to book more demos.

The company also used direct mail as part of a "resurrection campaign." Unitrends would send emails or reach out to opportunities where they lost the deal within a certain number of months and say, "Hey, if we can get some more feedback from you in this quick survey, we'll send you a gift item." While the company's original idea was just to collect more information, it ended up rekindling a lot of deals. Unitrends saw a 55% conversion rate to basically getting opportunities back into the funnel through sending gifts at that stage.



# RAMPING UP EVENT STRATEGIES WITH DIRECT MAIL & GIFTING

During the Covid-19 pandemic, direct mail was a hit for driving virtual event attendee engagement and even booking sales calls. Today, direct mail still plays a pivotal role, not only for digital experiences, but for in-person as well.

"I think direct mail can actually help people at trade shows because they get a choice of a larger number of prizes or gifts, and they can get it shipped directly to their home instead of having to try to fit it into a suitcase," said Postal.io's Barca.

For example, one of Postal's clients hosted a "curling for cash" game at their booth, where they encouraged attendees to try to curl for points. As a prize, they received business cards with QR codes that led to a landing page with a selection of prizes they could choose from to ship right to their homes.

Direct mail can take on many forms as a tactile element in marketing, and it doesn't necessarily have to be "mail." This "gifting" element can be paired with events to engage target personas in the middle of the funnel and move deals further down the pipeline.

Intelligent Inbound marketing agency [SmartBug Media](#) developed a campaign that included a physical recipe book full of inbound marketing strategies for all stages of the inbound marketing funnel that they used as a gift during a senior living conference. The company saw 15% of new leads from the conference to booked meetings and a 23X ROI from the printed book leading to closed/won revenue.

"Direct mail can actually help people at trade shows because they get a choice of a larger number of prizes or gifts and they can get it shipped directly to their home instead of having to try to fit it into a suitcase." **ALEX BARCA, POSTAL.IO**



## CONCLUSION

Direct mail is here to stay, but one-off campaigns won't cut it in an oversaturated landscape. Modern marketers are engaging prospects, buyers and customers with unique direct mail and gifts to fuel ABM campaigns, customer success initiatives and event strategies — all while maintaining a streamlined operation with technology on the backend to run and measure initiatives.

"Random acts of marketing are not going to get you very far, and you're not going to be able to get the results that you want," said Barca. "Starting with a pilot is fine, but make sure it's an all-inclusive strategy — like an ABM campaign — where you're giving people multiple touchpoints, with direct mail as a part of that. But just doing one-off sends hoping for the best is a little bit tricky."



Postal is the most intuitive and effective Offline Marketing Engagement Platform—the all-in-one solution for go-to-market and revenue teams to scale, execute, and track their offline marketing strategy to grow their business.

**MARKETING@POSTAL.IO**



Printfection is a B2B swag management platform used by Marketing and HR teams to create, store, and send swag to prospects, customers, partners, employees, and events, anywhere in the world.

Businesses rely on us to power their branded gifting programs to retain customers, drive meetings for sales, and get stronger ROI from virtual & in-person events.

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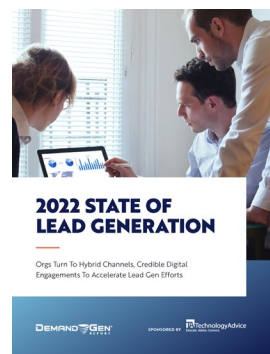




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*Demand Gen Report* is a targeted online publication that uncovers the strategies and solutions that help companies better align their sales and marketing organizations, and ultimately, drive growth. A key component of the publication's editorial coverage focuses on the sales and marketing automation tools that enable companies to better measure and manage their multi-channel demand generation efforts.

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