

THE POWER OF PRINT

Capturing Attention in an Increasingly Distracted World

We all know it because we all experience it: Every day is a constant bombardment of ads, much of it through online media. And the attention span of your multitasking audiences is shrinking. Gaining your target's attention long enough to receive your message—let alone read it—is more challenging than ever. There's an answer. Mail-delivered print.

>8 seconds
Average Attention
Duration for 71%
of Emails¹

54 seconds
Average
Website Visit²

The longer you have your target's attention, the more effective your branding will be. Mail captures attention better than any other channel.

108 seconds
Average Attention
Duration, Direct Mail³

3+ minutes
Average Attention
Duration, Mailed
Catalog⁴

These days, most people are moving through their lives at ever-increasing speed, looking at their mobile devices the whole way. Capturing their attention is tough and getting tougher.

At just eight seconds, the attention span of a typical consumer on average is one second less than a goldfish.⁵ Multitasking reduces attention span by up to 40%; mobile device use further erodes attention duration.⁶ So increasingly, success in branding is

becoming more about consumer attention than consumer action. Because without the former, you have no chance at the latter. Attention span is king.

THE PROBLEM WITH EMAILS, SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE WEB

Email, social and website media are very popular among advertisers. But with the growing prevalence and volume of advertising through these channels, there's a problem—people aren't paying attention.

Most people don't want your advertising email in their in-box. They call it spam (ouch), and 61% use a spam filter.⁷ Even if your email gets through, 30% are viewed for less than two seconds. 41% for less than eight. Only 29% of emails get more than eight seconds of reader attention.⁸

Social media advertising is even more challenging. A 2023 study found that 74% of social media users have grown tired of ads on their feeds, finding them intrusive and irrelevant.⁹ Click-through rates are dismal and decreasing—in 2022 it was 1.21%, down slightly from 2021.¹⁰

Website marketing is problematic as well. The average webpage visit lasts around 54 seconds, with visitors spending an average of just 5.59 seconds actually reading written content.¹¹ Ecommerce website conversion rates—people making a purchase—average between 1.8 and 3.1%.¹²

DIRECT MAIL IS A HIGH-ATTENTION CHANNEL

A recent study by JICMAIL measuring attention levels among those receiving direct mail—including business mail, direct mail, household-addressed mail and door drops—showed that mailed or hand-delivered print materials significantly outperform digital media.¹³

Across the 28-day study, business mail showed an average attention duration of 150 seconds; 108 seconds for direct mail, 64 seconds for household-addressed mail and 46 for door drops (unaddressed items delivered to every building in a specific geographic area)—all far longer than the average time spent with marketing emails.¹⁴

The numbers are there: Mail-delivered print generates consistently—and significantly—longer attention duration than online media.

MAGAZINES AND CATALOGS: THE ATTENTION ROCK STARS OF MAIL-DELIVERED MEDIA

Magazines and catalogs are in another league when compared with other channels, with attention numbers measured in minutes rather than seconds. According to the JICMAIL study, magazines generated an average of 5.5 minutes of attention, while readers spent an average of just over three minutes with catalogs.¹⁵

Even in this increasingly online world, people of all ages still love their catalogs. Especially among Gen Z and Millennials—27% of Gen Zs keep retail store catalogs for an average of 3–6 days and another 20% keep them around for 1–2 weeks.¹⁶ For Millennials, those numbers are 30% and 18%, respectively.¹⁷

During their time in the home, most catalogs are viewed an average of two to three times. Among all consumers, some 60% say they enjoy spending time with catalogs.¹⁸



FROM HIGH ATTENTION TO REAL RESULTS

The numbers show that mail-delivered media is a high-attention channel, and attention span ties into commercially beneficial response, defined as additional exploration, web visits or purchase.

In the JICMAIL study, 31% of direct mail pieces generated a commercially beneficial response, each response resulting in significantly higher brand-building attention levels.¹⁹ Direct mail and door drops framed to encourage a commercial response both generated significantly higher attention levels—3–5 times the overall average for the two channels.²⁰

The lesson here: Attention is key to marketing ROI, and contrary to general perception, mail or hand-delivered print delivers consumer attention better than any digital medium.

— Source 1, 5, 6: Golden Steps ABA, October 5, 2023
— Source 2, 11, 12: "Top Website Statistics for 2023," Forbes, February 2023
— Source 3, 4, 13–20: "The Time We spend with Mail," A JICMAIL Attention Study, June 2023
— Source 7, 8: "The 2023 Spam Report," Orbit Media Studios, DataProt 2023

— Source 9: "74% of People are Tired of Social Media Ads—But They're Effective," Survey Monkey, 2023
— Source 10: "Top Social Media Statistics and Trends of 2023", Forbes, May 18, 2023



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