



2025

# Direct Mail Marketing Benchmark Report

Examining how mailers utilize the channel, what challenges they face, and consumer sentiment ... ensuring your direct mail initiatives remain successful.



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## Executive Summary

Franklin Madison Direct's 2025 Direct Mail Marketing Benchmark Report combines the latest marketer and consumer research to present a full-spectrum view of the current and future landscape of direct mail. This year's results clearly show that while marketers are evolving their strategies with increased automation, creative testing, and omnichannel integration, consumers are responding with greater engagement and preference for personalized, relevant, and tangible experiences through mail.

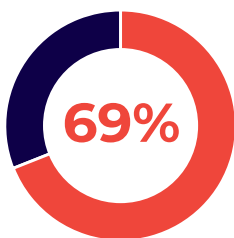
## Methodology

To complete our industry research, we partnered with research firm Circlebox to survey 350 B2B and B2C marketing strategy leaders across the United States. Via a custom online questionnaire distributed in April of 2025, Circlebox gathered insights on how marketing leaders are using direct mail today, what challenges they are facing, and direct marketing opportunities for the future. During that same time, Circlebox ran another online survey created for 600 consumers. This questionnaire sought to uncover how frequently consumers engage with various direct response advertisements, their level of influence and enjoyment with each, and their direct mail specific preferences.

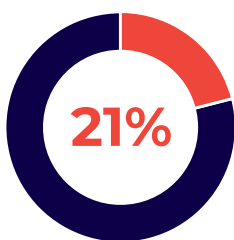
# Marketer Audience Demographics

## Company Business Model

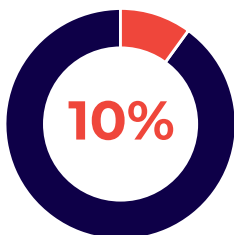
Combination of  
B-to-C and B-to-B



Business  
to Consumer



Business  
to Business



## Industry

Financial Services . . . . .	<b>11%</b>
Insurance Services . . . . .	<b>11%</b>
Healthcare . . . . .	<b>10%</b>
Real Estate . . . . .	<b>10%</b>
Automotive . . . . .	<b>9%</b>
Retail . . . . .	<b>9%</b>
Consumer Products/Packaged Goods . . . . .	<b>7%</b>
Education . . . . .	<b>7%</b>
Telecommunications . . . . .	<b>6%</b>
Travel and Leisure . . . . .	<b>6%</b>
Non-Profit . . . . .	<b>4%</b>
Investment Services . . . . .	<b>3%</b>
Utility . . . . .	<b>2%</b>
Other . . . . .	<b>5%</b>

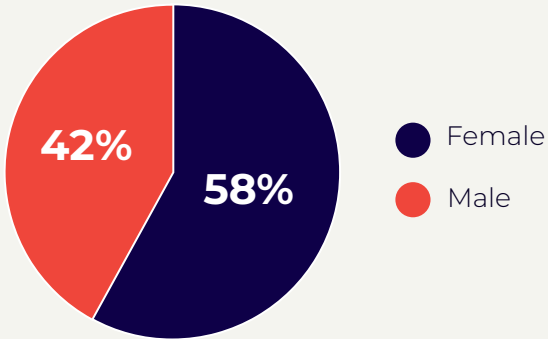
## Role in the Organization

Marketing Director . . . . .	<b>50%</b>
CMO/VP of Marketing . . . . .	<b>16%</b>
Marketing Manager . . . . .	<b>11%</b>
Creative Director . . . . .	<b>8%</b>
CEO/President . . . . .	<b>5%</b>
C-Suite non CMO . . . . .	<b>5%</b>
Brand Manager . . . . .	<b>4%</b>
Digital Manager . . . . .	<b>1%</b>
Other . . . . .	<b>0%</b>

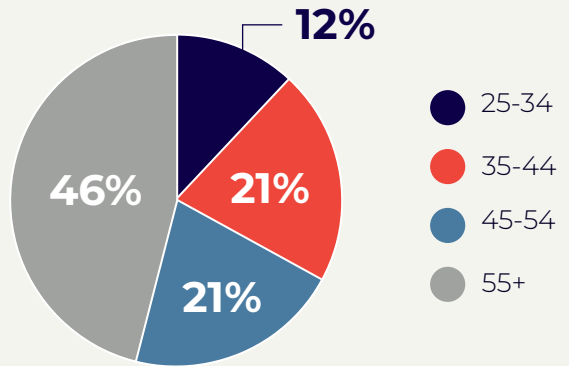


# Consumer Demographics

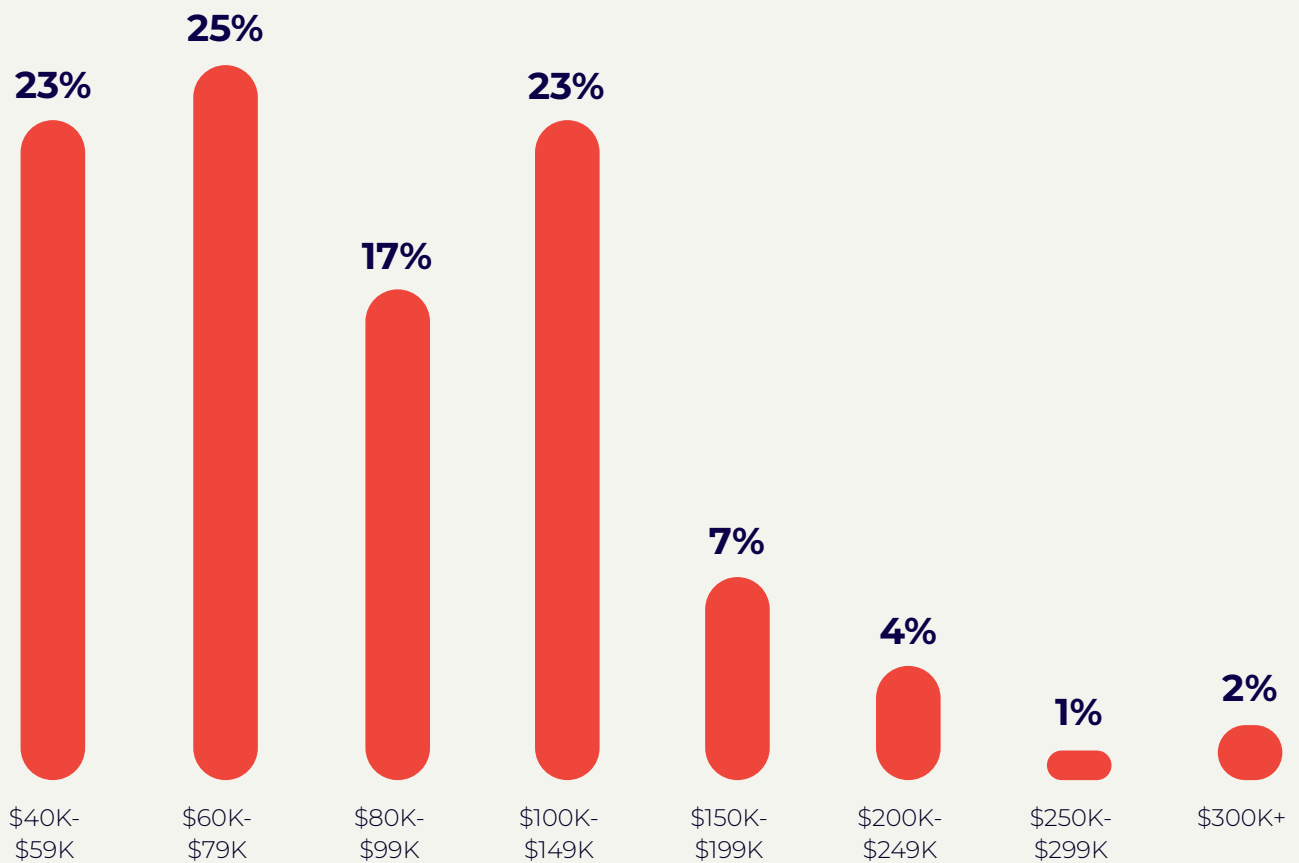
Gender



Age Group



Household Income





## Current State of Direct Mail Usage



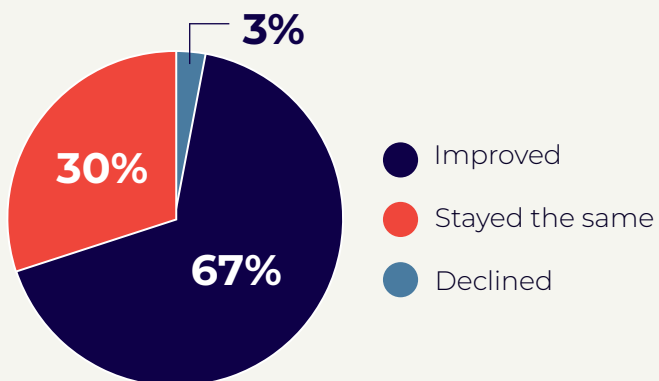
### Reality Check: Consumer Insights

- **More than 70%** of consumers engage with the mail they receive
- **Direct mail is the second most influential advertising channel** over purchasing decisions

Marketers report that direct mail performance has remained strong, with 67% citing improved results over the past 12 months. When compared against other direct marketing channels such as email and social media platforms, **mail experienced the most improvement in 2025**. Among the top drivers of performance are increased investment, higher mailing frequency, and regular creative testing, which align with evolving consumer expectations for relevant and well-designed mail pieces.

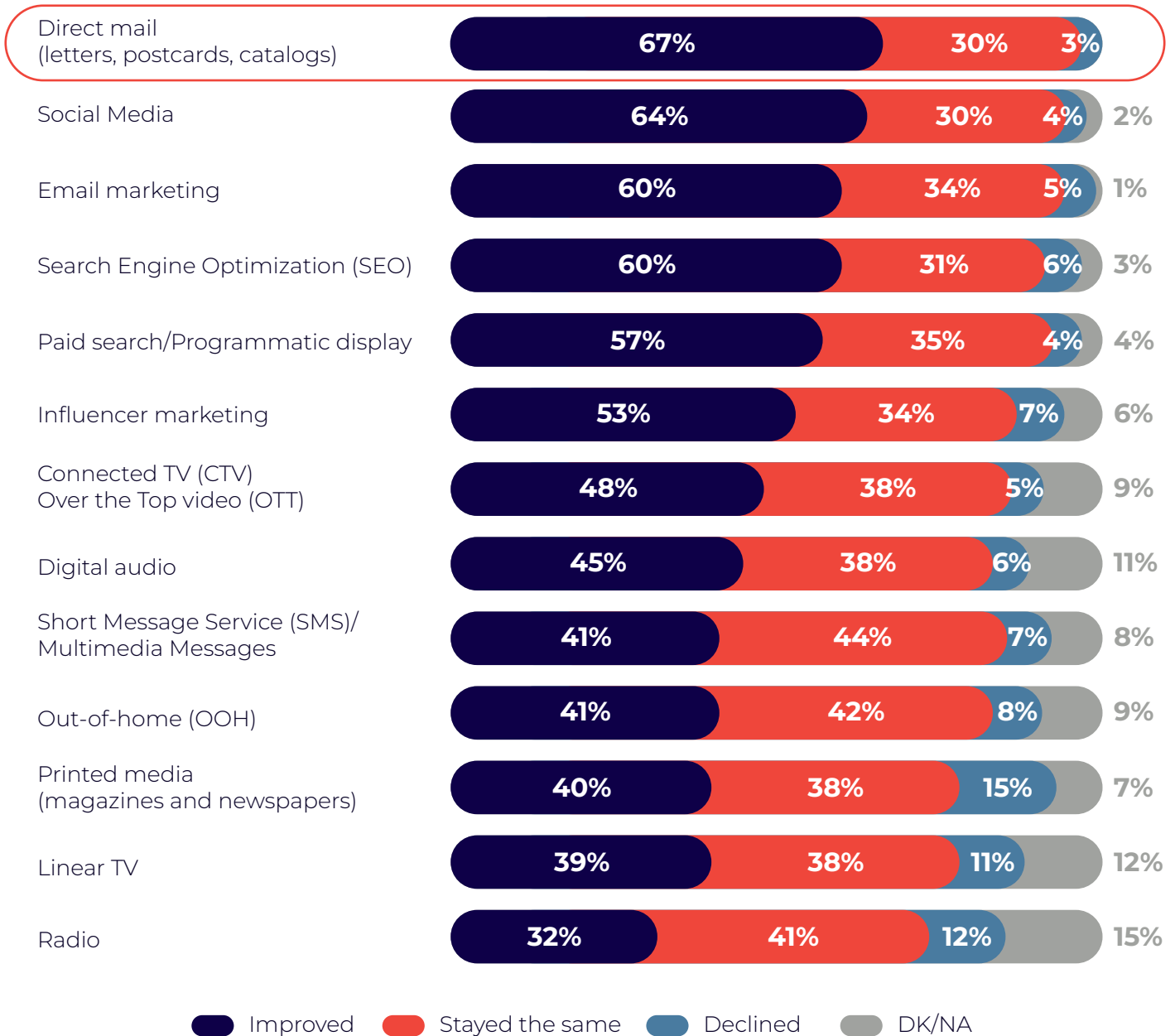
### Changes in Direct Mail Performance in Last 12 Months

**Marketer Question:** In the last 12 months, has your direct mail performance...



## Direct Marketing Strategy Performance in Last 12 Months

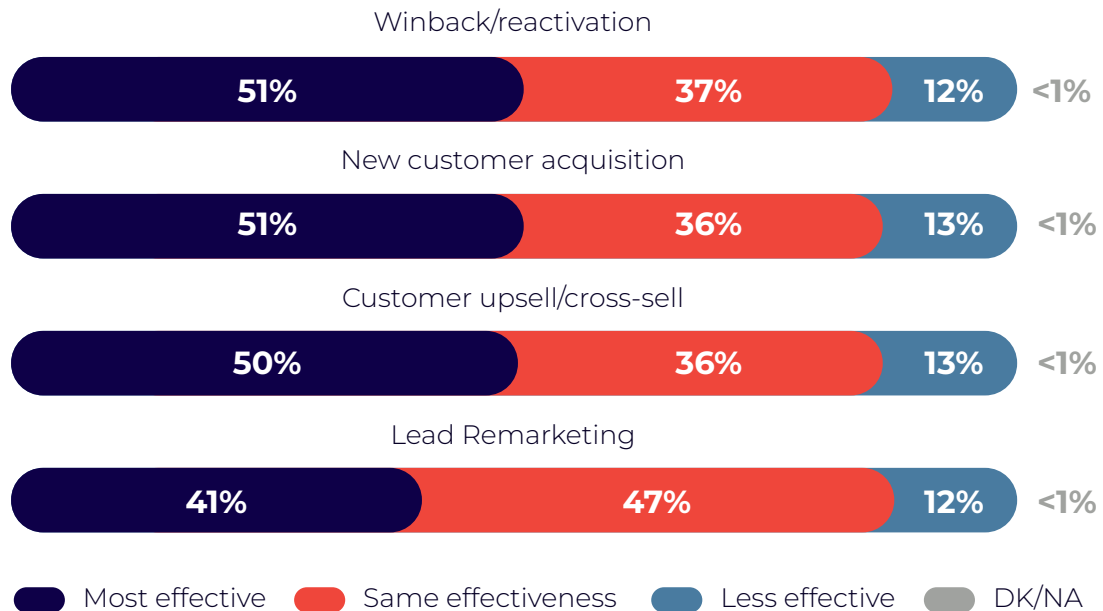
**Marketer Question:** How has your performance for the following direct marketing strategies changed in the last 12 months?



Mail program investments are also steady, with half of marketers increasing their budgets over the past year. That same number are planning to boost spending again in the year ahead, perhaps due to mail's ability to produce measurable outcomes where digital channels may fall short. **At least half of all respondents consider direct mail to be more effective than digital marketing** for key objectives such as winback campaigns, new customer acquisition, and customer upsell or cross-sell.

## Effectiveness of Direct Mail vs. Digital Channels

**Marketer Question:** In terms of effectiveness at achieving each of the following objectives, please tell us how direct mail compares to digital channels.

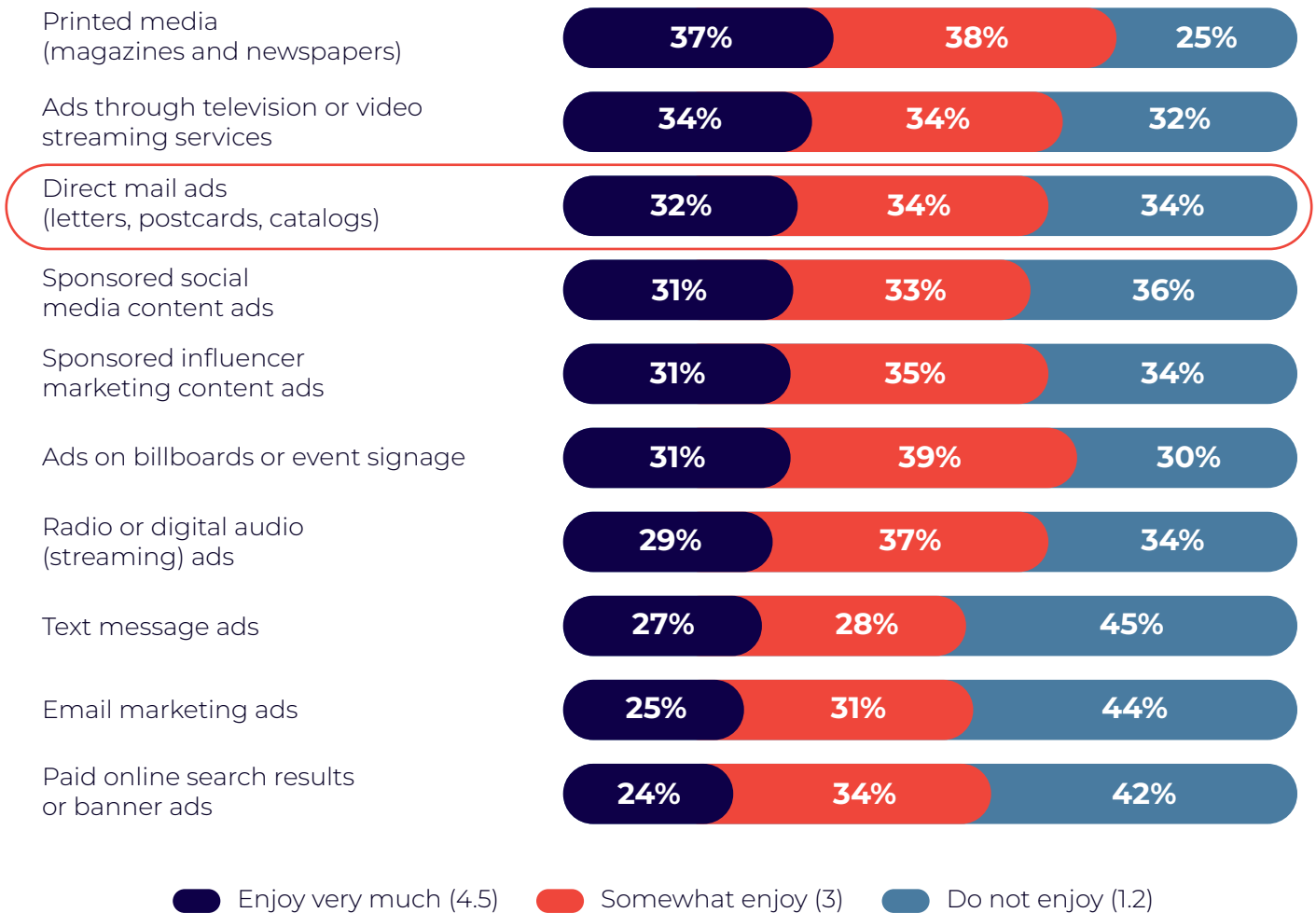


From the consumer viewpoint, **direct mail still ranks as one of the most enjoyable forms of advertising**, moving up from fourth to the third position this year. More than 70% of consumers engage with the direct mail they receive (56% weekly or more!), and 24% say they've made a purchase in the last six to twelve months as a result from receiving a relevant piece of mail. Most notably, direct mail moved up from the fourth to **the second most influential type of advertising**.



## Level of Enjoyment from Types of Advertising

**Consumer Question:** Please rate how much you enjoy or appreciate each of the following types of advertising.





## Most Influential Types of Advertising

**Consumer Question:** Please choose and rank the types of advertisements that are most influential over your purchase decisions. [Select top three types]

Ads through television or video streaming services

51%

Direct mail ads  
(letters, postcards, catalogs)

35%

Email marketing ads

32%

Sponsored social media content ads

29%

Printed media  
(magazines and newspapers)

29%

Radio or digital audio  
(streaming) ads

25%

Paid online search results or banner ads

17%

Text message ads

17%

Ads on billboards or event signage

15%

Sponsored influencer marketing content ads

14%



# Trends in Direct Mail Testing & Execution



## Reality Check: Consumer Insights

- **47% of consumers typically respond** to a relevant piece of mail advertising within a week of receiving it
- **59% of consumers enjoy mail** because they can keep an interesting piece and refer to it later (up 4% from 2024)

Along with general execution and cost analysis, our 2025 research dove deeper into how marketers are prioritizing and building their testing strategies to ensure their direct marketing campaigns continue to resonate and perform.

We found a marked shift toward more technology-driven execution of direct mail campaigns. **Nearly half of marketers now use automation software or online platforms.** B2B organizations continue to favor in-house execution, perhaps due to tighter alignment with internal systems and control over messaging. Marketers in the highest revenue segments are significantly more likely to use an agency.

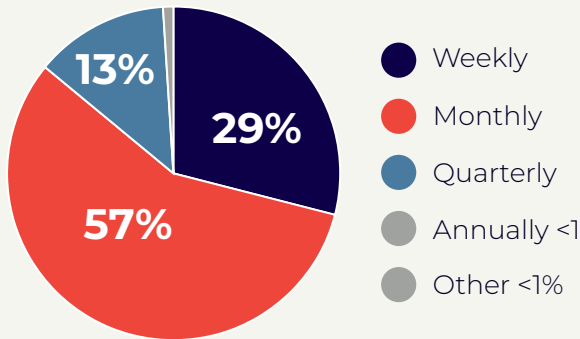
Creative testing proved to be a mainstay of direct mail strategy. **Nearly all marketers (95%) test creative quarterly or more**, and the majority test 11–20% of their volume. **Over half (55%) of respondents are testing their data sources quarterly**, and 42% are testing monthly.

Mailing frequencies are also changing. This year, marketers are mailing to winback and lead remarketing audiences more frequently, signaled by a significant increase in monthly mailings and significant decrease in quarterly and annual frequencies. In 2025, 57% of marketers are mailing to winback/remarketing audiences each month, up from 38% in 2024.

Despite inflation impacts and USPS rate increases, marketers are also reporting direct mail costs remain efficient, as the average cost per acquisition (CPA) for all direct marketing campaigns is skewing higher than mail alone. Most respondents (54%) report a direct mail CPA in the \$100–\$249 range, with few exceeding \$500.

## Frequency of Mailing to Winback and Lead Remarketing Audiences

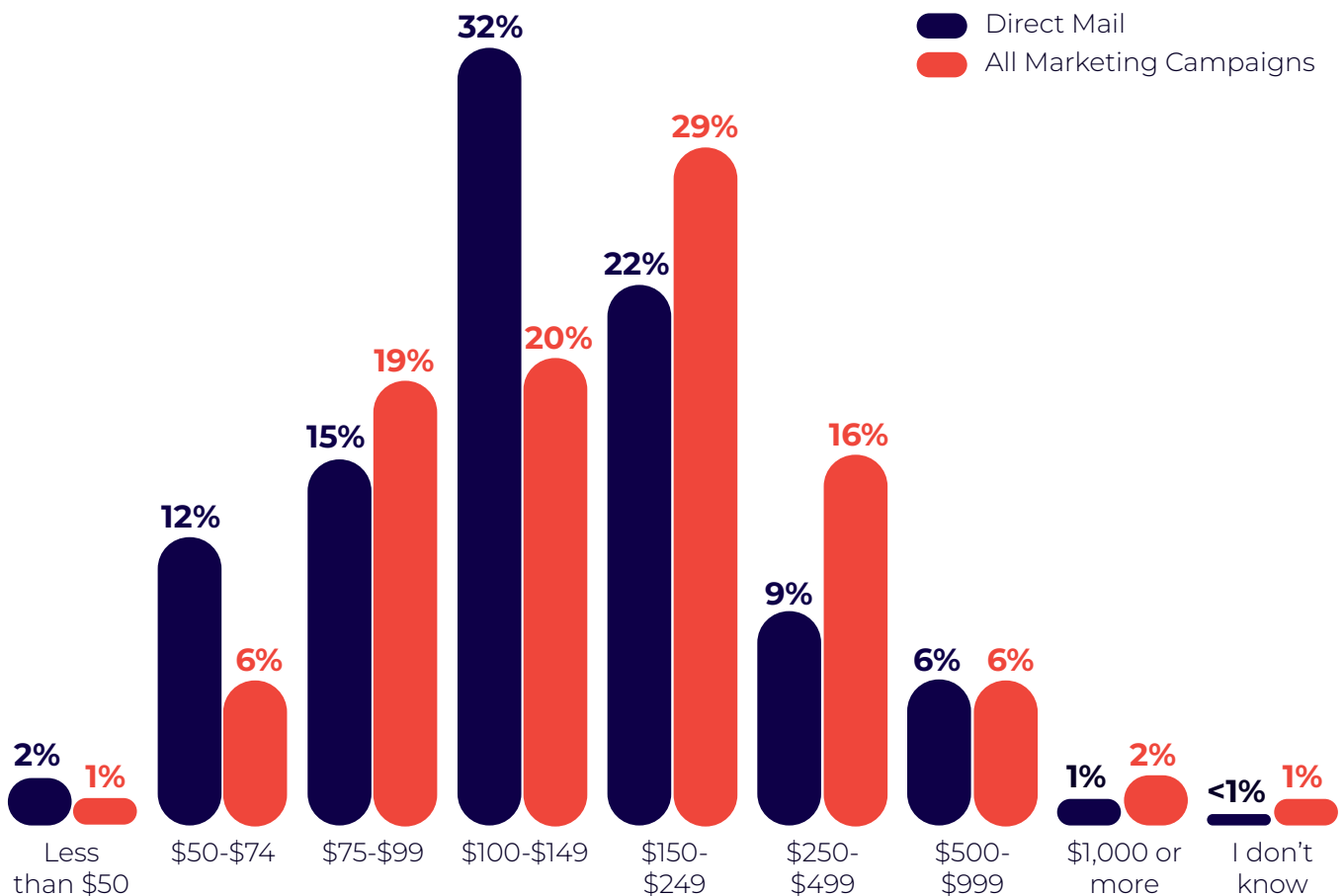
**Marketer Question:** How often are you mailing to your winback and lead remarketing audiences?



## Average Direct Mail Cost Per Acquisition vs. for All Marketing Campaigns

**Marketer Question:** What is your average cost per acquisition (CPA) for direct mail?

**Marketer Question:** What is the average cost per acquisition (CPA) for all of your direct marketing campaigns?



## Integration with Digital Channels



### Reality Check: Consumer Insights

- **Nearly 40% of consumers** report that receiving both a mail piece and digital ad increases brand awareness and overall consideration of the brand
- **Visiting a website** continues to be the most common action consumers take after receiving a relevant piece of direct mail

No longer an isolated channel, direct mail is a foundational part of integrated marketing ecosystems. According to our research, **97% of marketers say integrating direct mail with digital efforts such as email, SMS, and display has a positive impact on performance**. This is a 7% jump from 2024 results.

Email is currently the most integrated channel with direct mail, and for good reason—38% of consumers engage with ads in their inbox daily. Many brands are also integrating SMS and web video retargeting for further lift. When looking at future integrations, the majority of marketers plan to link display advertising with mail campaigns.

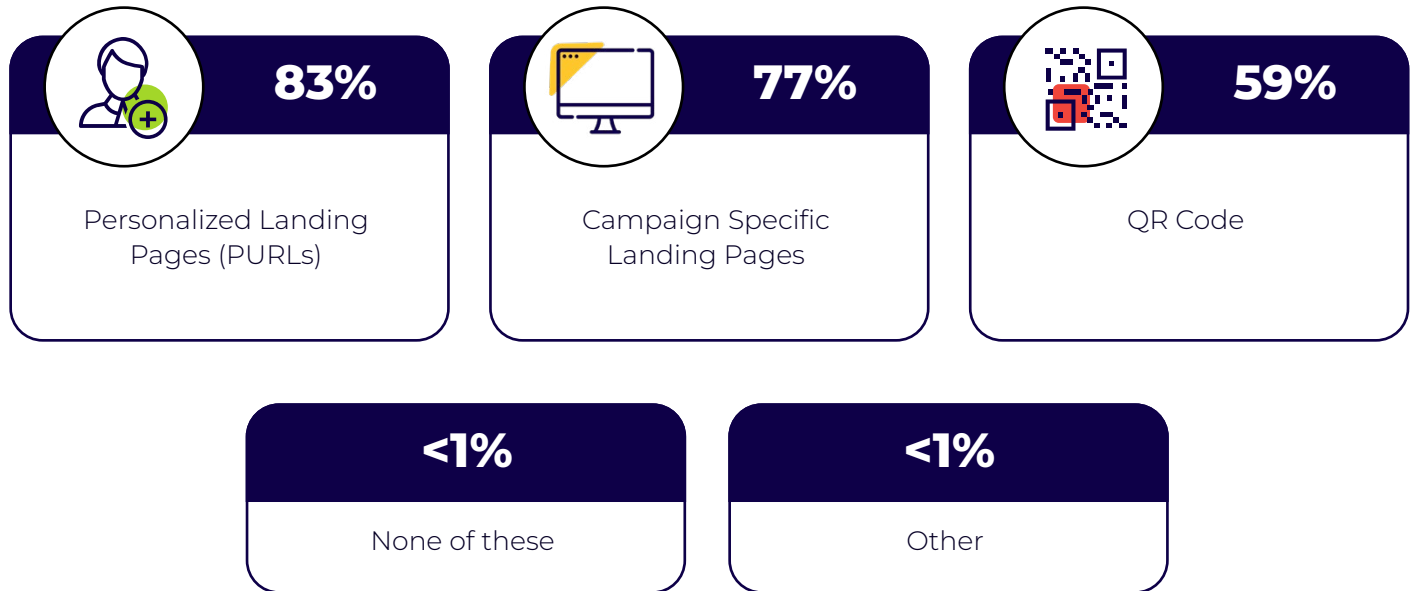
Landing pages are the preferred element used to drive engagement from a mail piece to a digital environment and play a pivotal role in driving conversions. Among marketers who integrate their campaigns, **94% have landing pages aligned with their mail creative**, and 97% (up 7% from 2024) say this consistency boosts performance.

When measuring lift, nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$  of marketers use digital-first metrics like website visits, CTRs, and conversion rates.

For those who have not yet integrated one or more channels with their direct marketing strategy, designing a multi-channel creative strategy and tracking performance across channels are the biggest challenges that have prevented integration.

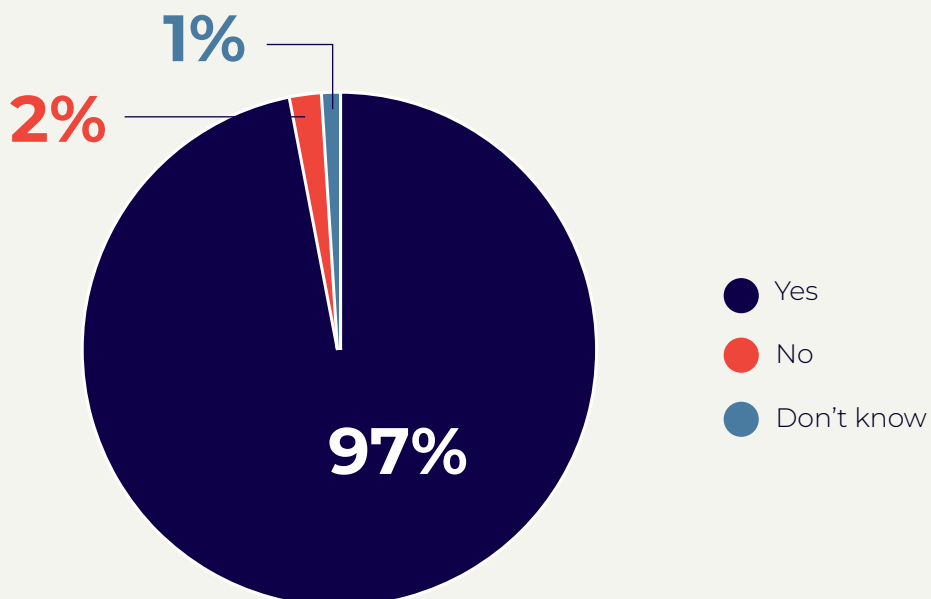
## Elements Used to Drive Engagement from Mail to Digital Environments

**Marketer Question:** What elements are you using to drive engagement from the mail piece to digital environments? Select all that apply.



## Integrating Direct Mail/Digital Channels has Positive Impact on Campaign Performance

**Marketer Question:** Generally speaking, does integrating direct mail and digital channels have a positive impact on campaign performance?





## Strategic Insights for Marketers

As the number of ads a person is exposed to each day continues to climb, personalization is no longer a nice-to-have. It's a performance driver.

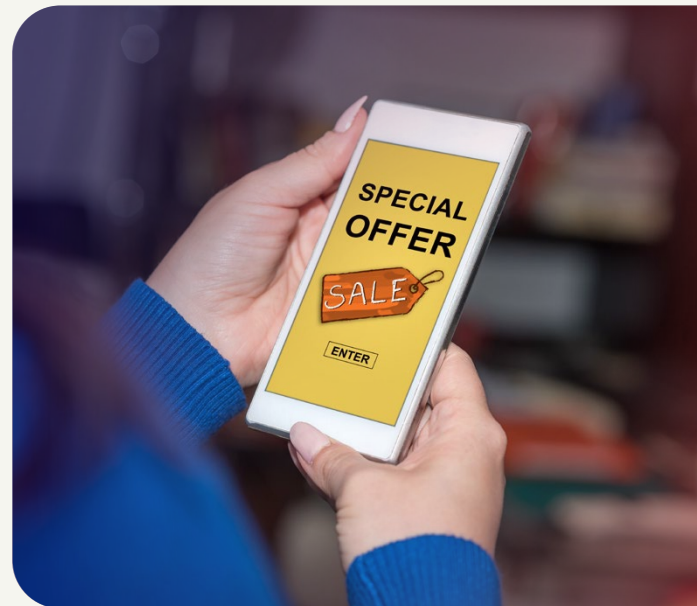
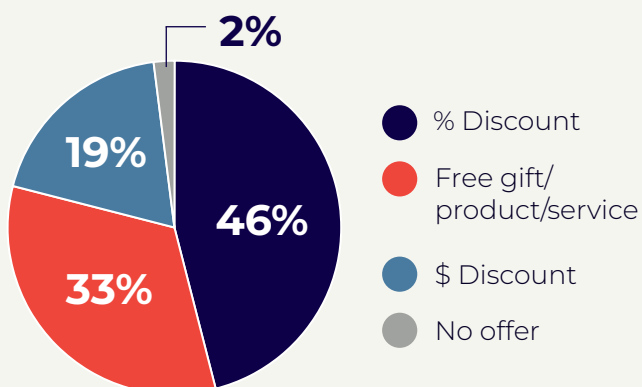
This year, **marketers identified personalization and quality audience targeting data as the top advantages of the mail channel**, with personalization rising a significant six positions from last year's research. This shift reflects a growing emphasis on mail piece relevance and individualized experiences to meet consumer preferences and drive conversions.

Challenges do exist. **Targeting and data access are still top pain points**, followed by performance tracking and lack of internal resources. These challenges are not lost on consumers, who express frustration with receiving irrelevant or redundant mail. Brands that refine targeting through regimented data testing, and time messages appropriately stand to gain significantly in engagement and response.

Offer strategy is also evolving. **Percentage-based discounts remain the most effective according to 46% marketers**, yet consumers are slightly more motivated by dollar-based discounts. What's clear is this year, both marketers and consumers are prioritizing cost-saving incentives when it comes to purchasing behaviors.

### Best Offer Strategy

**Marketer Question:** Which offer strategy performs best for your brand?



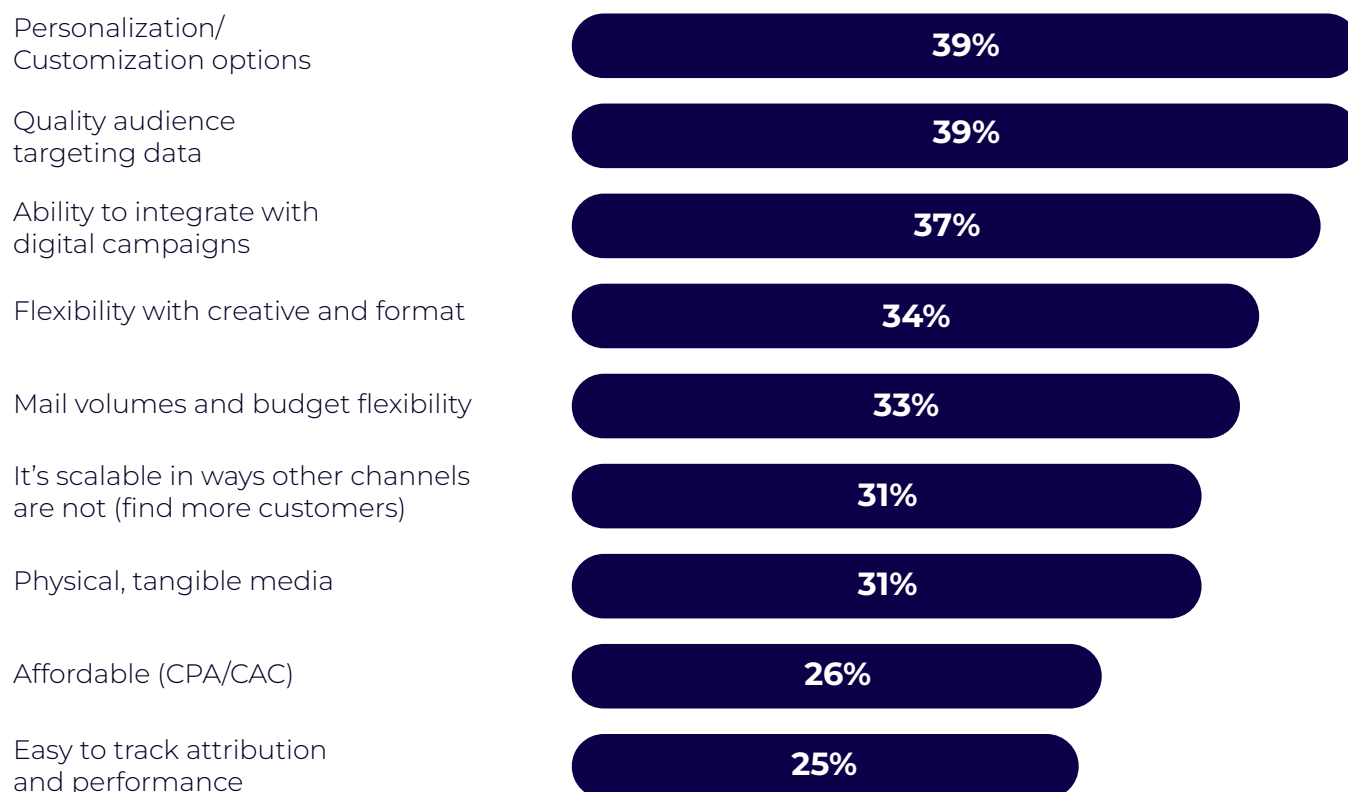
## Most Likely to Give Positive Impression of Direct mail Ad (Top Three Attributes)

**Consumer Question:** Which of the following are most likely to give you a more positive impression of a direct mail advertisement? [Select top three attributes]



## Top Three Advantages of Direct Mail Channel

**Marketer Question:** In your opinion, what are the top three advantages of the direct mail channel?

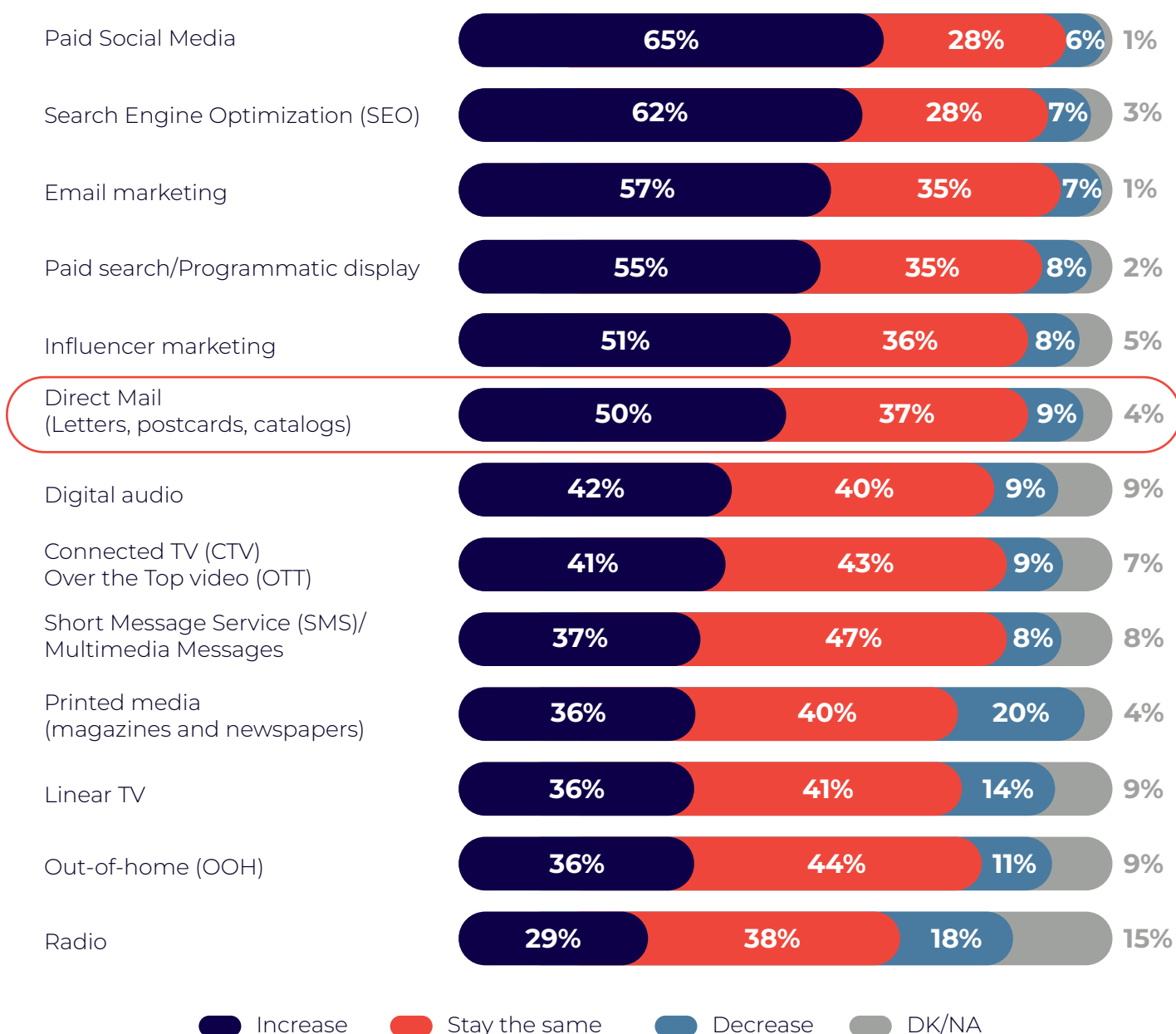


## Future Outlook and Opportunities

Looking ahead, the role of direct mail is expected to remain strong among marketers who already recognize its strategic value. While overall budget increases are projected more heavily toward digital channels, **87% of marketers plan to maintain or grow their investment in direct mail**. The continued investment reflects the growing priority for channels that deliver consistent return on investment, especially during economic uncertainties.

### Anticipated Direct Marketing Budget Changes in Next 12 Months

**Marketer Question:** How do you anticipate your budget for the following direct marketing strategies will change in the next 12 months?

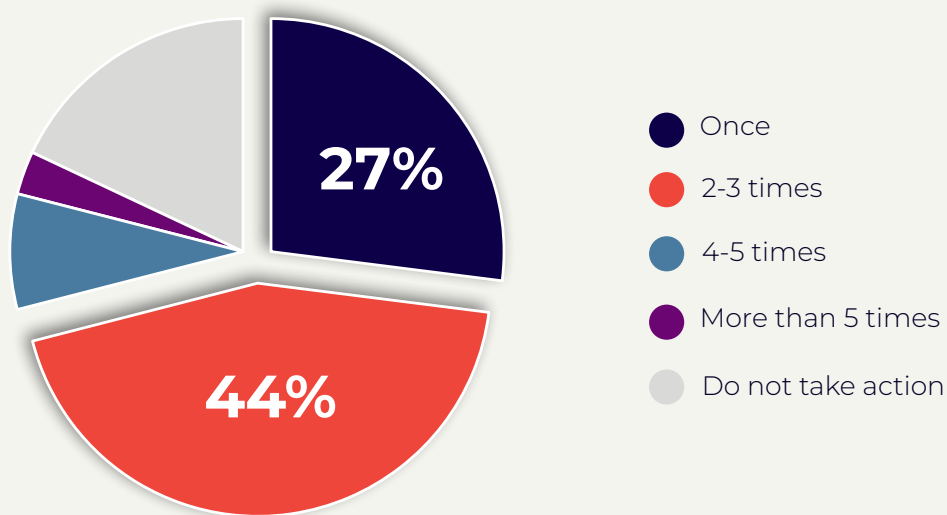


Despite slight decreases in overall mail volume, **brands are increasing mailing frequency for winback and remarketing campaigns** as they shift toward more targeted, data-driven strategies. Instead of sending large, broad campaigns on a quarterly or annual basis, marketers are now using smaller, more personalized drops on a monthly or rolling basis. And although 27% of consumers say one mailing is enough to get them to act, **44% admit they need to see two to three mailings before responding.**

This shift also reflects a broader move toward performance-based marketing and consumer behavior. Frequent drops enable brands to test offers, creative, and audience segments more often, optimizing response and ROI. As a result, brands are mailing smarter by investing in consistent mailings, even if the total number of mailed pieces is reduced.

### Mailing Frequency Required to Compel Action

**Consumer Question:** On average, how many times does a company need send mail advertising before you take a requested action?



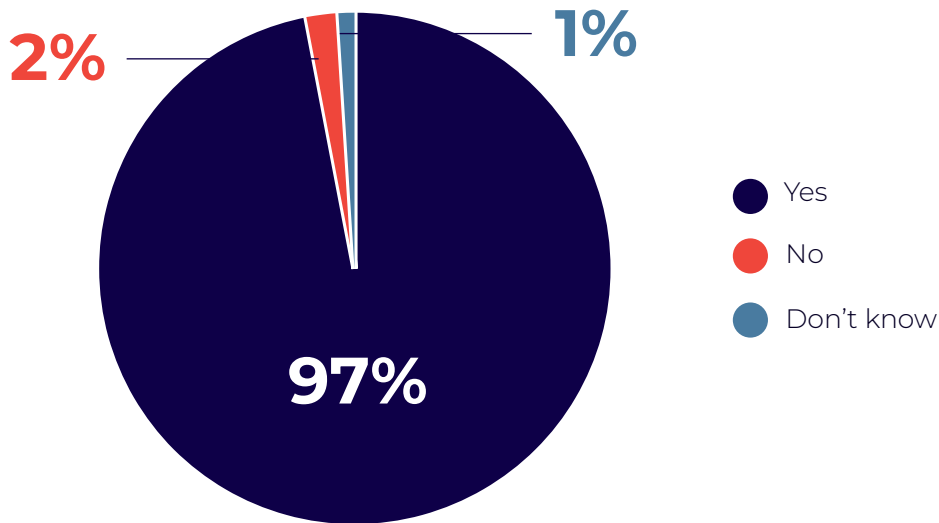
Consumers continue to respond strongly to marketing experiences that bridge the gap between offline and online channels. However, when direct mail programs are managed separately from digital efforts, marketers risk undermining the effectiveness of both.

In contrast, integrated campaigns deliver measurable performance gains. Nearly all marketers who are integrating channels (97%) report improved campaign results when they have a landing page that's consistent with their mail design, a 10% increase from the previous year. Additionally, **38% of consumers state that receiving both a mail piece and a digital ad from the same brand increases their awareness and consideration.** These findings highlight the critical role of integration in creating cohesive and profitable campaigns that meet consumers where they are and drive stronger program results.



## Landing Page Consistent With Mail Design Improves Campaign Results

**Marketer Question:** Does a landing page that is consistent with your mail design improve campaign results?



### Direct Mail Is a Modern Marketing Essential

Our 2025 marketer and consumer research highlights a rare alignment: what brands are doing with mail is working and consumers are responding.

As this year's research confirms, mail has not only maintained its effectiveness but, in many cases, outperformed other direct marketing channels. Marketers are seeing stronger results fueled by strategic investments, creative testing, increased frequency, and deeper personalization. Consumers, too, are showing heightened engagement, especially when mail is seamlessly integrated with digital touchpoints. Looking ahead, brands that continue to innovate, test, and align their mail and digital efforts will be best positioned to capture attention, drive conversions, and deliver meaningful ROI in an increasingly crowded and complex marketing landscape.

If you're already using direct mail, use these findings to refine and elevate your approach. If you're considering it, this is your sign: the mailbox is wide open.

Want help crafting high-performing campaigns? Learn more about how to turn these insights into action at [franklinmadisondirect.com](https://franklinmadisondirect.com).

