

The Environmental Impact of Print: Myths vs. Reality

There are many popular misconceptions about the impact that printed materials have on the environment. However, the idea that print is detrimental to the environment is factually wrong.

Myth: Paper is Made from Fresh-Cut Trees

Reality: Paper is Made Primarily from “Waste” Products

In the United States, the vast majority – a full two-thirds – of the fiber used to make paper comes from sources other than fresh-cut trees. One-third comes from wood chips and sawmill scraps, one-third comes from recycled paper and just one-third comes from “new growth” trees.¹

Of course, these statistics are based on industry averages. There are 200 mills in the United States that use recovered fiber exclusively.²

Myth: Print Leads to Deforestation

Reality: Print Promotes Trees

Contrary to commonly-held belief, paper mills are not cutting down old-growth forests in order to make paper. Nearly all the wood used in paper production comes from “tree farms” – acres of trees grown as a renewable crop, like broccoli or wheat. Print actually gives private landowners a financial incentive to grow trees rather than selling off their land for other uses, such as development.³ As Dr. Patrick Moore, Co-Founder of Greenpeace, has stated, “Using wood sends signals to the marketplace to grow more trees.”

Myth: The Tree Population is Shrinking

Reality: More Trees and Forests Exist Today Than 20 Years Ago

With the increased demand for printed goods that we've seen over time, many people believe that the forests must be shrinking. This is simply not true. There are 12 million more acres of forest in the U.S. today than there were 20 years ago; between 1953 and 2006 we saw a 49% increase in the number of trees still standing after mortality and harvesting.⁴

¹ U.S. EPA, Office of Solid Waste.

² American Forest and Paper Association.

³ Edward L. Glaeser, Professor of Economics, Harvard University, “A Road Map for Environmentalism,” Boston Globe, May 21, 2007.

⁴ Down to Earth.

Print is Powerful

The printed word on paper, enhanced with effective images, has enormous power to communicate your marketing message to your customers and potential customers. Why is print so powerful? Because print is...

Stimulating: Print stimulates the senses. People enjoy holding a printed piece in their hands, feeling the paper in their fingers. It's a tangible media that provides a feeling of substance that electronic media just can't deliver.

Accessible: Print is easily accessed – no need to upload information or deal with wait time, compatibility or network access issues. With print you don't have to keep anything charged or worry about screen glare. Print is highly portable as well, ready for you to “grab and go” on a moment's notice.

Trusted: Print is a vital part of our lives. People trust print. They feel comfortable using it. And they can't fast-forward past it.

Persuasive: Print is a proven sales booster. Studies show that 13% more is spent by online shoppers who receive a direct mail piece directing them to an online site than by those who do not receive a direct mail piece, and 28% more is spent by online shoppers who receive a catalog associated with an online site than by those who do not receive a catalog.

To get results from your marketing campaigns, choose print.

The Case for Direct Mail

Today's Low Mail Volume = Opportunity

With the overall economy still down and with so many companies moving their marketing efforts online, mail volume has dropped tremendously. The resulting empty mailboxes present a unique opportunity. While competition to get noticed in email in-boxes just keeps growing, a well-crafted direct mail package is now far more likely to garner attention than before.

The Advantages of Direct Mail

While both “snail mail” and email allow for targeted marketing, direct mail has some distinct advantages:

- **High Delivery Rates** - If your mailing list is current, nearly all of your direct mail will get delivered. Email, on the other hand, must get past spam filters, service provider issues and more.
- **High Readership Rates** - While many people review their email inboxes with their fingers on the “delete” button, studies show that 80% of consumers will at least scan the direct mail they receive.
- **Nearly Limitless Format Options** - Direct mail offers virtually unlimited formatting options, from postcards and envelopes (of all sizes and colors) to mailing tubes and boxes.
- **Much More Space** - With direct mail you have as much space as necessary to tell your story and deliver a compelling message in one package. You can include letters, brochures, coupons, photos, DVDs, product samples, small promotional items and more.
- **Extreme Personalization** - It is now possible to personalize every element of a direct mail package, without the expense of multiple print runs. For example, you can create a 4-color brochure in which everything from the text to the photos are personalized based on particular fields in your database.

The bottom line: with so much less competition, now's an ideal time to consider adding direct mail to your marketing mix.



Print Drives Both On- and Off-Line Sales

Print is a powerful media...and its power is multiplied when used as part of a multi-channel campaign. Print enhances the impact of television, telemarketing and the internet by providing an extra dimension that's warm, inviting and highly personalizable. Use it to reinforce your brand's message, introduce new products or services and drive traffic to your website.

From printed ads in magazines and newspapers to postcards, direct mail packages, catalogs, door hangers, newsletters, billboards and more, companies everywhere are using print to effectively increase their sales. They understand that:

Print Gets Read – 80% of households either read or scan advertising mail sent to their household.¹

Print Gets Response – 2.24% direct order response rate for printed catalogs, compared with just 0.48% from emails. In fact, catalogs have the second highest response as a marketing option, after telemarketing.²

Print Influences Decisions – 76% of customers have been directly influenced to purchase by direct mail.³

Print Drives New Business – 70% of customers renewed a business relationship because of a direct mail promotion.⁴

Print Leads to Repeat Business – 70% of customers renewed a business relationship because of a direct mail promotion.⁵

Print Increases Online Search – 67% of online search is driven by offline messages; 39% ultimately make a purchase.⁶

Print Increases Online Sales – 76% of internet users surveyed have been directly influenced to purchase an item or service thanks to a direct mail piece.⁷

With results like these, it's no wonder so many successful organizations choose print.

¹ United States Postal Service (2007). Household Diary Study.

² DMA Response Rate Report (2008).

³ 2009 Channel Preference Study.

⁴ 2008 DMA /Pitney Bowes Direct Mail Survey.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ iProspect Offline Channel Influence on Online Search Behavior Study (2007).

⁷ Exact Target, 2009 Channel Preference Study.



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What You Need to Know About Printed Media and the Environment

There's a lot of misinformation out there about the environmental impact of printed media. "Save a tree – don't print!" "Print is bad for the environment!" "Print is killing the forests!" We've all heard these types of thoughts before. However, none of them are true.

The truth is, print is recyclable, renewable and responsible. Let's examine the facts:

- **Print is Recyclable** – Nearly all Americans – 87% – have access to curbside or drop-off recycling programs. These programs are extremely popular; currently 63% of all printed materials in the U.S. are recycled, and this number has been growing over time.

These recycled paper fibers are used in paper production (where they can be recycled several times), in the manufacture of construction products and in the production of consumer goods.

- **Print is Renewable and Sustainable** – Trees are a renewable resource. In fact, there are more acres of forest and more trees standing today than what existed just 20 years ago. Most of the trees used in paper production today are grown on "tree farms" – growing operations that treat trees as a crop, just like broccoli or wheat. Once a section of trees is harvested the land is replanted with more trees.
- **Print is Responsible** – Just 11% of the world's forests are used for paper, with the majority of most fiber used to produce paper coming from "waste" products – wood chips, sawmill scraps and recycled paper. In the U.S. the wood used to produce paper all comes from certified forests. There are systems in place to track fiber content from certified lands through to the end product, ensuring that the fiber used to produce paper all comes from sustainable forest sources.

In addition, many people forget that digital media also has a carbon footprint. Websites, online ads and email are all supported by a strong infrastructure system. This infrastructure consumes electricity, emits greenhouse gasses and sends electronic waste to our landfills.

From sustainable forests to the renewable nature of trees and the recyclability of paper, the print and paper industries have a positive environmental story to tell—one in which print on paper and healthy forests thrive hand-in-hand.