

**DYK**  
DID YOU KNOW SERIES

## CLASS IS IN SESSION

A+ DIRECT MAILERS  
FOR BACK TO SCHOOL

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# DID YOU KNOW?

## HOW TO BUILD A DIRECT MAIL PIECE THAT SCHOOLS THE COMPETITION

The back-to-school shopping season is the second largest annual driver of the U.S. retail market with more than \$35 billion in sales in 2021,<sup>1</sup> and projections for the 2022 season are expected to exceed those as the country continues to rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic. The average household is likely to spend more than \$600 per child on items like clothes, school supplies and technology this year, which is why marketers need to think critically and strategically about the most powerful way to capitalize on this lucrative window in the retail space.

### WHY PAPER?

According to the United States Postal Service, the average household receives 16.8 pieces of mail each week compared to 608 emails.<sup>2</sup> This disparity serves to increase the degree of digital burnout consumers experience. A similar USPS survey also found that 81% of Americans

scan and read their mail daily.<sup>3</sup> These two factors make direct mail campaigns an attractive and fruitful vehicle for marketers to successfully communicate back-to-school products and services to an already captive audience — the trick is to make your back-to-school mailpiece stand out.

Whether it's the shape of your direct mailer or a specific paper stock that creates an impactful sensory experience, there are a handful of things marketers can do to help their back-to-school campaigns rise above the rest.

#### TAKE ON DIFFERENT TEXTURES



Direct mail pieces that offer a dynamic sensory experience will help the mailer resonate. Elements like different paper finishes — gloss, satin, matte or dull — or UV coatings or even laminating films can be an effective complement to the design and content of your mailer. In fact, a recent study suggests humans register more powerful responses when engaging with different textures.<sup>4</sup>

#### INCORPORATE QR CODES



More than 1 billion QR codes are projected to be scanned by the end of 2022,<sup>5</sup> which means incorporating QR codes in your direct mail piece can create an extended experience for customers. Not only does this enhancement create the possibility for omni-channel marketing campaigns, but it also helps marketers evaluate their direct mail campaigns via metrics like site visits and clicks.

#### FOCUS ON THE FOLDS



There's more to direct mail than a postcard, and focusing on how your mailer is folded can unlock design possibilities. For example, tri-folds can make it easier to incorporate perforated elements like coupons, while a cross-fold design allows for more interesting use of copy or images via folded panels. The shape of your mailer can carry as much weight and value as the design and copy.

#### PRIORITIZE PERSONALIZATION



Personalized direct mail campaigns hit home and can increase the time and attention a customer dedicates to your mailer. Variable Data Printing (VDP) makes it quick and easy to tailor messaging based on consumer data like geographic location, age, income, customer lifecycle stage and more. Personalized direct mail campaigns establish a more friendly relationship between brand and customer, and can impact whether a customer ultimately makes a purchase.

#### SOURCES

<sup>1</sup> <https://nrf.com/insights/holiday-and-seasonal-trends/back-to-school>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.uspsig.gov/blog/5-day-delivery-what-about-3-day>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.usps.com/business/promotions/direct-mail-brochure.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fnhum.2019.00455/full>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.juniperresearch.com/researchstore/fintech-payments/digital-commerce-platform-market-research-report>

#### RESOURCES

Whether it's books, brochures, postcards or other promotional and advertising materials, we suggest Accent® Opaque.

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