

3 Marketing Trends You Need to Capitalize on Now Before Your Competition Beats You to It

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When I was 16, big hair was in, and you couldn't go one day without hearing "Jessie's Girl" on the radio. Forty-four years later, the '80s style of sweater vests, mullets and big hair has made a comeback.

Trends are fluid and often cyclical, and many times the "old" becomes "new" again. Much like fashion, older marketing trends can also re-emerge and become in vogue once again.

I know it's not always easy to stay on top of the latest marketing news when you are a busy entrepreneur, but it's essential for achieving success.

I built my company, PostcardMania, from the ground up without funding, and we're now making \$119 million a year. A large part of my growth can be attributed to staying on the lookout for rising (and falling) marketing trends – and balancing those shifts with fundamentals that stay consistent across the ages, regardless of economic climates or what's "in."

So, here's what's trending up (and down) so you can stay ahead of the curve before your competition beats you to the punch.

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People are increasingly wary of digital, so optimize your presence there without spending more

If lately you've tried to cut back on your screentime or felt overwhelmed by your inbox, you're far from alone. A March 2024 survey found that 35% of U.S. adults reported taking an extended break from social media due to negative effects on their mental health. Another study revealed that 53% of consumers believe the current state of social media has decayed compared to the prior year, up to five years ago.

Not only are fewer people online (for less time per session), but it now costs more to reach them. Digital ad costs have been rising steadily every year. Meta's average price per ad increased by 10% worldwide year-over-year in 2024 while impressions only grew 6%. Similarly, Google search ads also rose in cost by 25% from 2023 to 2024.

To sum it up: You're paying more and getting less on digital's two largest ad platforms. So, as the value shrinks, you need to offset those rising costs by improving ad performance.

I suggest testing your digital ads and closely analyzing the results to see which ones deliver the highest ROI – not the most impressions, the most dollars.

We did this recently and ran extensive tests on our social media ads. The winning formula included an audience based on our own database of clientele and video-based ads featuring our clients' successful marketing campaigns. As a result, our social media leads doubled, increasing by 105%! Since then, we've transitioned most of our ads on Facebook and Instagram to video.

Related: [How I Turned a Marketing Mistake Into \\$1 Million in New Business](#)

Trust in print advertising remains high, and big brands are leveraging this with increased print investment

Print catalogs were in style decades ago, but when digital advertising increased, many companies decided to convert their catalogs to digital or cancel them entirely.

Recently, that trend is shifting back – J.Crew returned to mailing catalogs just a few months ago after being discontinued for nearly eight years in order to generate more annual revenue. According to J.Crew Men's Creative Director, their catalog is a physical reminder that lends the brand more gravitas, bringing a lift in esteem to the images and clothes. Similarly, Patagonia also developed a new catalog to leverage print's high trust ratings (76% compared to 43% for social media ads).

Reports show more than half of consumers read the print advertisements they receive in the mail from companies they are satisfied with. Why? Because people enjoy the nostalgia of fingering through the pages of a catalog. By engaging more of the senses, like touch and smell, brands can establish a longer-lasting impression.

My own company, PostcardMania, which has been a leader in direct mail marketing for 27 years, can confirm that mail is on the upward trend. Since 2020, PostcardMania's annual revenue has grown an average of 17% each year. In the decade previous (2009-2019), annual revenue growth averaged only 4.67%. That's a 264% increase in our growth rate.

In fact, direct mail ad spend actually grew last year by 12.9% in the third quarter for the first time in more than two years.

I suggest trying to diversify your ad spend and invest in direct mail to see if it will improve your overall growth as the trend to unplug from the digital world continues.

Truly maximize your marketing returns by combining the best of digital automation and traditional

Often, an old item can be refurbished into a new treasure, like refinishing an antique chest or adding embellishments to a vintage jacket.

The same is being done with traditional advertising channels – especially direct mail.

The “old” direct mail meant high-volume printing requirements, so you’d have to print and mail thousands of postcards at a time. However, the “new” direct mail is individual and responsive to consumer behavior, meaning you only mail a single piece to someone when they take a specific action or a trigger is activated. For example, if someone abandons a shopping cart or becomes a new lead, or if a current lead goes a week without responding to phone calls or emails, they would all get a single postcard following up with them specifically.

These triggers work through a direct mail automation platform that connects to your website or CRM. Some companies charge fees for a setup, but I recommend avoiding this if you can. Ideally, you only want to pay for the mail you send.

Related: How to Boost Your Business With Direct Mail Automation and Retargeting – a Detailed Beginner’s Guide

Triggered mail is responsive to prospects’ actions (or inaction), which also means it’s incredibly scalable and budget-friendly, because you can easily control how many pieces you mail every month.

One of my clients in the HVAC industry reported great success with their triggered mail campaign that targeted website visitors. Any time someone visited their website, they received a postcard within 24-48 hours. That campaign, in conjunction with digital ads and traditional direct mail, resulted in \$285,000 in revenue!

Like this client, I foresee many businesses this year combining both old and new marketing methods to better reach prospects and customers. The key is testing, tracking and trying new trends!

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