

Gen Z, Millennials & Snail Mail

It might seem counterintuitive at first: in an age defined by smartphones, social media, and streaming content, are Millennials and Gen Z really paying attention to direct mail? The answer, backed by both behavioral studies and marketing results, is yes—and in many cases, they're more engaged with physical mail than older generations. This is the first generation to grow up in a fully digital world, but that very saturation may be part of the reason why paper stands out. When you've spent a lifetime deleting emails, swiping past ads, and managing notifications, there's something novel—and even meaningful—about holding a well-designed piece of mail in your hands.

Younger audiences tend to view direct mail as more trustworthy than digital communication, which can often feel intrusive or disposable. There's also a deeper emotional response triggered by tangible media. A printed piece can feel personal, intentional, and real in ways that pixels often don't. And importantly, direct mail doesn't operate in isolation anymore: it now often includes digital bridges like QR codes or personalized URLs, which create a seamless connection between the physical and digital worlds—exactly the kind of hybrid interaction that resonates with younger, tech-savvy consumers. Far from being outdated, direct mail has evolved—and when used thoughtfully, it captures attention in ways that digital channels alone can't. For Millennials and Gen Z, paper isn't old-fashioned—it's refreshing.

Key Findings of recent studies:

- Millennials' Engagement: 75% say receiving personal mail makes them feel special, and 62% have visited a store after receiving mail. [1]
- Neuromarketing Study: Adults aged 18–41 spent more time with physical ads than digital, and more than older adults. [2]
- Gen Z: Over half enjoy mailed ads and connect them to emotional significance. [3]

Sources

[1] USPS Delivers – Millennials and Mail: <https://www.uspsdelivers.com/millennials-and-mail-5-myths-and-the-truth-behind-them>

[2] USPS OIG – Advertising Effectiveness and Age: <https://www.uspsoig.gov/reports/white-papers/advertising-effectiveness-and-age>

[3] USPS OIG – Gen Z and the Mail: <https://www.uspsoig.gov/sites/default/files/reports/2023-01/RISC-WP-20-009.pdf>



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