

Commentary by

competiscan



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THE MODERN MAILER IN 2021

January 2021

The direct mail industry saw its fair share of unexpected impacts in 2020; disruption to expected mail volumes and marketing efforts, Postmaster General changes, and who can forget the historical mail-in election voting that riddled the USPS with logistical challenges to close out the year. But as we look ahead, there is a renewed sense to establish stability again in 2021. From a marketing standpoint, this means reengaging direct mail as part of your marketing mix and finding a fresh perspective on design and targeting strategies to meet your audience at-home with exciting and relevant offers.

Drive engagement through your call to action.

Direct mail is a tested and proven strategy. When done correctly by focusing on the offer, targeting, and the ability to generate a call to action, it can result in high response rates and positive return on investment. While design and format play a part, there lies a great opportunity to evolve your mailers in ways that capitalize on new advancements, notably with the call to action.

It doesn't hurt that the USPS has also continued its promotional 2% postage discount in 2021 for their Emerging and Advanced Technology Program. This discount is offered to those that include the use of Video in Print, Near Field Communication, Augmented Reality and the latest addition of Respond Fast's first to market technology, Voice Activated Call to Action™ (VACTA).

This technology allows consumers to respond to a mail offer using a smart speaker, either Amazon Alexa or Google Assistant. When the unique code is spoken, the offer is delivered through text or email directly to the recipient, making the process as smooth and seamless as consumers have come to expect from other marketing channels.

Welcome to a better way to refinance your mortgage.


Sure, refinancing to a lower rate can save you big bucks. But the lender you use can make all the difference. Here's how you can come out ahead with SoFi:

- Fast and easy application.** ▶ Our digital platform saves you time and helps you avoid hassles.
- Low, competitive rates.** ▶ Check yours in 2 minutes, with no impact on your credit score.*
- No hidden fees.** ▶ And no pre-payment penalties.
- Help when you need it.** ▶ Your dedicated Mortgage Loan Officer can walk you through each step.

—

Check your rate in 2 minutes.

Find out how low you could go at SoFi.com/MyHomeRefi2

 Want to find out more? Tell your smart speaker to "open Respond Fast" and use the phrase "Mortgage Savings."

SoFi Oct. 2020

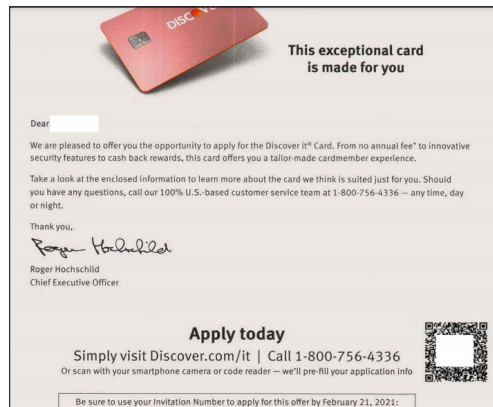
Want to find out more? Tell your smart speaker to "open Respond Fast" and use the phrase "Mortgage Savings."

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Additionally, QR codes have been around for a while now and still have a place as part of the call to action. More thoughtful ways should be considered with how to engage users with the code through convenient and time-saving actions.

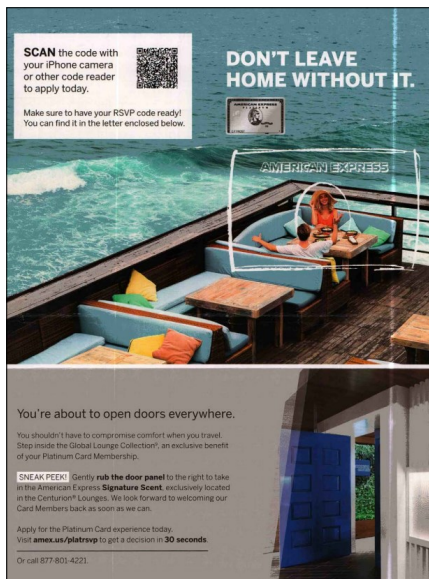
Discover, for example, has used the QR code to assist with pre-filling the card application. We also see the QR code being used to easily download coupons or mobile apps, pay bills, and schedule appointments.



Discover Dec. 2020

Scan with your smartphone camera or code reader - we'll pre-fill your application info

Direct mail offers the ability to engage the senses.



Direct mail is tactile and can evoke the senses in ways other marketing can't. American Express has gone as far as using scratch and sniff mailers for their Platinum Card to create a sensory connection to their signature scent and the experience of sitting in their Centurion Lounge.

This tactic may feel like a novelty, but it can also be memorable. Direct mail has the advantage of offering a longer staying power and tangible presence over email, which at times can have a short shelf life in both the consumer's inbox and conscious memory.

In closing, the opportunity awaits to ensure your strategic marketing efforts in 2021 include attention to how you leverage direct mail to target your prospective and customer audiences. This channel can benefit from advancements in digital technology as much as other marketing channels and it plays a pivotal role in generating new accounts, increasing brand recognition, and showcasing your digital capabilities.

AmEx Nov. 2020

Gently rub the door panel to take in the American Express Signature Scent, exclusively located in the Centurion Lounges.

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