

Direct Mail Trends Report 2024

DBS Datamarketing Ltd



Introduction

- Direct Mail (DM) remains an essential channel in 2025 for reaching and engaging diverse audiences, bridging digital and physical touchpoints with measurable impact.
- At DBS Datamarketing Ltd, we pride ourselves on empowering our clients with cutting-edge insights, supported by data from JICMAIL, Market Reach, and our own campaigns. This ensures you stay ahead of the curve in leveraging DM for maximum impact.
- This report explores the unparalleled ability of DM to create meaningful connections, drive tangible results, and sustain brand visibility, backed by case studies, campaign analysis, and actionable takeaways from evolving market trends.



Look out for these
images for
digestible bite-
size facts!

Direct Mail's Strength In Engagement and ROI in 2024



Direct mail continues to prove its value as a versatile tool capable of achieving measurable impact across various demographic segments. Campaigns that incorporate DM see a **52%** higher likelihood of reporting ROI benefits – a statistic that underscores DM's effectiveness as a complement to digital campaigns.

Direct mail boasts an open rate of 80-90%, compared to email's 20-30%



With **95%** of mail engaged with and an average attention span of over two minutes per interaction, direct mail secures consumer attention at a highly competitive cost-per-minute rate.

Nearly two-thirds of recipients report that mail attracts their undivided attention



Notably, direct mail appeals across all age groups, particularly resonating with younger demographics who engage with physical mail as a novelty in today's digital world. This trend is bolstered by the finding that **62%** of consumers who responded to direct mail ended up making a purchase, demonstrating the channel's potency in driving action.


57% of individuals aged 18 to 34 find direct mail extremely helpful

Conversion Power: From Engagement to Purchase

- The core objective for many of our clients is conversion, and DM has shown its strength in bridging offline and online channels seamlessly.

In the first quarter of 2024, DM spurred a **6% purchase rate**, marking a **43% year-over-year increase**. Nearly half of these conversions occurred online, while **32% were in-store**, highlighting the channel's role in omnichannel marketing.

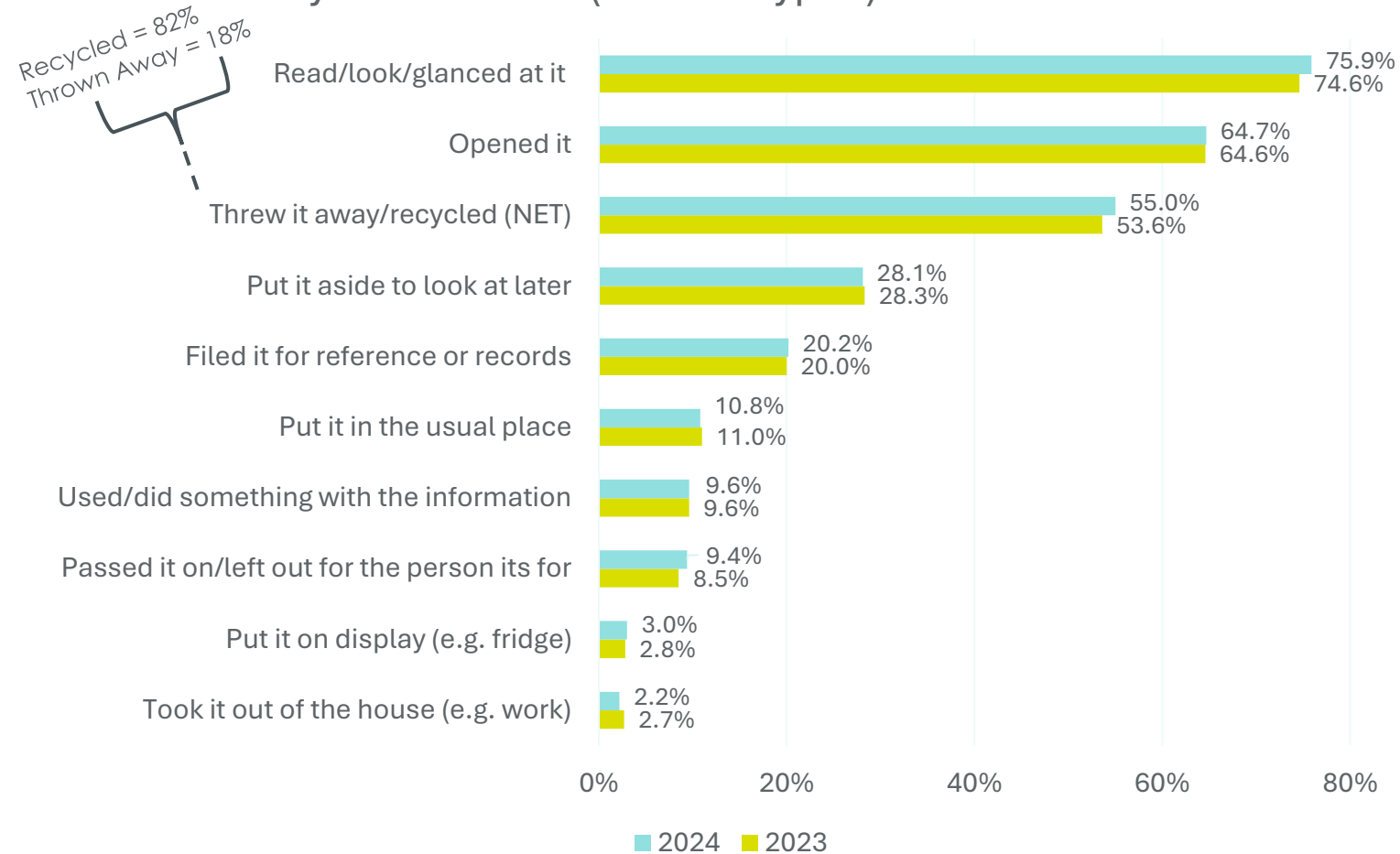
With an impressive **38% conversion rate** from DM-driven website visits to purchases, direct mail effectively directs traffic, converts leads, and supports multichannel strategies.



46% of these purchases occurred online, while 32% took place in-store, underscoring direct mail's effectiveness in driving both digital and physical sales

Mail Interaction Rates

Physical Actions (All Mail Types) % Of Mail Items



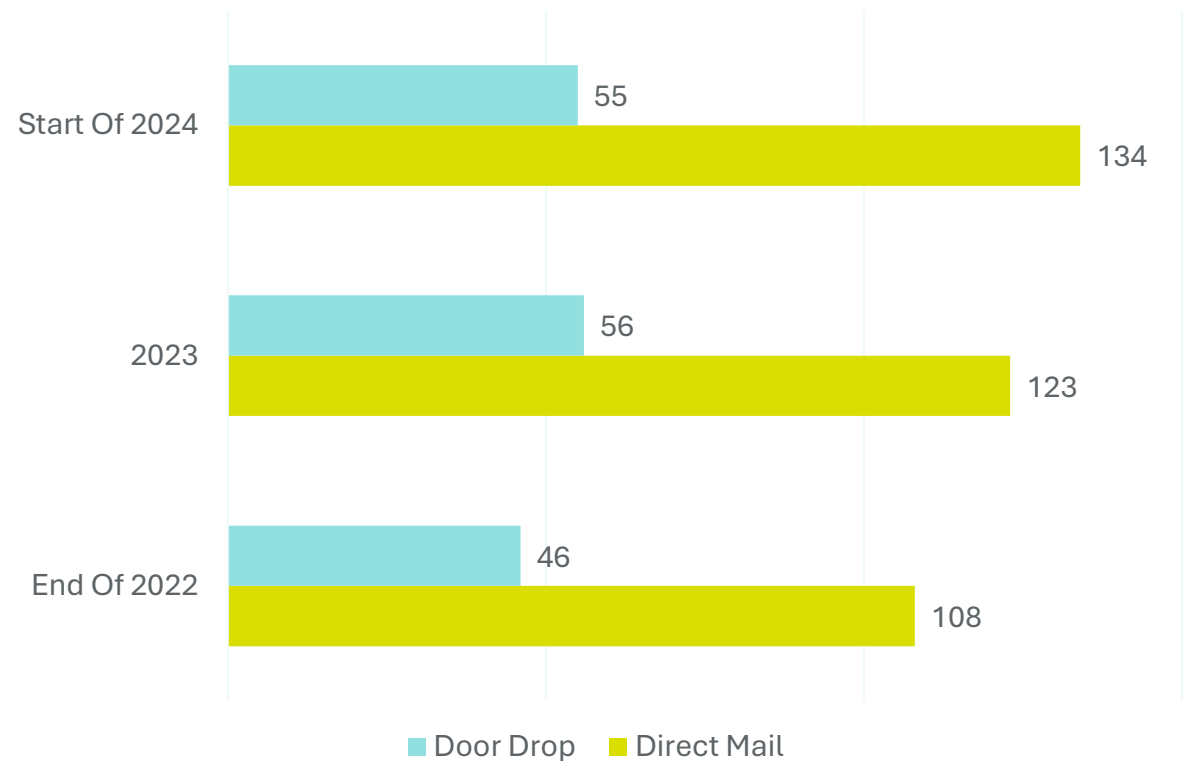
- The data shows that mail interactions remain stable year-on-year, with slight increases in key actions like reading and passing on mail to others (up by 1 percentage point).
- Notably, **82%** of discarded mail is recycled, reinforcing mail's sustainability.
- This consistency highlights direct mail's reliability, especially as other channels experience declines.

High Engagement

Attention remains strong across the mail channel. It should be noted that attention metrics represent interactions with the mail item across any household member that interacted with that item.

Direct Mail outperforms Door Drop consistently in engagement, with over double the attention time at the start of 2024 compared to Door Drop.

Attention (seconds interacted with per item)



Personalised and Data-Driven Campaigns

In 2024, direct mail remains a critical tool for driving personalised, meaningful consumer interactions. According to Market Reach's research, direct mail effectively balances consumer trust, emotional engagement, and measurable outcomes, making it an indispensable component of modern marketing strategies.

➤ Land Rover Case Study

- **Objective:** Simplify the customer journey for Land Rover's highly customisable New Defender by engaging busy customers with a memorable experience.
- **Approach:**
 - Designed an interactive mailer highlighting the Defender's ability to handle extreme 45-degree inclines.
 - Recipients activated a button on the mailer, prompting a personalised follow-up via SMS and email, seamlessly connecting them to product experts.
 - Tactile elements and visuals mirrored real-world driving conditions to captivate attention.

▶ Driving Engagement & ROI

- Data-Driven Customisation - Personalised mail enhances consumer connection, demonstrated by examples like Land Rover's interactive mail campaign, achieving:
 - ✓ **50% response rate**
 - ✓ **49:1 ROI**
- Commercial Outcomes - Catalogues generate 3.35 minutes of consumer attention and are revisited over 8.28 days on average (JICMAIL data). Conversions: High engagement drives web visits, in-store purchases, and sustained brand loyalty.

DM Tactics For 2025

Direct mail continues to evolve in 2024, driven by new players in the industry, including technology-driven start-ups, digital marketing firms, and boutique creative agencies. These entrants are leveraging advanced technologies and fresh strategies to bridge physical and digital channels, setting new benchmarks in innovation.

Emerging agencies specialising in experiential marketing and performance-based advertising are introducing innovative DM formats, integrating augmented reality (AR) and QR codes to create interactive and engaging consumer experiences.

Omnichannel Synergy - DM improves engagement by up to **63%** when combined with digital campaigns, driving actions such as website visits and purchases.

Innovative Tactics Transforming DM :

AR & QR Codes

Enabling customers to seamlessly transition from physical mail to digital interactions.

Programmed Mail

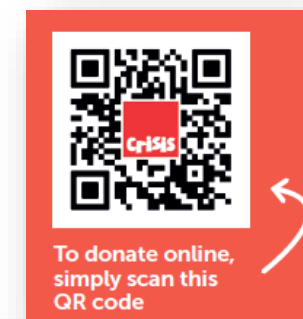
Data-driven mailings customised for consumer preferences, increasing relevance and response rates.

Tactile & Memorable Engagement

DM's physical nature continues to captivate attention for longer durations, averaging **132 seconds** of interaction time per item (JICMAIL Q2 2024).

Items such as personalised URLs and interactive elements enhance recall and prompt revisits.

The QR code examples below demonstrate how businesses can effortlessly guide customers from traditional physical communication to streamlined digital engagement, simplifying the transition :



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Engagement + Effectiveness in 2024

Lifespan & Retention

DM formats an average of **7.3-day lifespan**, marking the highest in seven quarters (JICMAIL Q2 2024).

File-away rates exceed **20%** showcasing its tangible, lasting value in consumer homes.

Driving Commercial Outcomes

38% conversion rate from DM-driven web visits to purchase (JICMAIL Q1 2024).

Notable campaigns, such as interactive DM by major brands, demonstrate remarkable ROI.

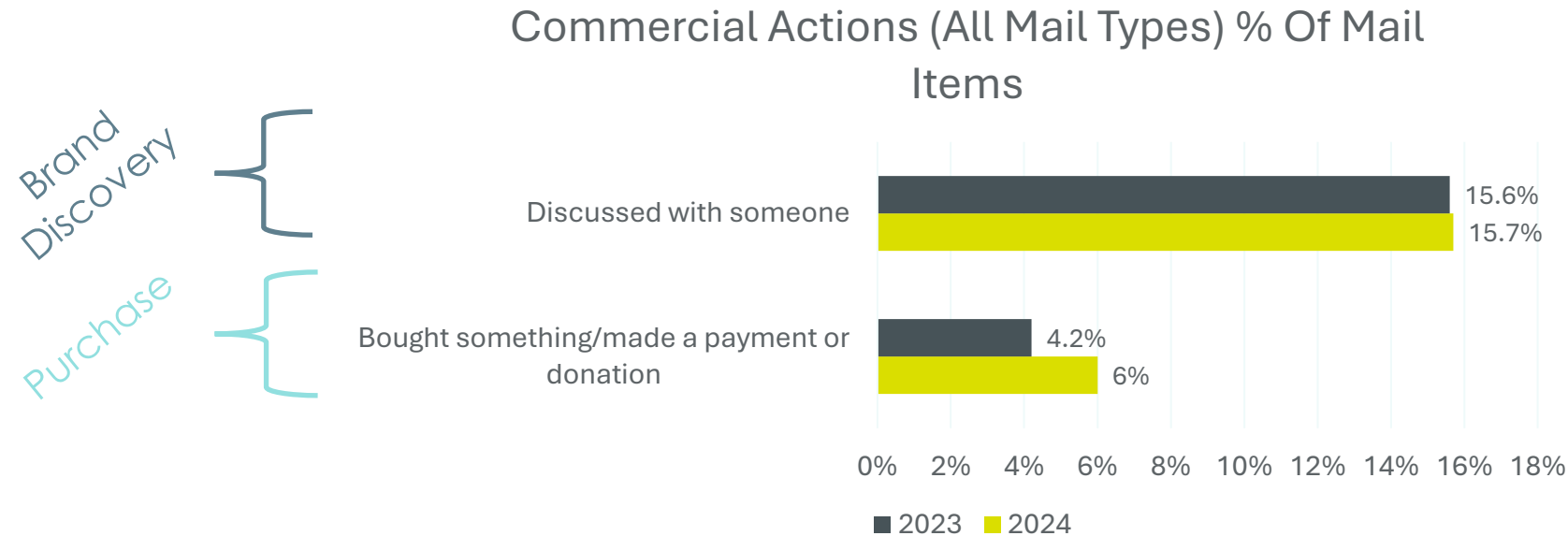
Highlights of Engagement & Effectiveness in 2024

Mail's effectiveness in driving lower funnel metrics that continues to grow. Purchases driven by mail are up to **6%**, representing **43%** growth year on year.

46% of these purchases are fulfilled online vs **32%** in store. The conversion rate from online visit to purchase is **38%**.

Mail engagement remained strong even as the panel had more volume to sort through with lifespan and attention increased across all mail types year on year. Non-political mail recorded an **8%** increase in purchase effectiveness and a **3%** increase in website traffic.

Mail's Effectiveness At Prompting Purchases On The Rise



- The graph shows the growing impact of direct mail (DM) in driving commercial actions, with a significant rise in its effectiveness from 2023 to 2024.
- The percentage of recipients making purchases, payments, or donations after receiving mail increased by **43%**, from **4.2%** in 2023 to **6%** in 2024. This highlights the rising power of mail as a media channel, especially in prompting immediate actions.
- As DM's influence continues to grow, it becomes an even more valuable tool in multi-channel marketing, driving both brand awareness and conversion, with numbers reflecting its increasing importance in generating tangible results.

Resilience Amid Economic Shifts Across 2024

Navigating Economic Uncertainty

Direct mail remains resilient amidst inflation and economic challenges, offering brands a trusted way to connect with consumers. Its tangible nature builds trust and familiarity, driving purchasing decisions during uncertain times.

Building Trust & Engagement

Direct mail guides consumers through complex decision-making, particularly in sectors like financial services. Its ability to foster emotional connections makes it a key tool for trust-sensitive industries.

Driving Measurable Results

Direct mail consistently converts attention into action. In 2024, its lifespan in homes reached record levels, with over 20% of mail saved for future reference, enhancing brand visibility and recall.

Innovating With DM

The integration of QR codes, augmented reality, and personalised content bridges the gap between physical and digital, ensuring direct mail remains an indispensable part of omnichannel strategies.

Direct mail delivers resilience, trust, and tangible outcomes, providing its continued value in evolving economic landscapes.

Compliance in 2024



Over the past 12 months, the regulatory landscape around data protection and direct marketing has evolved, bringing greater clarity, fairness, and confidence to businesses using Direct Mail for customer acquisition. These changes are particularly significant for CMOs and marketing agencies, as they reinforce Direct Mail's unique advantages in an era of increasing digital scrutiny.

What's Changed?

Clearer ICO Guidance on Legitimate Interest

The ICO has refined its stance on the use of Legitimate Interest for marketing, making it easier for brands to justify Direct Mail campaigns without needing explicit consent. This clarity provides marketers with a more straightforward compliance framework, reducing uncertainty and enabling greater confidence in campaign planning.

Growing Recognition of Direct Mail's Consumer Trust

Regulatory focus on consumer privacy has highlighted the intrusive nature of digital tracking, strengthening Direct Mail's position as a trusted, transparent, and non-disruptive channel. Unlike digital marketing, which often relies on opaque data collection, Direct Mail aligns naturally with consumer expectations, making it a compliance-friendly choice.

Increased Enforcement Against Rogue Operators

The past year has seen the ICO taking a firmer stance against businesses engaging in unlawful data practices, particularly in digital marketing. This has led to a cleaner data ecosystem, ensuring that reputable businesses can operate with greater confidence and a lower risk of association with bad actors.

A More Robust Framework for Data Sharing and Partnerships

Updates to industry standards and increased transparency in data supply chains mean that CMOs and agencies can now source and use marketing data with greater assurance. Responsible data providers have strengthened their due diligence and accountability, making high-quality, compliant data more accessible than ever.

What Does This Mean for Marketers?

For brands and agencies considering Direct Mail as a customer acquisition channel or looking to scale their existing efforts, these developments create a safer and more predictable environment. The compliance landscape is now clearer, data quality is higher, and consumer trust in mail remains strong.

With the right strategy, Direct Mail can be a powerful tool in a multi-channel marketing mix, offering a compliant and effective way to engage potential customers. Now is the time to explore its full potential.

Summary

The **2024 Direct Mail Trends Report** underscores the continued effectiveness of direct mail (DM) as a key marketing channel, particularly when integrated with digital campaigns, boosting engagement by **63%**.

Personalisation and innovations like augmented reality (AR) and QR codes have significantly enhanced DM's impact, delivering an impressive **49:1** return on investment. Trust remains a cornerstone, with **71%** of consumers preferring DM over digital alternatives, and **82%** of mail being recycled.

Overall, direct mail continues to demonstrate its critical role in effective, trusted, and sustainable marketing strategies.

