



How Print and Digital Work Together in Marketing

Digital marketing is cost-effective, exciting and essential for businesses with an eye on growth, but print marketing has carved out a unique role in a holistic marketing strategy. Print marketing pieces offer some advantages that digital media can't, acting as a complementary piece of a business's overall marketing plan.

Stephen Cotrupi, Area Sales Manager for Print and Marketing at Staples, has seen firsthand how businesses can use print pieces to create a stronger marketing campaign. Here are a few tips from Cotrupi to keep in mind as you integrate a print and digital marketing strategy for maximum impact.

Create Staying Power

"Print is tangible," Cotrupi emphasizes. "Postcards, brochures, even coupons – people will hold on to these for months." That's a stark contrast from fleeting online experiences like banner ads and promoted tweets that can make it difficult to focus on any one message. A print piece in your customers' hands likely has their attention in way that a digital promotion doesn't. For companies fighting for limited attention, that's critical.

How to Do It Right: Create a compelling message and convey it in both your print and online pieces. To have a truly holistic marketing message, be sure to use the same logo, colors, imagery and wording across all your channels. This will reinforce your message and help break through the clutter.

Rise Above the Noise

The internet has made it much easier to get your message out there, but the very fact that it's easy to post online means that anyone – even businesses that aren't terribly professional or even legitimate – can do it. By contrast, a quality piece of print marketing shows that you've taken the time and effort to produce something worthwhile, which might inspire more people to give your business their consideration. "A direct mail piece tells a potential customer you're real," Cotrupi says. While a professional-looking website is essential, print items take your legitimacy a step further.

How to Do It Right: If you're creating a print marketing piece, don't cut corners. This doesn't mean overly complex designs or lots of features, but you should use professional-grade services and products to make sure your print pieces set your brand apart.



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Track Your ROI Across Media

Knowing how and when a customer interacts with your brand is useful information. While most businesses think of digital tracking, Cotrupi notes that the impact of print combined with digital can be tracked. If you send out a promotion with a particular code attached, you can measure how many customers end up using it. For example, you can note which deals resonate most with direct mail print promos and which ones got the best response through digital channels like emails. In this instance, the printed direct mail piece can also tell you exactly which neighborhoods your customers come from and inform how geography affects your success with specific buyers.

How to Do It Right: Decide on a single promotion and spread the word via print and digital, but use different types of coding for each media form. That will allow you to analyze how well your message resonates and see what patterns emerge.

Drive to Digital Through Print

Visiting a website is often the step that immediately precedes a store visit, phone call or e-commerce purchase. But often, a print piece is the impetus for getting that customer on your site in the first place. Cotrupi cites real estate agents who put personal URLs on fliers that prompt prospects to look them up online; QR codes on business cards that lead to online videos; and the fact that Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn profile information goes on print pieces right along with phone numbers. Print is a powerful driver to your digital presence, he notes.

How to Do It Right: Be selective about which digital channels to emphasize in your print pieces so you don't overwhelm prospects with options. Pick your strongest area of digital marketing – a personal URL, your website, a Facebook business page, etc. – and make that a prominent part of your print item. Add a clear call to action, such as “Read more about our services on our website,” “Fill out our web form to arrange a consultation” or “Follow us on Twitter for more deals.”

With these expert tips, you can bring your message to a much wider audience and track the impact of your efforts.

To learn how Staples can help make your print and digital marketing work together,
call 1-844-243-8645.