



3 KEYS TO AN EFFECTIVE CUSTOMER COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Optimize the channel mix to maximize engagement

YOUR CUSTOMER COMMUNICATION STRATEGY MATTERS MORE THAN EVER

The business landscape is constantly evolving, and, regardless of remote/hybrid/in-office employees, companies must still be able to deliver communications easily and effortlessly to their customers and prospects. That said, how should companies communicate with their customers - print or digital communications (or both)? What are the benefits of each? How do customers even want to receive their communications from your company?

Quadient and IDC set out to find the answers.

During in-depth interviews with Quadient customers, IDC gained insight into everything from current outbound communication volume to key benefits of print and digital communication methods and why each method is preferred. Read on for an in-depth look at the current communication outreach landscape and learn why it is imperative to implement an integrated communication strategy.

Research Details:

IDC QUICK POLL: 2021 U.S. OUTGOING MAIL SURVEY

- 100 respondents, U.S. - based
- Companies with 100+ employees (segmented by company size and vertical)
- Respondent Qualifications: Responsibility or insight into how the organization manages and/or aims to improve the customer experience with knowledge of outbound communications programs.
- Qualitative Research sponsored by Quadient

IDC conducted six in-depth interviews (IDIs) with Quadient customers as a supplement to the Quick Poll structured survey.

Watch the webinar from Quadient and IDC that shares additional research findings and more:

How The Hybrid Workforce Has Changed How We Communicate



THE CURRENT COMMUNICATION OUTREACH MIX

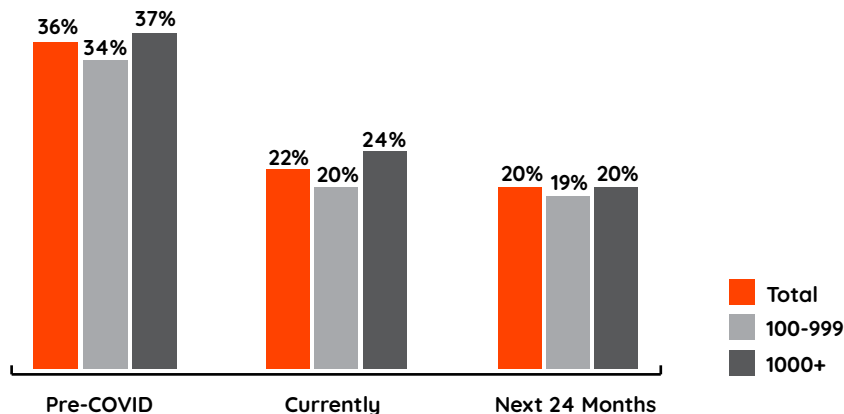
Certain document types (bills, statements, invoices) were already slowly migrating to digital and that will continue. Print is still prevalent for these applications in most verticals due to the need to support certain demographics. Organizations indicate that printed mail generates higher response rates for certain types of marketing materials: direct mail marketing, transactional/promotional outreach, and catalogs/flyers.

As more communications became digital, print took on an allure that had been missing for some time. All the reasons that direct mail used to dominate the marketing mix are new again to digital natives. Print will remain the chosen delivery mechanism for high-value documents, especially for companies with limited access to secure document delivery.

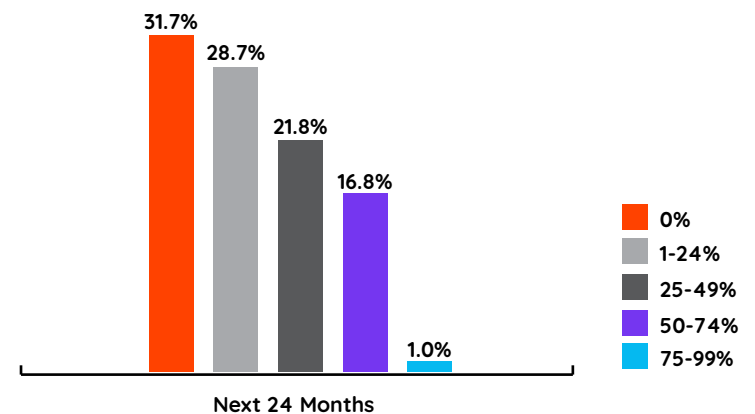
What percent of your organization's communication with customers was/is/will be by printed mail vs. digital mail?

Please consider ALL customer communication, including outbound transactional mail (billing, invoicing, statements), direct marketing (promos and coupons), and other correspondence.

Means by Company Size



Percent Range by Company Size



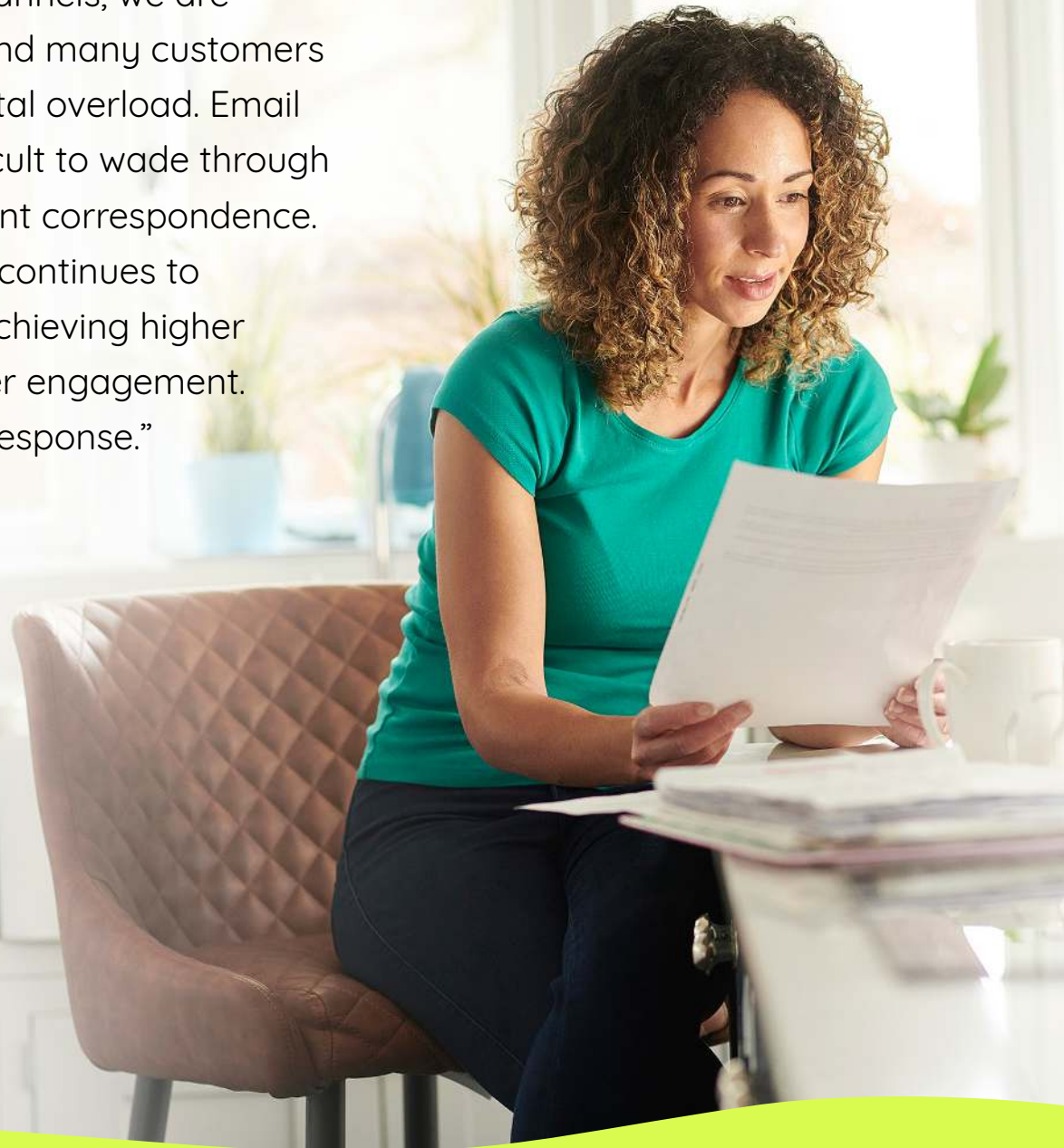
Source: Quick Poll - Quadient Survey, IDC, October, 2021; N = 101

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“With the uptick in use of digital channels, we are starting to hear of digital fatigue and many customers have expressed concerns over digital overload. Email inboxes are full, and it is often difficult to wade through the spam to find critical or important correspondence. Print correspondence (direct mail) continues to get high marks when it comes to achieving higher response rates and better customer engagement. Digital tends to drive more timely response.”

— **Robert Palmer**, Research Vice President,
IDC's Imaging, Printing and Document Solutions
IDC





PRINT AND DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS ARE **BOTH** EFFECTIVE

These two communications connect the company and the customer, yet each comes with distinct benefits.

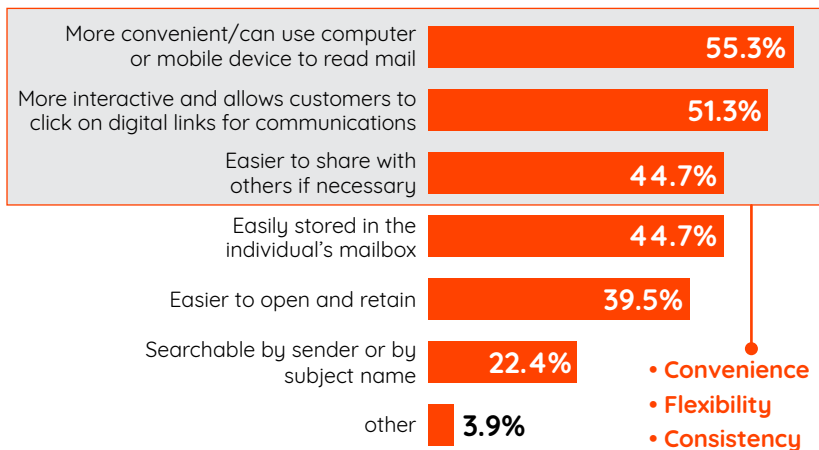
- **Print communications feel more personal (and less like spam), are easier to reference or file, and are easy to understand. Physical mail evokes comfort, trust and familiarity.**
- **Digital communications are convenient, as recipients are able to access the communication from a computer or phone, more interactive and are easy to share. Digital mail is flexible, convenient and easy to share.**

Leverage a mix of print and digital communications at the right time, for the right message, for maximum impact. Maximize the unique attributes to provide a consistent character of communication with customers.

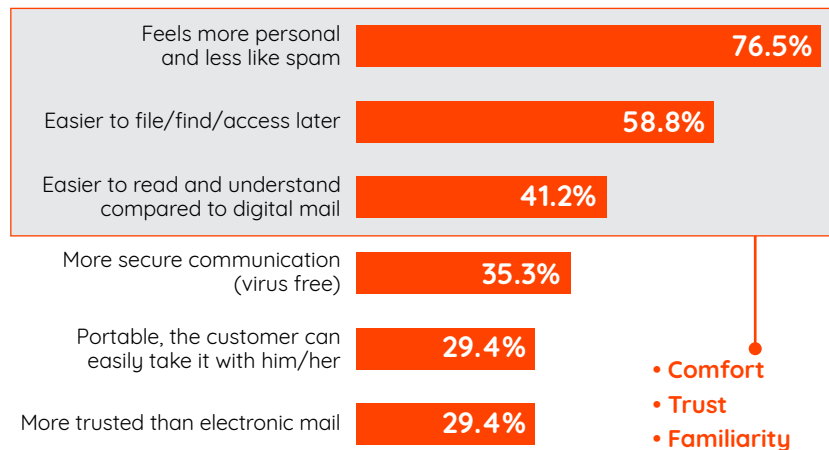
Perceived Customer Benefits: Digital vs Print

Q. What are the main reasons you think print/digital mail is preferred by customers?

Perceived Customer Benefits of Digital



Perceived Customer Benefits of Print



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PREFERENCE: PRINTED MAIL IS PREFERRED AMONG OLDER GENERATIONS

Prefer print communications:

- **Born pre-1928: 85%**
- **Traditionalists (1928-1946): 81%**
- **Baby Boomers (1946-1964): 59%**
- **Gen X (1965-1976): 27%**

Source: Quick Poll - Quadient Survey, IDC, October, 2021 n = 101

PREFERENCE: EMAIL IS OVERWHELMINGLY PREFERRED BY THE YOUNGER GENERATION

Prefer digital communications:

- **Baby Boomers (1946-1964): 40%**
- **Gen X (1965-1976): 71%**
- **GenY/Millennials (1977-1995): 80%**
- **Gen Z (1995-2010): 81%**

Source: Quick Poll - Quadient Survey, IDC, October, 2021 n = 101



of respondents say that customers are overwhelmed with the volume of digital mail.

Source: Quick Poll - Quadient Survey, IDC, October, 2021 n = 101

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THE IMPORTANCE OF A BALANCED OUTREACH APPROACH

While organizations are investing in digital technologies, printed mail continues to offer a compelling value. Many organizations have found success in leveraging multiple touchpoints and channels to engage with their customers. Consumers want the ability to choose their delivery channels and have a heightened expectation for personalization and interaction. Companies must take advantage of the benefits of print and digital communication methods within a personalized outreach strategy to exceed their customer expectations and meet goals.

Companies must:

- Understand the importance of meeting customers where they are
- Acknowledge the need for a balanced approach to customer outreach
- Weigh the impacts of digital fatigue
- Match communication channels with customer preference to achieve optimal results

How important is it to have a balance of digital and paper choice in your organization's customer communications strategy?

41.6% — Important

33.7% — Very Important

21.8% — Somewhat Important

3% — Not at all Important

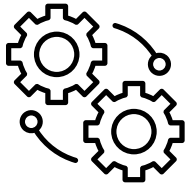
75% of respondents believe that a balanced communications mix is either important or very important. Source: Quick Poll - Quadient Survey, IDC, October, 2021 n = 101.

We see no increase in digital formats. Our company is actually trying to go more digital, but there is huge customer pushback. — Survey Participant

Institutional clients almost all get e-billing compared to individual clients. Private clients are more paper heavy. — Survey Participant

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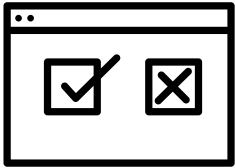
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INSTITUTE AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

There needs to be action behind every customer communication. All organizations must know each customer's communication preference (print, digital, or both) and understand the customer journey to ensure every touchpoint is relevant and timely.

What to keep in mind when planning your communication strategy:



- **Choice**

Customers demand choice. Print and mail is still a highly rated channel for communications, and it is not going away anytime soon. At the same time, digital communications provide value-added benefits that paper is unable to match in certain scenarios. A balanced approach is crucial.



- **Know your customer**

Some customers prefer print because they trust it more. Some prefer print because of regulatory concerns. Other customers prefer email and digital communication because it is portable and easy to consume. Know your customer and demographics to understand what they prefer.



- **Digital fatigue/overload**

Customers are feeling digital fatigue and are embracing offline, tangible experiences. Print, direct mail, promotional, and marketing pieces deliver a unique, engaging experience. Important or business critical communication may get lost in the electronic deluge.



- **Presence**

Print communication stands out in the digital world. Print is sticky in the minds of customers. Print is tactile. Print is emotional. Print has longevity. Print offers a clear call to action, especially around billing.

Companies must be strategic and nimble in order to exceed customer expectations today. That's why it's critical to partner with a company that understands these challenges and offers a suite of connected solutions to solve them. Designed for businesses of every size, Quadient offers a range of intuitive solutions that provides the highest level of productivity and dependability.



“Digital channels are most effective when combined with physical communications and self-service options. The most successful companies are increasing the total number of communications and interactions with their customers and doing so in a thoughtful way that keeps the consumer well informed and engaged, while not overwhelming them with information. We find that simple, understandable messages, with clear calls to action, are best received by customers and lead to the most positive business impacts.”

— **Avi Greenfield**, Vice President
of Product Management, CXM
Quadient

ESTABLISH A COHESIVE CUSTOMER COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Built on generations of personal and practical experience and supported by cutting-edge technology, Quadient's suite of best-in-class hardware and software solutions help communications get out the door faster, with complete integrity. Our employee-friendly solutions help companies respond and adapt quickly to evolving communication strategies, changing customer preferences, nuanced compliance requirements, and increasing market demands.

Smart Mailing and Shipping Solutions

Quadient mailing solutions put your customer's experience first. Accurate, timely, personalized, and low-cost mail is the foundation of your most important customer communications. Streamline mail production at every stage, from filling envelopes automatically to rapidly posting outbound mail.

Intelligent Communication Automation for Enterprise and SMBs

Quadient's enterprise customer communications management (CCM) solutions Inspire Flex (any-premise) and Inspire Evolve (cloud) have transformed customer experience for thousands of companies around the world by empowering non-technical business users to safely design, manage and deliver personalized, compliant communications across all channels from one centralized platform.

Our comprehensive intelligent document automation platform for SMB's, Impress, helps companies automate their entire customer communication workflow, eliminating manual, low-value tasks, and deliver communications via any combination of channels - print, digital or remote fulfillment.

Journey Mapping, Analytics and Orchestration

Our cloud-based customer journey management solution, Inspire Journey, integrates mapping, analytics, and orchestration technologies to power exceptional customer-first experiences. Inspire Journey helps companies:

- Create dynamic journey maps
- Connect personalized communications to every touchpoint
- Break down silos
- Collaborate efficiently and share real-time feedback
- Empower business users to enhance the customer experience with data-driven next-best-actions

Discover how Quadient will enhance agility and improve your communication strategy, visit quadient.com.



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About Quadient®

Quadient is the driving force behind the world's most meaningful customer experiences. By focusing on Intelligent Communication Automation, Parcel Locker Solutions and Mail-Related Solutions, Quadient helps hundreds of thousands of customers worldwide simplify the connection between people and what matters. For more information about Quadient, visit quadient.com.