

SORTED

Discovering the power and performance of mail **Issue - January 24**

The Strategic
Mailing
Partnership™



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THE ATTENTION EQUATION

Exploring the value
of attention for
non-screen media

**HOW TO
COMMUNICATE
PRICE INCREASES**
Without alienating
customers

**OPTIMISTIC
HORIZONS**
Mail's resilience and
relevance in 2024

**STORY
TIME**
Tell your sustainable
story through paper
communications



DRIVING CHANGE THROUGH INNOVATION INSPIRATION AND EDUCATION

It was another challenging year for our industry, but it was faced with resilience and determination. My vision for the Strategic Mailing Partnership (SMP) is for it to be the engine room of the mail industry, driving change, retaining and growing volume sustainably through innovation, inspiration and education, supporting each other and uniting us as one community.

I was overwhelmingly proud to look back at our successes and see SMP membership increased by a staggering 96% since March 2022. None of this would be possible without the support from our board and the participation of our members, thank you.

We also saw 141 new JICMAIL certifications within our membership, with great attendance at our educational webinars throughout the year. There is a keen appetite for growth and knowledge within our industry and I am thrilled that the SMP can offer these development opportunities.

We also hosted our biggest ever annual awards and networking evening in 2023 attracting over 400 people. I was blown away by the amazing talent that surrounded me.

At the awards, we introduced two new vital categories: Bright Futures and Sustainability. My hope for these awards is that we can inspire and pioneer the next generation of our industry and continue to drive forward as an innovative, dynamic and fun sector to make a career.

As an industry, we are tackling major issues, like sustainability, head on and pioneering new and innovative approaches across the board. 2023 saw our Sustainability Super Hub launch to unite a team

of sustainability experts across industry bodies (DMA, IPIA, BPIF, Two Sides and ourselves) to help lead the way to a more sustainable future.

Looking ahead in 2024, it's no secret the economic climate is unpredictable and an election on the horizon could drive brands to hang fire and stick to what they know rather than taking unnecessary risks. When actually, this year is a real opportunity to push mail as a channel - with the adoption of marketing automation technology, brands are looking to cut costs, provide ultimate flexibility and make late decisions on media choices.

There are also opportunities within retail, at present most retail media offers are digital inventory or in-store advertising opportunities - this could include mail if the capability could be provided, and margin can be made. We are also gearing up for the total removal of cookies in 2025, brands must act now to build their first party data and permissions to ensure they can maintain reach in the marketplace.

In this issue we're exploring all these areas and more, I hope you enjoy!

Lucy Swanston

Chair, Strategic Mailing Partnership

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REVIVE RANGE

MEMBERS CAN MAKE MORE OF MAIL INSIGHT WITH THE LAUNCH OF JICMAIL DISCOVERY 3.0

Members can put their direct mail campaigns ahead of the rest with even greater JICMAIL insight, following the release of the new, improved version of its Discovery data platform.

Tara Pickles, customer support manager at JICMAIL, summarises what Discovery 3.0 can now offer users:

In partnership with DataTile, Discovery 3.0 offers greater flexibility and advanced functionality to help harness the power of JICMAIL data in pitching, planning and measuring Direct Mail, Business Mail, Partially Addressed Mail, and Door Drop campaigns, even more seamlessly than before.

What's New in JICMAIL Discovery 3.0

The core data set remains the same, to replicate the look and feel of the original JICMAIL Discovery. But it also incorporates new data and functionality, including:

- The ability to create customised target audiences using a combination of demographic, household and geodemographic variables.
- Attention reporting to gauge the time spent with mail across key mail types, audiences and advertisers. For the first time, users will now be able to see not only the actions taken with mail in the home but also how long panellists spent with those items. Members can find out more about JICMAIL Attention Research by downloading The Time We Spend with Mail:
- The ability to assess key commercial and physical actions, and the mail content drivers of each one by customised target audiences.
- New mail journey charts – now with two different views according to user preferences.
- New improved competitor insight charts, also including Attention Metrics.



- An Advanced Analytics function to enable users to analyse advertiser and mail item level data in industry-leading data analysis and cross-tabbing software.
- Improved system intelligence to remember the last data run performed.
- Faster data load speeds, so much quicker delivery of key mailing metrics.
- PowerPoint chart download functionality, making it easier than ever to get JICMAIL data into pitches, proposals and presentations.

Registered users will automatically be redirected to Discovery 3.0 when navigating from the main JICMAIL site and be able to log in using their existing username and password.

Access JICMAIL Discovery by using this QR code:



SMP members who are non JICMAIL subscribers, can get in touch with tara@jicmail.org.uk to request the details of how to access the JICMAIL data, a training session on the new version of Discovery, or the new Advanced Analytics system.

Short Support Videos

To support users JICMAIL has recorded several new, short explainer videos – one for each different feature. These explain how to use the new tool and help make the most of the data provided.

These tutorials can be accessed via this QR code here:



There is also a short video from Ian Gibbs, director of data leadership & learning at JICMAIL, demonstrating the new improved functionality:





HAVE WE GOT YOUR ATTENTION?

The concept of attention in advertising has been around for a few years, supported by numerous studies from industry powerhouses such as Lumen, Ebiquity, and PwC. In a highly fragmented media environment with an ever more distracted audience, it makes sense that there has been a lot written on this subject. But in a screen-focused world, non-screen media is not always included or considered. Here, Philip Ricketts, wholesale commercial director at Marketreach, explores 'The Attention Advantage', a groundbreaking report from Marketreach and WARC.

Defining attention

When we talk about attention in the context of advertising, we are talking about the fact that people have a choice between media options which they can be selective about. For example, it can be the choice between watching the TV that is on in front of you, your phone in your hand or the magazine by your side, all three are trying (in an inanimate sort of way) to engage you and grab your attention.

However, your attention is finite, and you only have so much to give. The one thing you are paying attention to is what is being measured, what is important and what every advertiser is after. Historically, media was measured by ad impressions or opportunities to see. But with an explosion in media channels fighting for that attention, this has raised questions about whether viewability is the same as actually viewing. And, when channels do get eyes on ads, does this actually deliver results?

Therefore, we at Marketreach needed to develop an approach to give us a voice in the attention conversation and show how the mail channel stacks up against all the others within the media sector."

The Attention Advantage

Our independent research set out to quantify the time people spend engaging with mail, with a view to creating robust results to reflect the true power of mail's engagement. There is already an existing attention measure provided by JICMAIL, the industry standard audience measurement data source for mail, which has laid the foundations for attention on mail. JICMAIL's attention measures currently report attention by mail type from between 55 and 159 seconds, truly standout metrics within a media industry that is arguing the difference between two and three seconds.

What guided this further research was a desire to gain insight and provide real life behaviour-based metrics on the power of mail to hold readers' attention. We wanted to further explore how much attention people are giving their mail to understand how mail achieves that and what value it delivers; and establish how this compares to other media.

To meet our vision, our research partner, Blue Yonder, deployed an innovative three-step approach. The use of its innovative Clickscape button enabled respondents to click when they started and stopped looking at a mail item. This

was combined with post interaction surveys with participants to assess impact as close to the moment of truth as possible. This in-depth field work was then followed by a one-off final survey examining overall behaviour around mail, all of which led to some fascinating conclusions.

The result, 'The Attention Advantage' report, released in October 2023 by our partners, WARC, is a persuasive exploration into the intricate relationship between attention and mail. The paper delves deep into the mechanisms of advertising, attention and mail, shedding light on the complex interconnections that govern our modern consumer landscape. This work is the result of dedicated months of research by Blue Yonder and rigorous inquiry by WARC and Marketreach, offering insights that have the potential to reshape the strategies and practices of advertisers, marketers, media and communication professionals alike.

Key findings

- Nearly two-thirds of recipients say mail attracts their undivided attention
- The average time spent with direct mail is 108 seconds
- Over 80% of mail delivered in an envelope is opened
- Mail persuaded 16% of recipients to consider the brand, leading 5% to a transaction
- Mail is one of the most cost-efficient media channels for capturing attention
- Mail is effective at delivering high quality of attention

80%

of mail delivered in an envelope is opened



Attention = impact

What makes mail truly exceptional is its compatibility with other media. In a world inundated with messages that often feel overwhelming and intrusive, mail provides a refreshing pause – time for recipients to read, contemplate, and revisit often multiple times. It leverages the awareness generated by other media to guide consumers toward crucial actions. Our study reveals that mail captures attention not just for a fleeting moment but for extended periods, ranging from two to 10 minutes. Moreover, the more attention mail commands, the greater impact it has, creating abundant opportunities to strategically incorporate it into media plans.

For many brands, mail's influence becomes most evident during the final stages of a transaction. However, its ability to capture attention offers advantages throughout the marketing funnel. Mail can raise brand awareness by delivering the complete narrative of something new, ensuring the message is opened and read. It can foster consideration by using QR codes to engage customers and gather additional information. Mail can also propel consumers closer to intent by transforming brand interest into meaningful engagement, be it through a test drive, recipe download, catalogue request, or in-store visit.

So, the next time you're searching for a fresh, impactful, and imaginative media approach to captivate consumers and prompt them to take notice, focus, engage and act, it's imperative to recognise the potential of mail. It's not merely a message on paper – it's a powerful tool capable of leaving a lasting impression and eliciting meaningful responses. Read the report here:



All images on pages 4&5 credit to WARC



HELPING CUSTOMERS TELL THE GREAT SUSTAINABLE STORY OF THEIR PAPER COMMUNICATION

Love Paper®, created by the not-for-profit campaign Two Sides, is a global initiative that explains to consumers the sustainable and attractive attributes of print, paper and paper-based packaging. Underpinning it is a highly recognisable logo that printers and mail producers can offer to customers to feature on their printed products so consumers know they are making a positive, environmentally friendly decision.

Paper is renewable, recyclable and the natural ally to new ideas and creativity. Paper is a wood product and, as such, is a natural and renewable material. As young trees grow, they absorb CO2 from the atmosphere. Furthermore, as a wood product, paper also continues to store carbon throughout its lifetime.

Facing facts

The aim of Love Paper is to present the sustainable facts around print, paper, and paper packaging in a simple and consumer friendly way. It seeks to tell consumers across the world the positive messages about paper, print and paper packaging, from its environmental credentials to its ability to improve mental wellbeing, help with learning and enhance creativity.

Through adverts in national newspapers and magazines, social media and supported by a website: www.lovepaper.org, the campaign reaches more than 20 million consumers every month in the UK. Key sustainability messages explain the high recycling

rates of 71% for paper and 82% for paper packaging, the highest of any material in the world, and the fact that European forests are growing in size by the equivalent of 1,500 football pitches every day.

Why your customers should use the 'Love Paper' logo

Increasingly, brands and organisations want to explain the sustainability of their media choices and use of paper communications. The Love Paper logo is a simple, eye-catching way to tell their customers that they care about the environment and use products that are from an inherently sustainable source. The logo's subtle design and colour variations are an effective yet unintrusive addition to any paper product, from printed catalogues and books to direct mail and product packaging.

A simple way for printers, packaging companies and mailing houses to add value to their customers, is to help them tell the sustainable story and introduce them to the idea of using the Love Paper logo."

How to access the Love Paper logo

The Love Paper logo is a registered trademark of Two Sides. The logo can only be used on paper-based products which are sourced from sustainably managed forests, or made of recycled fibre, and are fully recyclable.



www.lovepaper.org

To request the use of the Love Paper logo please register at www.lovepaper.org/logo

To find out more about Two Sides and to use the resources created to help tell the great sustainable story of print and physical mail, contact: enquiries@twosides.info





HOW TO COMMUNICATE PRICE INCREASES WITHOUT SPOOKING YOUR CUSTOMERS

In a challenging time with rising production costs, it's easy for brands to be spooked by headlines around price increases that further reinforce the price premium on mail. We spoke to Lucy Swanston, chair of the SMP, about how to help customers understand and accept price increases.

Approaching price increases

“Communicating price increases can be a delicate task,” shares Lucy, “but with a thoughtful and transparent communication strategy, you can try to minimise the impact on your customers' perception by approaching your marketing in a more positive way.”

From a marketing perspective, price increases are “a compelling event and time bound”, Lucy finds, which “makes it an ideal subject line ‘to get in quick’ before the prices go up.” However, Lucy says the same approach could be achieved by focusing subject lines around optimising mail expenditure or annual health checks.

“This way brands don't get spooked by the headlines of a price increase. This is what we need to try and avoid.” Lucy explains, “Messages like these don't help our industry or mail producers at all in keeping volume. Do you ever see communications that say Google or ITV are raising their costs?”

The value of mail

“Mail is no doubt more expensive than most other channels on a cost per thousand basis, but the value it brings is significantly higher.” explains Lucy, citing JICMAIL data as a key demonstrator of this (flip to page 3 to read more).

Mail can provide similar or better value than other marketing channels, depending on the objective. As an industry, Lucy believes the focus needs to be on communicating mail's effectiveness, as price is one dimensional, the channel will never be the cheapest due to the physical costs involved of delivery.

Lucy cites Marketreach's approach, which focuses its sustainability messaging on the life cycle of mail, from regenerative materials to reusing and recycling, rather than just looking at a carbon number.

The need for good communication

“We need to be open, transparent and focused on the long-term relationship with our customers, always emphasising value.” she added, reinforcing her message that maintaining clear communication will help customers understand and accept price increases more positively.

Lucy's top tips

- Educate customers on the market trends, industry changes or economic factors that contribute to the need for a price adjustment to ensure they understand the reasoning behind the change.
- Demonstrate that the increase is in line with broader market conditions to make it more understandable to customers.
- Highlight customer success stories from those who have found value in their mailings despite the price increase. Real-world examples can provide reassurance and build confidence.
- Acknowledge customers' loyalty and express gratitude for their continued support, a simple thank you goes a long way.

Mail is no doubt more expensive than most other channels on a cost per thousand basis, but the value it brings is significantly higher.”

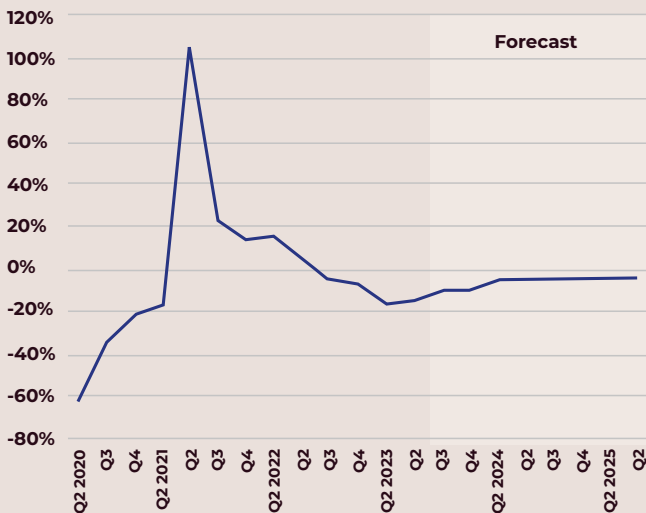


LET'S CELEBRATE THE SUPERPOWERS OF MAIL

The economic climate has created tough conditions for most media channels, with inflationary pressures and the sluggish economy impacting the sector. But with WARC predicting spend in the mail channel to rebound in 2024, Royal Mail's director of new business at Marketreach, Sophie Grender, explores what's ahead for mail.

Direct mail advertising spend

£ millions and year-on-year % change, current prices



Source: AA/WARC Advertising Expenditure Report Q2 2023

Headlines continue to shine a light on wasteful digital advertising.

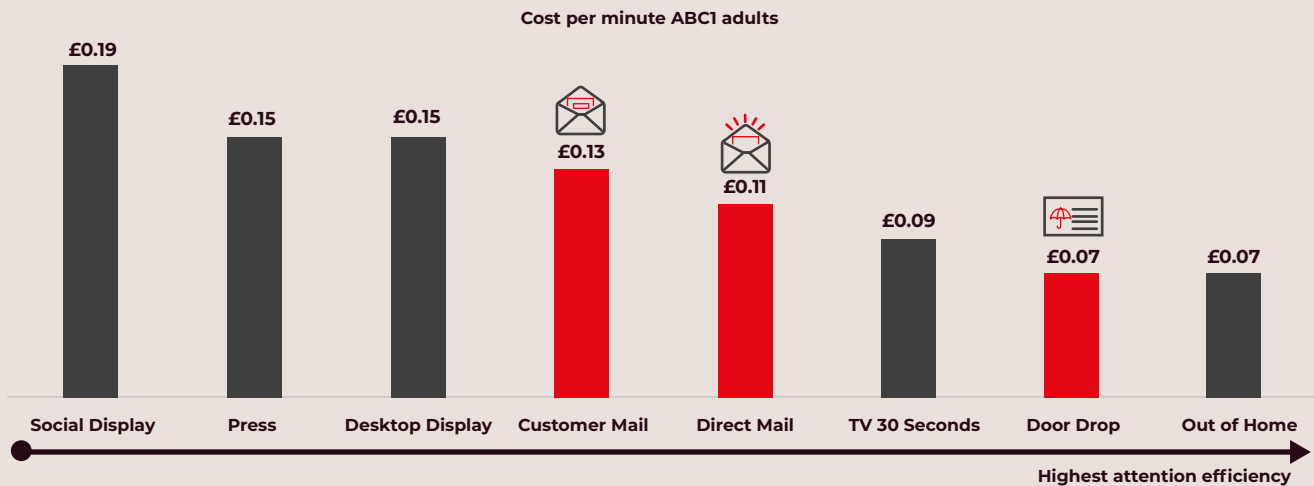
A survey conducted by YouGov and Picnic highlighted the issue that brands are actually wasting budget on annoying ads that do more harm than good. With 70% of Brits finding digital advertising 'annoying' and 'intrusive'.

"We are at a point in our channel's history where we have never had such a wealth of insight and data which supports how mail performs in the media landscape." shares Sophie, explaining that JICMAIL now has over 249,765 mail items on its database with two quarters of attention data on mail by sector and even at brand level.

"Mail continues to provide a channel which is the original in-home advertising experience. With the average household getting only 3.5 items of mail a week, it allows the consumer to experience the brand that is sending the mail in an uncluttered environment and on their own terms."

The latest research from JICMAIL, supported by data from Marketreach, has found that with media attention garnering more consideration over and above traditional media metrics, marketers can make better and more informed choices about their media investments.

- Customer mail gets a consumer's attention for two and a half minutes.
- Advertising mail a minute and 48 seconds of attention.
- Even partially addressed grabs over a minute and door drops 46 seconds.



Source: JICMAIL Item Data Q4 2022, Lumen; TVison, Kite Factory CPM data

What this understanding gives us is a complete reframing of the relative value of media channels when you look at how much they cost," shares Sophie, "making direct mail cheaper than both social or desktop display and putting door drop on a par with out of home."

We live in a world where there is an inexorable desire to harness all that is digital, just look at the hype around Artificial Intelligence, but Sophie urges brands to consider the value in other channels too, "Whilst it is exciting and we're right to be inspired about the potential AI can offer, it's easy to overlook the power of the real world and physical communications - something you can actually feel, touch and be immersed in. The potential winners are those that embrace the ways of bringing together the physical and digital worlds." With the rise of QR codes and digital image recognition a mail pack can connect the consumer seamlessly to a virtually enriched world which in turn will improve the brand experience.

The meteoric rise of the marketing stack

The marketing stack has become the number one concern for many brands in how they tackle the growing complexity of channels, and consumers want a seamless and connected experience of brands across every channel.

Marketing automation, and developing AI capabilities, are making it easier for brands to tailor digital outputs like ads and emails using this new technology. This could have profound effects on how mail can be tailored and produced through the same automation stack as email, digital display and social media.

"Making the marketing automation platform work for brands is an increasing challenge with many feeling they have now cracked this across their digital journeys but have less capabilities in integrating with offline too." says Sophie, "Whilst this technology is available, the challenge is that brands aren't using this capability to its full."

With the tight targeting that mail affords and response rates of between 1% for cold and over 10% for warm mailings, it is an enviable performance channel. And whilst it can't be tracked like digital in real time, QR codes and digital image recognition make an instant and trackable response when they are used in mail.

Let's give sustainability a big hoorah

The more the industry can highlight the sustainable credentials of mail, the better we will do as an industry." believes Sophie. "Everyone in the sector has a role to play to ensure our customers understand the circularity story of mail and get that message out there to an audience that, frankly, are bamboozled and somewhat deluded that all things digital must be better for the environment."

Direct mail packs can be designed and produced more sustainably. There are substitute materials and methods to lower the channel's carbon footprint. For example, using paper sourced from FSC certified forests and biodegradable inks. Or, by working with B Corp-certified printers and agency partners to advise on the best size, pagination, delivery options and other ways to ensure sustainability while maintaining impactful creativity. These are just some of the methods Sophie suggests for brands to do their bit.

As an industry we're creating a great story and practical tools to help brands create the most sustainable mail, a journey we must continue to travel."

OPTIMISTIC HORIZONS: MAIL'S RESILIENCE AND RELEVANCE IN 2024

It's that time of year again - predictions for the upcoming year are making their rounds and if you read the WARC and Bellwether reports, the forecast for mail would read 'a bit gloomy'. However, the good folks at Marketreach have a different view. Here, Amanda Griffiths, head of planning and insight, shares how digital integration has invigorated the channel and the enduring qualities of mail that will be even more relevant to both marketers' priorities and consumers' lives in 2024.

For marketers, the trio of words that dominated their thoughts in 2023—sustainability, attention, and accountability—will continue to hold sway in 2024.

Sustainability, a priority for 71% of UK CMO's, takes centre stage at Marketreach. "Through our rigorous assessment of The Lifecycle of Mail we have shown that mail, already a sustainable choice, becomes even stronger when more of the right decisions are made," shares Amanda. "Communicating this to the market was a pivotal strategy in 2023. Efforts in 2023 to establish the circular advantage of mail resulted in a 50% increase in marketers acknowledging mail's sustainability compared to other channels. 2024 will see us continuing to promote this message and our LCA tool for carbon smart mail."

In an era of heightened budget scrutiny and demand for accountability, mail emerges as a stalwart performer. Personalised URLs (PURLs) and offer codes allow brands to track spending back to the recipient. QR codes have solidified their place in mailpack design, they are the favoured way for consumers to respond, enabling speedy, real-time tracking of a mailing's effectiveness.

Attention is a brand's most valuable commodity believes Amanda, "In a world of increasingly distracted consumers, longer visual dwell times correlate with higher prompted recall and brand choice."

JICMAIL attention figures reveal high levels of attention across all mail forms, with Business Mail at 150 seconds, Addressed Mail at 108 seconds, Partially Addressed at 64 seconds, and Door Drops at 48 seconds over 28 days. Further research showed that mail captures undivided attention, serving as a gateway to significant attention across other channels driving response and revenue.

While consumer trust in brands and communications is on the decline, mail remains a highly trusted channel – people are significantly less likely to think it is a scam. And, against the backdrop of increasing concerns surrounding deep fakes, artificial intelligence, and media channels with inherent biases, mail stands as a steadfast source of authenticity and trustworthiness.

The approval of the Data and Digital Information Bill in early 2024 brings further optimism.

Clarification on legitimate interest creates opportunities for mail growth, bolstering marketers' confidence in mailing customers, especially in acquisition mail as brands adapt to a cookie-less world from 2025," explains Amanda.

Looking ahead to 2024, it is evident that mail retains its value and remains a powerful medium for brands.

KEEPING UP WITH THE SMP WORKING PARTIES



The SMP working parties have been busy as ever, working across all areas of our industry to improve innovations, processes, sustainability and marketing. We spoke to three working party heads to see what they've been getting up to in the last quarter of 2023.

Sales and Marketing

The sales and marketing working party has welcomed a new chair, Carrie Klepzig, head of global marketing for eProductivity Software (ePS). Carrie has over 25 years of progressive leadership experience in global marketing.

Under Carrie's guidance, this working party is already getting started on the 2024 Networking & Awards event, each year hoping to bring more members and value. In addition, the party has started planning for 2024 marketing activities to include increased social media presence, curating research, promoting membership and driving awareness of all working party priorities.

Education

Chaired by Royal Mail's Sophie Grender, our education working party will be running regular webinars in 2024 with JICMAIL to understand how SMP members can attain their bronze JICMAIL accreditation. JICMAIL has become a vital tool to help our sector make the case for mail with clients.

For those wanting to build on bronze accreditation, sessions on Silver and Gold will be available in the coming months. As you may know, every SMP member organisation must subscribe to JICMAIL and at least one individual within the company must now have undertaken JICMAIL training and received at least bronze level certification. For those of you who are yet to become bronze certified the training will help you get on the right track to being certified.

Sustainability

Chaired by Paragon's head of ESG, Lucy Klinkenberg-Matthews, the sustainability working party has produced a sustainability and ESG glossary for SMP members around ESG, covering industry jargon and legislative terminology.

As well as developing the glossary (scan the QR code below to take a look!), the sustainability group is working on some guidance around calculating carbon emissions, how to understand carbon footprints, and gathering carbon data for paper. All key topics that came out of the party's 2023 membership survey.

Mail Innovation Group (MIG)

A big focus for the MIG party, chaired by Go Inspire's MD Danny Cook, in 2023 was exploring consolidating business mail and ad mail together. MIG has identified that merging these streams could provide incredible efficiencies throughout production and lead to better tray fill, meaning fewer pallets going out.

MIG has been speaking with machine manufacturers to assess the possibilities and is due to meet with downstream access providers to discuss how this could be best implemented, with minimal investment. A very promising prospect!

Incentives

The incentives working party, chaired by Isla Munro, MD at The Dragonfly Agency, aims to evolve and influence the design of Royal Mail's Letter incentive portfolio, ensuring that incentives help support customers' use of mail as part of an integrated media mix.

Throughout 2023, the group worked extensively with Royal Mail to look at the range of incentives available for all mail types, adding additional incentives into Royal Mail's portfolio including Try Mail and Programmatic Mail.





INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION

A group of like-minded individuals from a broad range of companies have united to tackle a burning issue for the print and packaging industry – attracting young talent. Here, Elizabeth Bowerman, head of UK sales at Stephen Austin and leader of Introducing Young People into Print (YPIP), shares why this is such an important step for the industry.

“ We are working together to drive out a new project that seeks to get young people into the print industry in all its many guises.” explains Elizabeth, “Planning collaborative outreach and working with suppliers to arrange student networking days.”

Joining Elizabeth in the group are Paul Stead of ASL Group, Jo Stephenson of PHD Marketing, Kelvin Bell of VPress, Lucy Swanston of the SMP and Nutshell Creative, Delroy Simmons of Dayfold and Murray Sale of Hensal Communications.

The group is reaching out to colleges and universities that provide courses associated with the industry, to enable sixth form and final-year students to network and see how amazing the print and packaging industries are and the great people who work within them.

With an annual turnover of £13.7 billion and employing around 98,000 people in 7,200 companies, the UK printing sector is an important economic contributor in all UK regions and is the fifth largest print market in the world.* It is also an advanced manufacturing sector, utilising cutting-edge information and production technologies, connecting organisations around the world.

Despite this, attracting people to work in the industry proves to be a challenge. “It has an ageing skilled workforce and the number of tradespeople working in print is plummeting - by 73% between 2006 and 2021*.” Elizabeth shares. “Workers are approaching retirement and there is a risk their skills will be lost, which could have serious consequences for our industry if not mitigated.”

But why is this happening? “The industry has an old-fashioned image, and there is very limited print or packaging education available today, apart from print apprenticeships, but even then not all printers are using their levy to fund employees.” she explained, citing negative (yet false) environmental perceptions and competition from better publicised industries like aviation, engineering, automotive and biotech, among other barriers to encouraging young people to the sector.

So, what is YPIP doing to tackle this? “YPIP will promote the industry as a far more dynamic, high-tech, innovative, connected and exciting place to work with clear career progression routes and opportunities.” says Elizabeth, explaining that this super group will connect with schools and universities to promote print as an attractive career and showcase its realities, opportunities, benefits and attractiveness.

Want to get involved and help promote the industry and support with networking days? Please contact Elizabeth Bowerman via email ebowerman@stephenaustin.co.uk or mobile 07948 412597.

*Source UK Printing Facts and Figures, BPIF (2023 data)



THE FRESH FACES OF THE INDUSTRY

NEW
ROLES

In this edition's round-up of new appointments across the sector, we chat to two marketing executives, one just starting out in her first role post-university, and the other in a senior role with 13 years of marketing experience, to hear how they are getting on in their job roles.



Milly Beeching

marketing executive
FCS Lasermail

Milly Beeching joins FCS Lasermail straight from university, where she gained a first class with honours degree in marketing from Nottingham Trent University.

Milly is principally targeted with increasing the brand's presence in the transactional mailing arena, which will hopefully convert to a significant increase in envelope fill.

Victoria Blackwell

senior marketing executive
Nutshell Creative Marketing

With over 13 years of print and creative experience, an IDM Level 6 Professional Diploma in digital marketing, and a Rising Star Award from The Printing Charity under her belt, Victoria Blackwell joins Nutshell Creative Marketing as a senior marketing executive.

Having previously met Nutshell's managing director, Lucy Swanston, through her Rising Star Award, Victoria kept in touch and soon a role became available at Nutshell that suited her.

"I was lucky to be shortlisted for the SMP Bright Futures Award in September and even luckier to join the Nutshell team in November. It's been quite a year!" shared Victoria. "My aspirations are to develop my skills and learn from the wonderful people around me. I hope to become a valuable



member of the team. Although it feels like a huge leap out of my comfort zone, it also feels like I've landed in a really good place."

Destined for a career in print and marketing, Victoria's first ever role was at Advantage Media, a company that, unbeknownst to her, was the digital arm of Blackwell Print, a company that her grandfather had founded in the 1980s.

SMP MEMBERS SHOWCASING SUSTAINABILITY FOR SUCCESS

Making decisions based on sustainability in the current economic climate when budgets are being squeezed can feel overly complicated for marketers with so many other priorities to consider in campaign planning. But how mail and print suppliers operate environmentally is increasingly becoming as important as how they do so effectively and efficiently.

In this edition, we catch up with two member companies that are successfully leading the push for sustainability within their respective organisations and industries.

Sustainability is driving innovation across the print and mail sector and implementing more sustainable environmental and social strategies is now key to longevity alongside staying in tune with customer behaviours and increasing brand value.

Nottingham-based digital print and direct mail specialists, Eight Days A Week Print Solutions (EDWPS), has recently officially gained B Corp certification.

One of 1,500 B Corp businesses in the UK, this means EDWPS is now officially counted as contributing to the global movement for an inclusive, equitable and regenerative economy. The scope also includes its subsidiary business, Eight Plus, which was only launched in March 2022.

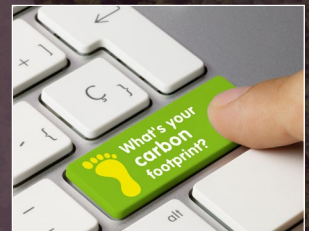
Speaking about the achievement, Lance Hill, managing director of EDWPS and Eight Plus, said, "This is an incredibly proud moment for us, on top of many other achievements over the last three or four years, where we have continually pushed the business forward to be best in class, which has always been my ambition."



Lance explains that going for B Corp certification was the next logical step on EDWPS' journey around social, environmental performance, transparency and accountability.

All of our certifications form the backbone of our business and will continue to do so going forward," shares Lance. "We will never rest on our laurels or be complacent as continual improvement is what differentiates us, and it is what our clients expect to see, or even demand."

Elsewhere, Paragon, one of the UK's largest business services providers, is developing a new programme to provide more accurate readings of carbon footprints, in a bid to help reduce climate change and enable companies to become more eco-friendly.



The purpose of its new programme, named AutoCarbon, is to help companies advance towards achieving their net zero goals, aiming to play a big part in delivering the environmental change the planet needs.

Through the development of Autocarbon, Paragon has created a new footprinting methodology to give a more precise calculation of carbon footprints, using verified Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions, as well as third party spends.

Speaking about AutoCarbon, Lucy Klinkenberg-Matthews, head of ESG at Paragon, said the company's goal is to help businesses "make informed decisions about their sustainability and drive responsible choices and behaviours across the whole value chain."

Investing in sustainability has the potential to yield highly positive results for print and mail firms, increasing efficiency and creating new opportunities for further investment. Brands that implement sustainable business models have the chance to make a positive impact on urgent social and environmental problems, whilst also increasing their own longevity.

MAXIMISING ROI THROUGH DIRECT MAIL INNOVATIONS

The benefits of direct mail are well-known – the targeting, tangibility, longevity and creative impact of it equals or even exceeds those of digital communications. By fully integrating direct mail into a digital marketing and in-store customer journey, you can realise tangible ROI benefits.

We sat down with Tom Pickford, new business sales director at Service Graphics, to discuss his thoughts on maximising ROI through innovations in direct mail.

Experimentation and brand alignment

“Direct mail allows for a great deal of innovation in terms of design, materials, finishes and engagement,” explains Tom. “Sometimes, the best new ideas are actually ones that have been tried in the past and fallen into disuse. With modern production techniques and targeted databases, formats such as catalogues and brochures are once again enjoying a moment – and delivering results for clients.”

Tom describes how a recent project with Southern Mail (the mailing services division of Service Graphics), was able to leverage multiple regional databases to generate a direct mail catalogue campaign, which added resonance to a national digital marketing and in-store POS campaign, and continued through to the purchase of a product in this the customers in turn sold on to homeowners.

High-end approach

“In several market sectors, influencer marketing is redefining the way companies raise awareness by using industry icons for brand messaging and endorsements to capture consumer attention effectively,” explains Tom.

“Many brands, big or small, are now leveraging the power of personalisation with direct mail to create brand awareness, instantly, across digital platforms,” said Tom, citing that an ‘unboxing moment’ captured on YouTube or TikTok can reach an audience instantly, with the fraction of the cost of a broadcasted advert.

Tom discusses how The Service Graphics Farringdon and Service Graphics studio design teams recently worked with Porter Novelli, to develop a

comprehensive marketing promotion for Nivea, creating a compelling, original design with clear messaging and product information.

The special influencer sampling box was brought to life by utilising state-of-the-art printing and cutting technology and various finishing techniques, including raised print with drop gloss,” explains Tom. “Precision handwork was then employed to build each box and create individual messaging to deliver a truly personalised experience.”



The results of the collaboration with Porter Novelli delivered a significant 20% increase in lead generation. Tom says this demonstrates the effectiveness of a collaborative approach in creating an engaging communication channel for their influencer community, and illustrates the synergy between digital, in-store and direct mail marketing to deliver creative innovation. This in turn creates strong engagement with customers and reinforces brand identity.

To learn more about direct mail solutions from Service Graphics contact enquiries@servicegraphics.co.uk

MEMBERS' CORNER



For our winter Members' Corner interview, we've sat down with **Ellie Revell, account manager at certified B Corp, The Dragonfly Agency**. Ellie was the winner of our inaugural Bright Futures Award at the 2023 SMP Awards. Her journey at Dragonfly began in 2017 when she started as an intern, quickly progressing through the ranks to become an account manager.

What are you most proud of in your career?

It has to be winning the SMP Bright Futures award, purely because it was so unexpected. I have always lacked confidence in myself so to win something like that gave me the boost I needed. Next stop is a BAFTA!

Looking back, is there anything you would have done differently?

Backed myself more.

What's the best piece of advice in business you've ever been given?

Treat everyone as equals, you are no more or less important than anyone.

What's your most memorable print project?

I love any charity mailings that we do because it feels so rewarding that it's helping towards such amazing causes. It is even more rewarding to visit the charities and their hospices, seeing first-hand what the donations go towards.

What advice would you give to someone starting out?

Make use of the knowledge that people around you have, and most importantly, get on site and out to the factories. Everything makes so much more sense when you experience it in person. Finally, don't take any sh.... ortbread.

What's your perfect night in?

Japanese takeaway, red wine and a true crime documentary.

In another life, you would be...

A cat. Their lives are so easy. And they have nine of them!

What's your secret talent?

I can say the longest word in the dictionary which is pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis. I can also tie my hair in a knot with one hand. As you can probably tell, I am an incredibly multi-talented person.



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