



TOUCHMORE

Let's keep in touch

Physical media make contents graspable, in the truest sense of the word; they build "bridges to real life". Consumers perceive them as more valuable than mere online-messages. In short: haptic sells!



- 1 Haptic advertising media inspire customers
- 2 Unfolding the power of a brand: A mailing with the folded plate cube



No question: Marketing calls and emails are important marketing tools, but too much of that may turn annoying. US market researchers Andrea Godfrey, Kathleen Seiders and Glenn Voss have demonstrated this in an impressive way in their analysis. In 2011 they interviewed approximately 1,200 car dealer’s customers. The researchers examined the history of the interaction with the customer: How many times did each customer receive calls, emails and marketing calls by the car dealer in the last 39 months – and how much money did the customers averagely spend on services every quarter?

From which it resulted that: Physical mailing had the greatest effect. After three contacts the customer spent at least \$ 60 in comparison to only \$ 40 following the identical number of calls or emails. The researchers discovered an efficiency accelerator when they combined marketing letters with marketing emails: When the subjects received five physical mailings combined with up to two emails, they spent approximately \$ 100; more than two emails would start to decrease spending. Too many emails and calls cause reactance in the receiver: They feel bothered by the sales intention that is all too noticeable. Instead, the receiver can pick up promo-

tional mail whenever he likes. That creates greater acceptance towards the promotional message and less rejection towards the sender.

A wise combination of digital and physical media is the strongest sales booster. This insight was also reached by the German Mail last year in a field study. The customers of fotokasten.de – an online service for photographic printing products – either received a promotional email, a product catalogue by mail, or a combination of both. The cross media strategy paid off: A 35% increase of orders produced a 55% increase of profits when customers received an email and held the catalogue in their hands.

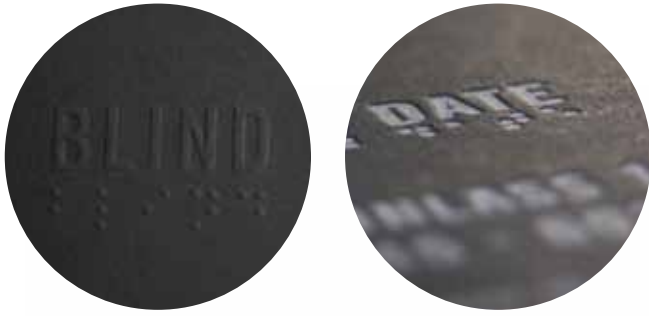
More haptic dialogue, more profit

The market research company Ebiqity verified the “effect accelerator” in a study: In comparison to other banks, with 66.7% ING-DiBa has the highest advertising effect index value and its share in the market has increased by 4% in the last 2 years. In the same period the competition’s market shares decreased. Part of ING-DiBa successful strategy: Not to invest solely in classical online advertisement but also, in addition, to make substantial investments in

physical mailing – 52% of the sector investments in mailings came from ING-DiBa.

Physical mailing is somewhat more costly than emailing. This initially deters; but the investment is worthwhile, when the profit increases correspondingly. A provider of event vouchers invested exclusively in online advertisement and email marketing until a few years ago. With that strategy he reached his limit of growth. When he experimented with adding physical mailings, he broke through these limits: more response, more orders, more profit – and surprisingly he discovered that despite the higher investment costs, the CPO (Costs per Order) were lower than the pure online strategy – and this when sending out 1 million mailings every time. The combination of digital and analogue communication was yet again demonstrated as being the most efficient and effective channel for customer interaction.

What makes physical mailing and cross media actions so successful? Psychologists and neuroscientists know the answer: Multi-sensory amplification. Humans are multi-sensory beings – their brains classify multi-sensory signals as more relevant and credible than “single-sensed” ones. Thus, we absorb information better and faster if we perceive it with multiple senses. Multi-sensory amplification produces a 10-fold >



A bridge from haptic to landing page:
The Connect-to-Web USB Webkey



> increase of brain activity; the information penetrates our subconscious mind, which processes 11 million bits per second. Instead, consciously we only perceive 3 to 4 words – approximately 40 bits per second. The researchers of Milward Brown attested the effect of this marketing practice: Customer loyalty doubles, when a brand is recognised by multiple senses. Therefore, in addition to their promotional characteristics, haptic mailings can also develop your branding strengths as a multi sensory medium.

The haptic effect – a psychological accelerator

The sense of touch is our most important sense. It gives us a feeling of truth; because we can hear and see incorrectly but not touch incorrectly. Physical mailings are not only marketing effect amplifiers – through the receiver’s sense of touch various psychological effects are triggered: Among these are the *Endowment effect* (we take possession faster of something we hold in our hands and touch), *Irradiation* (what feels good, is good), the *Priming effect* (for example subjects estimate an applicant to be more competent when they hold their resume on a heavy clip board rather than a light one; soft surfaces make us well-disposed and less stubborn when making decisions), *Learning by doing* (our

brain stores information significantly easier when we are moving or doing something whilst learning new information, *playful joy* (haptic is a direct contact sense, which allows us to playfully explore the world and satisfy our deeply rooted need of touch), *Embodiment* (an arm movement towards one’s own body promotes acceptance and agreement towards new information and products) and *Reciprocity* (if the receiver perceives an object as a present, they return the favour by at least lending their attention).

Summing up, this means: haptically optimised mailings create attention, credibly transport messages and increase their memory; they increase valuation and encourage buying.

A mailing action should be well considered and thought through. There are seven important aspects: The message must be sent at the right time to the right receiver. The form must support the explicit message and respond to the implicit goals of the customer. Example: Women feel more attracted to soft forms, because they respond to values that are attractive to women such as: Friendship, companionship and commitment. If there is no perceived difference, then the price is the deciding factor. Thus, the following applies to haptical mailing: It should demonstrate how the advertised product differs from the competition. The optical, textual and sensory

design of the mailing should reflect the brand identity. The haptic should be congruent with value proposition. Example: If innovation is promised, then the mailing should also be haptically surprising. The mailing can initiate the contact, the landing page and emails continue it efficiently. Relationships thrive when they are taken care of. Customers will not fall in love with the brand after a “hello”. At best, the action will trigger their interest or convince them to a (first) purchase.

The Next Big Thing in Marketing

Despite – or as a direct result of – our world’s digitalisation, haptic is yet again gaining ground in marketing. Touch is an ancient human need and without touch something vital is missing. Some of the hot topics of the digital future are haptic displays, 3D-printers and intelligent clothing. They are looking for a connection between the digital world and the haptic, because touch evokes unique emotions; and haptic is the determining perception of truth as well as value.

Campaigns that do not use any haptic touchpoints, give away valuable effect potential. Therefore: Keep in touch! || **Olaf Hartmann**

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