

POWER OF PRINT

In Killing Techlash, COVID Enlivened MarTech

The rise of marketing technology acceptance. Someone once said the Internet sounds like a carnival barker endlessly shouting, “Could I interest you in everything all of the time?” Combined with the personal angst from the shut-in experience and the sensory overload of daily digital life, it’s not surprising that “techlash” became a thing. Then the unexpected happened; the pandemic reversed this trend.

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of Millennials prefer hard copies of important documents.

The 18-35 year-old shoppers are the most frequent users of AR as part of their decision set.

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of Millennials prefer physical books.

COVID accelerated consumer consent to allow data collection.¹ Surveys in 2019 and 2021² showed a marked rise in this acceptance as a means to improve shopping experiences. In five buckets - making shopping easier, quicker, more informative, more fun and anticipating my needs – the 2021 survey clearly displayed this uptick.³ This encouraged marketers to apply marketing techniques (MarTech) such as Quick Response (QR) codes and Augmented Reality (AR) in creating more personalized brand interactivity.

SHOPPERS MORE OPEN-MINDED THAN MARKETERS

The 2021 results did confirm that “techlash” – the backlash to marketing technologies viewed as compromising consumer privacy – persisted. It also revealed this perception noticeably eased the last two years. Consumer consent decreased for certain MarTech categories as well.

A surprising result was also revealed. A larger percentage of marketers thought consent was needed in far more categories than consumers. In three categories gauging permission to use data - personalizing products/services, providing promotions and coupons, and personalizing ads – consumers overwhelming said yes. But marketers must remain vigilant in responding to ever growing concerns about personal data abuse.⁴

AR AND QR CODES BOLSTER BUYING

A 2019 Google survey found 66% of shoppers were interested in using AR to make more informed purchasing decisions. Two years later, 94% of those surveyed agreed they would use AR the same or more when shopping in 2022.⁵

This is a clarion call for direct mailers to ping more personalized content to the 100-million shoppers using AR and QR codes online and in stores.⁶ It’s also why more companies are using QR codes on packaging and labels to promote product and/or company details. This add-on sell copy delivers more ways to up-sell and cross-sell new and existing markets.⁷

VIDEO AND 3D PACK A BIG WALLOP

Two other MarTech assets are also on the rise. Adding video has shown to lift conversion rates by 60% vs. buyers interacting with images alone. While companies that add 3D content can expect, on average, an amazing 94% conversion lift.⁸

Both techniques help decrease returns, too. Nearly a third of all goods were brought back because they weren't "as described." Allowing shoppers to virtually "try before they buy" helps solve this issue. Proof that seeing is believing, as shoppers first buy with their eyes.

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MILLENNIALS AND GEN Z BUYERS ADORE AR

The 18-35 year-old shoppers are the most frequent users of AR as part of their decision set. It's a trend that will only continue to grow. As will the opportunities they represent for direct mailers, catalogers and publishers. Integrating AR into print offers a bevy of real-world results: higher response rates, larger ROI, increased consumer confidence and reduced returns.⁹

Take note if you create, market or publish long-format print materials, documents or books. Research shows 90% of Millennials prefer hard copies of important documents and 78% prefer physical books. By bridging the digital and physical, interactive print can capitalize on human memory sensors like touch, while maximizing the many benefits of e-commerce.¹⁰



A concluding consideration: a 2021 survey showed 66% of Gen Z and Millennials view all or most of their direct mail.¹¹ Collectively they possess tremendous purchasing power and social influence. Which makes it imperative to reach them frequently, and with embedded AR and QR codes. Cha-ching, cha-ching.

— Source: 1 – AMA Survey [Did Covid Kill the Techlash](#), 2021
— Source: 2 – 2019 and 2021 survey by Charney Research and Toluna
— Source: 3 – AMA. Base=506 consumers surveyed August 2021
— Source: 4 – Snap Inc./Deloitte 2021 Survey of 15,000 consumers worldwide
— Source: 5 – Snap Inc./Deloitte 2021 Survey
— Source: 6 – AMA Survey [Did Covid Kill the Techlash](#), 2021
— Source: 7 – ResearchandMarkets.com
— Source: 8 – 2021 Shopify survey
— Source: 9 – AMA Survey [Did Covid Kill the Techlash](#), 2021
— Source: 10 – 2021 survey by RIT
— Source: 11 – 2021 survey by Keypoint Intelligence



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