

# PRINT POWER: HOW DOOR DROP MEDIA CAN ANSWER YOUR DIGITAL MARKETING CHALLENGES



WHITEPAPER



**ELMA**  
European Letterbox  
Marketing Association

# PRINT POWER: HOW DOOR DROP MEDIA CAN ANSWER YOUR DIGITAL MARKETING CHALLENGES



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# [INTRODUCTION]

Cheap to run, easy to scale, and reliably on target - it's no wonder why digital channels have dominated the advertising industry for the last decade or so. But, marketers are facing a raft of new difficulties that are challenging the typical campaign playbook.

Surveys show that ~30% of brands are reducing their ad spend across the next 12 months, partly in response to the global economic downturn.<sup>1</sup> And so, marketers need to find ways to raise brand awareness and generate leads with fewer resources. If this wasn't enough, the culture around data collection and consumer targeting has also drastically changed. Reforms to consumer privacy legislation have made data collection more complex, and software providers are taking steps to protect user data.<sup>2</sup> As a result, brands can no longer rely on a digital-first comms strategy because campaigns aren't reaching who they need to.

Offline advertising, specifically channels like door drop media, could provide marketers a way forward. Door drop is a direct-to-consumer and high-impact medium that offers a range of added benefits that marketers should take advantage of in the coming months. In this whitepaper, we're looking at the state of modern media buying and the opportunities and challenges that marketers are facing. Read on to learn more and discover how to get started with door drop campaigns using best-in-class support from industry leaders.



**SURVEYS SHOW THAT ~30% OF BRANDS ARE REDUCING THEIR AD SPEND ACROSS THE NEXT 12 MONTHS**

<sup>1</sup> INSIDER Intelligence (2023): 30% of advertisers are cutting their 2023 budgets

<sup>2</sup> Apple (2023): Control is yours



# [THE PROBLEM WITH MODERN MEDIA BUYING]

## DIGITAL DOMINATES, BUT AT WHAT COST?

Before we can examine the problem with today's media buying landscape, we must consider how we got here in the first place. The rise of digital media has largely been driven by an increase in internet adoption across the EU – particularly by younger generations. In 2022, internet connectivity across Europe stood at 92%, with practically 100% of 16-24-year-olds using the internet with regular frequency.<sup>3,4</sup>

In turn, EU online ad spending has increased nearly two-fold since 2017 alone.<sup>5</sup> The latest data indicates that the value of the European programmatic advertising market reached \$73.88 billion, up from \$58.17 billion 12 months previous. In relative terms, this means the European online advertising industry was nearly 45% the size of the American one.<sup>6</sup> Similar data from the UK shows digital average ad spend has risen by more than 10% each year in the same 5-year period - constituting the largest rise across all other media channels.<sup>7</sup>

Despite its popularity, however, digital marketing has three critical problems. Firstly is the method's growing saturation. The uptake of online advertising has been so large that brands are noticing its efficacy has dwindled as consumers grow accustomed to ignoring ads. While 69.5% of ads were viewable in 2021, engagement levels rapidly declined with each passing second.<sup>8</sup> What's more, the global average time-in-view for advertisements' decreased by as much as 25% on mobile devices.<sup>9</sup> The only region that saw increases in viewing times was France, whose increase came in at just +0.134 seconds from the previous year.<sup>10</sup>



**THE RISE OF DIGITAL MEDIA HAS LARGELY BEEN DRIVEN BY AN INCREASE IN INTERNET ADOPTION ACROSS THE EU**

<sup>3</sup> Eurostat (2023) Level of internet access - households

<sup>4</sup> OECD (2019): Society at a Glance 2019

<sup>5</sup> Statista (2022): Programmatic advertising spending in Europe from 2017 to 2026

<sup>6</sup> Statista (2022): Programmatic advertising spending in Europe from 2017 to 2026

<sup>7</sup> The Data & Marketing Association (2022): Door Drop Report 2022

<sup>8</sup> Integral Ad Science (2021): Media Quality Report

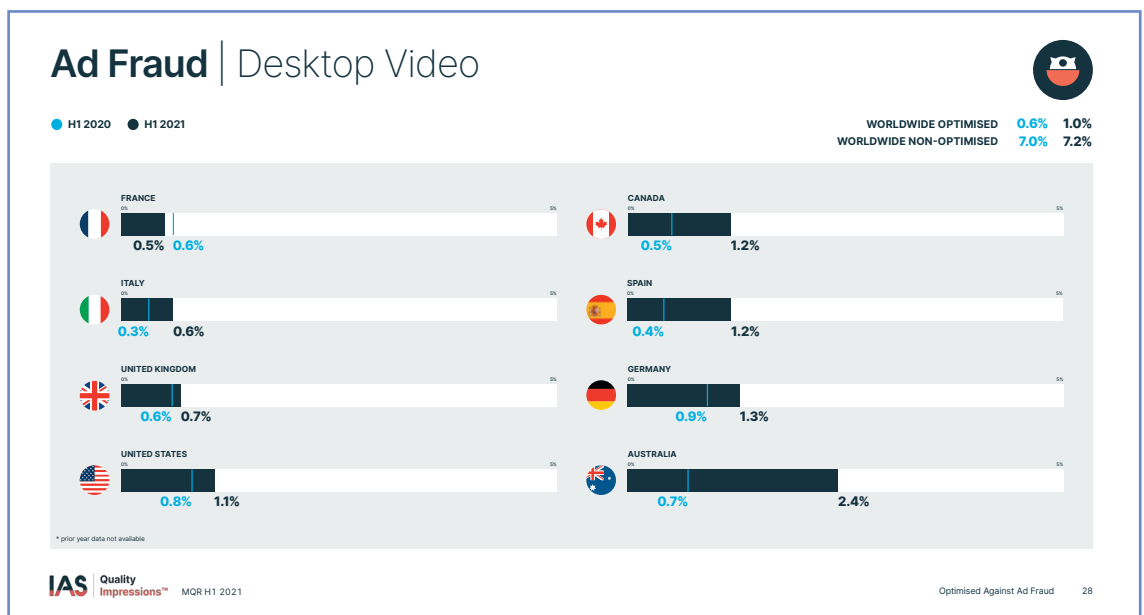
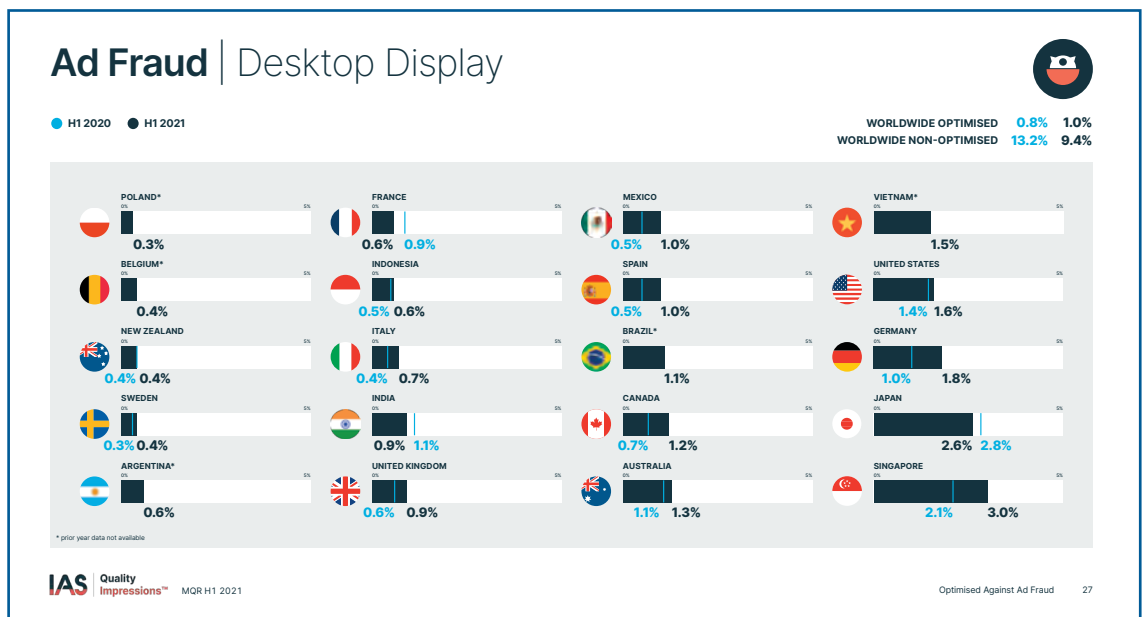
<sup>9</sup> Integral Ad Science (2021): Media Quality Report

<sup>10</sup> Integral Ad Science (2021): Media Quality Report

# [THE PROBLEM WITH MODERN MEDIA BUYING]

## DIGITAL DOMINATES, BUT AT WHAT COST? CONT

Secondly is a lack of transparency. In order to maintain their competitive edge, programmatic advertising providers need to keep their algorithms' workings a secret. As such, it can be difficult to build a scalable campaign when different advertising agencies have conflicting opinions about how to use the medium effectively. To make things worse, ad fraud is a persistent problem in digital advertising, affecting around 15% of total spend, according to US data.<sup>11</sup> In nominal terms, this amounts to \$81 billion in 2022 of wasted campaign spend. Worryingly, ad fraud costs are predicted to increase to \$100 billion across 2023, creating further problems for marketers.<sup>12</sup> With inflation running high and gloomy economic forecasts ahead, marketers must be wary of their dwindling resources and look to maximise their ROI.<sup>13,14,15</sup>



<sup>11</sup> Business of Apps (2023): Ad Fraud Statistics

<sup>12</sup> Business of Apps (2023): Ad Fraud Statistics

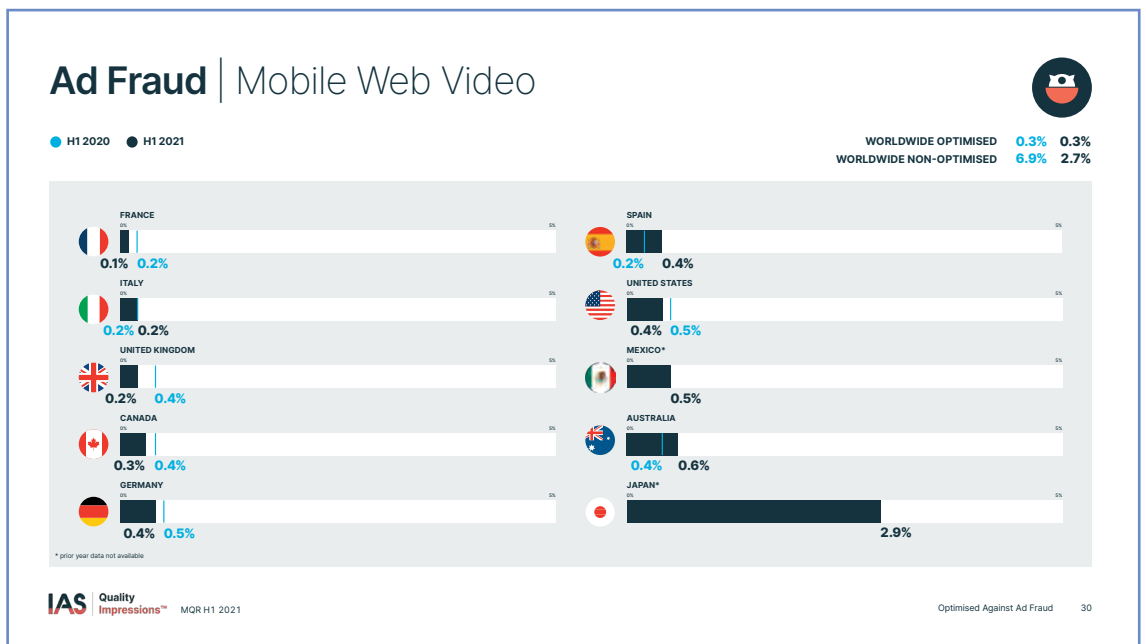
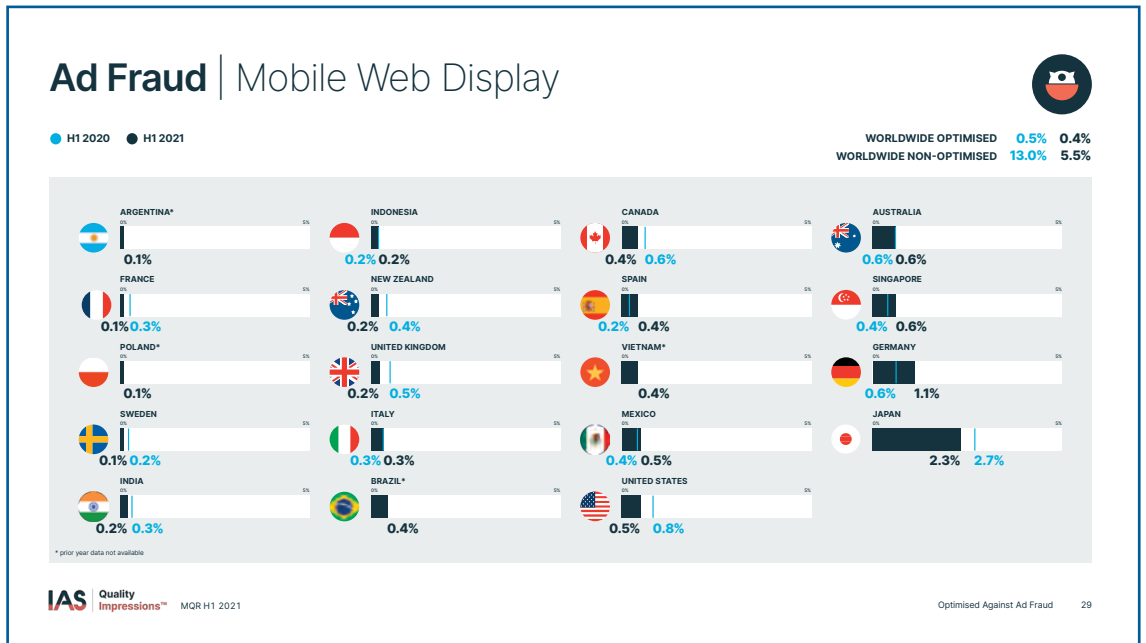
<sup>13</sup> INSIDER Intelligence (2023): 30% of advertisers are cutting their 2023 budgets

<sup>14</sup> International Monetary Fund (2023): Inflation peaking amid low growth

<sup>15</sup> Reuters (2023): Recession alarm bells are ringing, but (much) less loudly than before

# [THE PROBLEM WITH MODERN MEDIA BUYING]

## DIGITAL DOMINATES, BUT AT WHAT COST? CONT



# [THE PROBLEM WITH MODERN MEDIA BUYING]

## DIGITAL DOMINATES, BUT AT WHAT COST? CONT

Thirdly is its poor reputation. In the last few years, social media platforms (the very providers of programmatic advertising solutions) have become embroiled in various scandals, ranging from fines for breaching users' privacy and spreading election disinformation.<sup>16,17</sup> As a result, there's been a sweeping cultural shift around data collection and consumer targeting – so much so that consumer trust in online advertising has plummeted. A 2021 YouGov study found only 10% of US and Australian customers trusted online ads.<sup>18</sup> In response, governments have introduced flagship legislation like GDPR, while tech giants such as Google and Apple have each taken steps to protect their users' privacy.<sup>19,20,21</sup>

Unfortunately for marketers, the loss of third-party cookies will reduce the effectiveness and reach of digital marketing campaigns. Therefore, it's clear that brands can no longer rely on digital-first strategies. Not only is the data they're based on decaying in value but so too is customers' very engagement with online content and the uptake of goods and services on offer.



**IN THE LAST FEW YEARS, SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS HAVE BECOME EMBROILED IN VARIOUS SCANDALS, RANGING FROM FINES FOR BREACHING USERS' PRIVACY AND SPREADING ELECTION DISINFORMATION**

<sup>16</sup> The Guardian (2023): Meta dealt blow by EU ruling that could result in data use 'opt-in'

<sup>17</sup> WIRED (2019): Far-Right Propaganda Floods Facebook Ahead of EU Elections

<sup>18</sup> YouGov (2021): Most people do not trust online ads

<sup>19</sup> European Data Protection Supervisor (2023): The History of the General Data Protection Regulation

<sup>20</sup> Google (2022): How we make every day safer with Google

<sup>21</sup> Apple (2023): Control is yours

# [THE PROBLEM WITH MODERN MEDIA BUYING]

## OFFLINE IS UNDERUTILISED, DESPITE ITS POTENTIAL

By contrast, marketing professionals have largely ignored offline advertising channels. As we discuss in the next section, this lack of adoption occurs despite the enduring value of offline media. While digital advertising platforms have created a comprehensive ecosystem to run whole campaigns on, they're far from the only one available, and offline channels have continued relevance in consumers' daily lives.

This preference for digital advertising channels may simply be a function of marketers' personal biases. For example, research suggests that marketers are notably different from the demographics they are trying to reach. More specifically, data from a 2021 Belgian study shows that marketers (compared to the wider population) are disproportionately:

### • Women, aged 25-44 and living in a city



### • More socio-culturally engaged; travelling more often and more internationally






# [THE PROBLEM WITH MODERN MEDIA BUYING]

## OFFLINE IS UNDERUTILISED, DESPITE ITS POTENTIAL CONT


- More physically active, and career driven

**CONSUMER**



**39%**

**MARKETEER**



**60%**

**Work/Life Balance**  
% top 2, (totally) agree

---

*"My goal is to make it to the absolute top of my function."*

---

**MARKETEERS ARE MORE CAREER-DRIVEN.**



**86%** **52%**

Dinner in a restaurant / having a drink with friends/family

**48%** **21%**

Dinner in a restaurant / having a drink with colleagues

**MARKETEER**



**76%** **52%**

Working out

**Activities in personal time**  
% top 2, weekly/monthly

---

*"During the past year, how often did you do the following activities?"*

---

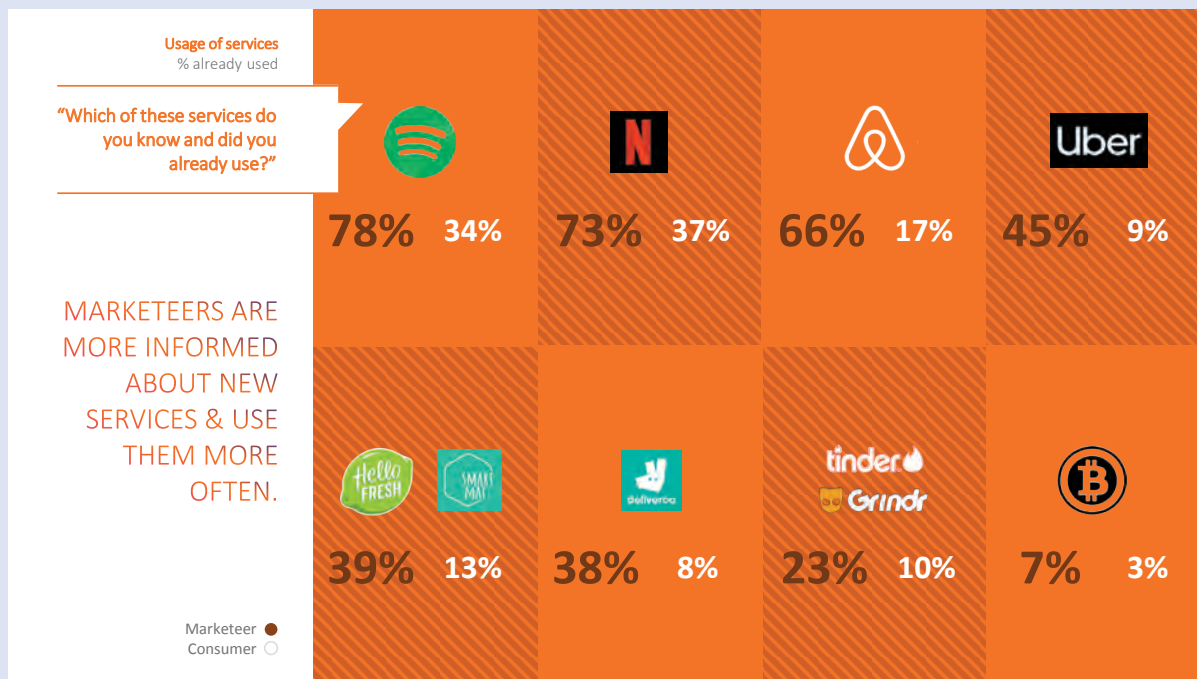
**DESPITE THE FOCUS ON WORK, MARKETEERS FIND A WAY TO HAVE FUN. THEY ARE MORE ACTIVE ...**

● Marketeer  
● Consumer

# [THE PROBLEM WITH MODERN MEDIA BUYING]

## OFFLINE IS UNDERUTILISED, DESPITE ITS POTENTIAL CONT

• More likely to use digital media channels and online services, like Netflix, Airbnb, Uber, etc.<sup>22</sup>



Of course, the same cannot be said for consumers more generally and these differences become clearer when we look at trends in weekly digital media usage. For instance, 77% of Belgian marketers use Instagram at least once a week, compared to 35% of the wider population - a difference of 42%. Similar disparities can be seen across other digital platforms; 44% vs 18% for Twitter and 60% vs 27% for Pinterest.

Even seemingly ubiquitous platforms show huge imbalances: 96% and 93% of marketers actively use WhatsApp and LinkedIn compared to 52% and 26% of non-marketers, respectively.<sup>23</sup> Overall, it seems that marketers navigate the world in a fundamentally more digitally-enabled way compared to even similarly aged, non-marketing peers.

And so, herein lies the problem: using their own experience as a point of reference, marketers consistently overestimate consumers’ usage of digital channels.<sup>24</sup> In turn, this causes an excessive amount of campaign resources to be directed towards the wrong channels since much of consumer attention remains with offline media channels. Therefore, in an age of data-driven marketing, the evidence is clear that advertising professionals need to change.

<sup>22</sup> Profacts (2021): Consumer Connection Survey

<sup>23</sup> Profacts (2021): Consumer Connection Survey

<sup>24</sup> Profacts (2021): Consumer Connection Survey

# [THE PROBLEM WITH MODERN MEDIA BUYING]

## OFFLINE IS UNDERUTILISED, DESPITE ITS POTENTIAL CONT

At a time when advertising budgets are decreasing in the face of an economic slowdown, optimal campaign spend becomes vital.<sup>25</sup> Yet, combined with the rising cost of ad fraud mentioned above and the diminishing returns of programmatic solutions, optimal campaign spend is becoming more difficult to achieve.

Given their relative underutilisation, early adopters of (and in some cases *returners* to) offline marketing channels stand to make huge gains in brand awareness. Fast-acting brands that adopt offline advertising channels like door drop media will be able to stand out in a comparatively quiet media landscape – meaning market saturation is no longer an issue. What’s more, as we discuss in the next section, modern door drop solutions allow advertisers to retain the ability to target consumers in an easy and inherently compliant way.

**FAST-ACTING BRANDS THAT  
ADOPT OFFLINE ADVERTISING  
CHANNELS LIKE DOOR DROP  
MEDIA WILL BE ABLE TO STAND  
OUT IN A COMPARATIVELY  
QUIET MEDIA LANDSCAPE**



<sup>25</sup> INSIDER Intelligence (2023): 30% of advertisers are cutting their 2023 budgets

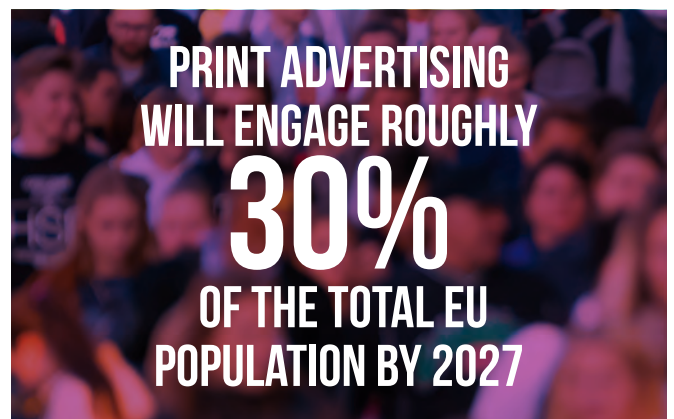
# [WHAT DOES DOOR DROP OFFER?]

In order for marketers to consider offline advertising channels such as door drop media, it has to present unique value as part of a campaign. That's why, in this section, we're looking at what door drop media offers to brands, where it can fit within a campaign and how it compares to the digital channels that advertising professionals are likely already familiar with. Below is a six-point outline of door drop media, broken down by the essential qualities of any advertising medium.

## REACH

Current trends indicate that print advertising will engage an estimated 208.20m readers (or roughly 30% of the total EU population) by 2027.<sup>26</sup> Ironically, this figure could be much higher with strategic investment from forward-thinking brands.

As an advertising channel, door drop media has the highest penetration rate in the European market. Penetration rates of other major channels in the EU, like internet, TV and radio, have risen to 92%, 95% and 84%, respectively.<sup>27,28,29,30</sup> However, despite digital channels becoming more accessible from shrinking device costs, there has been little to no growth in penetration rates in recent years.<sup>31,32,33</sup>



Conversely, practically every consumer has a home address that can be targeted as part of a flyer campaign, of which, research shows that the overwhelming majority receive flyers regularly. For example, 95% of German consumers receive flyers, leaflets and catalogues with some frequency.<sup>34</sup> This means that printed media is a leading way to build and maintain brand awareness in the mass market since door drop can give marketers more access to consumer attention than digital channels.

If this wasn't enough, door drop advertising holds a unique advantage over other marketing channels because it operates at the household level rather than an individual one. Surveys show that once consumers receive a flyer or another piece of campaign material, they consistently share it with others in their household. This trend is evident across EU and UK consumers, meaning that individuals become vectors for the campaign, giving door drop media extra reach – of up to 7 additional consumers – that siloed, individualised digital campaigns don't.<sup>35,36</sup>

While consumers can share some types of social ads or tag other users, this is not true for other programmatic solutions, such as embedded video advertising. As a result, door drop media can generate a multiplier effect to deepen its reach that other online channels can't.

<sup>26</sup> Statista (2023): Print Advertising - Europe

<sup>27</sup> Eurostat (2023) Level of internet access - households

<sup>28</sup> Statista (2023): TV penetration rate in Europe from 2017 to 2027

<sup>29</sup> Broadcast Networks Europe (2023): Europe's radio landscape

<sup>30</sup> Statista (2023): Share of households with internet access in the European Union (EU) from 2009 to 2022

<sup>31</sup> World Economic Forum (2015): Why is tech getting cheaper?

<sup>32</sup> Statista (2023): TV penetration rate in Europe from 2017 to 2027

<sup>33</sup> Statista (2023): Share of households with internet access in the European Union (EU) from 2009 to 2022

<sup>34</sup> FOCUS (2021): Promotions Insights

<sup>35</sup> ELMA (2014): Perception of Door Drop Media by European Consumers

<sup>36</sup> The Data & Marketing Association (2022): Door Drop Report 2022



# [WHAT DOES DOOR DROP OFFER?]

## IMPACT

Unlike digital advertising mediums, door drop is an extremely popular and trusted media channel. Pan-EU research indicates that door drop is the most favoured advertising method for retail brands, with as many as 80% of European consumers preferring door drop to other advertising channels.<sup>37</sup> This trend is consistent across product categories (like groceries, electronics and clothing) and regions (such as Germany, Austria and France), meaning door drop media is an extremely flexible advertising tool.<sup>38,39</sup>

What's more, a study of French consumers found that 67% of respondents considered flyers and catalogues 'useful' and 59% read them at least once a week.<sup>40</sup> Interestingly, these figures rose to 90% and 84%, respectively, within the study's majority cohort (those aged 35-49). By contrast, favorability is more mixed for other advertising channels (like TV and online ads), which most EU consumers rank below 50%.<sup>41</sup>

Such favorability means door drop media is highly efficient at grabbing consumers' attention and prompting them to take action, like visiting a shop or website.<sup>42,43</sup> Consumers tend to spend up to 20 minutes reading door drop media and are particularly interested in local events, deals and news.<sup>44,45</sup>

From here, data from the DMA's 2022 Door Drop Report indicates that 89% of consumers remember receiving printed media, which is more than any other advertising channel.<sup>46</sup>

Campaign materials from the average door drop are then typically interacted with over three times a month, which generates a 5% average response rate (compared to digital campaigns' <2%).<sup>47,48,49</sup>

Therefore, across the lifetime of a campaign, we see that leaflets have among the highest ROI as well as the largest share of sales effect - positioning door drop as a leading TOFU marketing channel.<sup>50</sup>



**DOOR DROP IS THE MOST FAVOURED  
ADVERTISING METHOD FOR RETAIL  
BRANDS, WITH AS MANY AS 80% OF  
EUROPEAN CONSUMERS PREFERRING DOOR  
DROP TO OTHER ADVERTISING CHANNELS**

<sup>37</sup> ELMA (2014): Perception of Door Drop Media by European Consumers

<sup>38</sup> FOCUS (2017): The use and efficiency of the leaflets

<sup>39</sup> ELMA (2014): Perception of Door Drop Media by European Consumers

<sup>40</sup> Bonial (2022): Les Français et les prospectus et catalogues publicitaires (Février 2022)

<sup>41</sup> ELMA (2014): Perception of Door Drop Media by European Consumers

<sup>42</sup> JICMAIL (2022): Attention Pilot Study

<sup>43</sup> ELMA (2014): Perception of Door Drop Media by European Consumers

<sup>44</sup> Profacts (2021): Consumer Connection Survey

<sup>45</sup> Bundesverband Deutscher Anzeigenblätter & Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach (2022): Leserakzeptanzstudie

<sup>46</sup> The Data & Marketing Association (2022): Door Drop Report 2022

<sup>47</sup> The Data & Marketing Association (2022): Door Drop Report 2022

<sup>48</sup> JICMail (2023): Response Rate Tracker

<sup>49</sup> HubSpot (2020): What's a Good Clickthrough Rate? New Benchmark Data for Google AdWords

<sup>50</sup> Acceleration & FK Distribution (2022): Media ROI in Denmark (June 2022)

# [WHAT DOES DOOR DROP OFFER?]

## CREATIVE POTENTIAL

As marketing tools, digital advertising channels are visual-only creative mediums. However, door drop media is a tangible and graphical product, meaning it gives advertising professionals an extra feature – physicality – to leverage when engaging consumers. As such, door drop presents a unique opportunity to impress customers by using textural qualities to engage consumers beyond visual details alone.

For example, high-quality paper and embossed details can pique readers' interest by providing extra sensory experiences and even convey a sense of luxury. Similarly, door drop campaigns involving free product samples can excite consumers about upcoming releases and even help educate them on what to expect when purchasing them later on.

What's more, for historically digital-first brands with a younger target audience, door drop can also be an innovative marketing tool. Despite stereotypes of poor uptake, flyers and door drop media are highly effective because of their perceived novelty from younger consumers. So much so that Gen Z consumers (those born from 1997 onwards) spend more time reading printed media – up to an hour a week – than they do on digital platforms.<sup>51</sup>

In turn, data from JICMail shows that Gen Z is 40% more likely to change their mind about a brand than the average UK adult.<sup>52</sup> This means that door drop media can help attract *and* retain consumers by building brand awareness and generating leads. However, as with any advertising campaign, mastery of the creative medium is essential.



**DOOR DROP MEDIA IS A  
TANGIBLE AND GRAPHICAL  
PRODUCT TO LEVERAGE  
WHEN ENGAGING  
CONSUMERS**



<sup>51</sup> Reuters Agency (2021): If Millennials killed print, will Gen Z revive it?

<sup>52</sup> The Data & Marketing Association (2021): What is The Response Rate From Direct Mail Campaigns?

# [WHAT DOES DOOR DROP OFFER?]

## COMPLIANCE

Compliance within advertising is not a new problem; regulations ensuring campaign materials are accurate and fair have been around for decades. However, GDPR legislation and the Digital Services and Markets Acts have shaken the digital advertising industry in particular.

As a whole, the EU's digital strategy seeks to bolster consumer privacy protections by limiting data collection/sharing and making online platforms more transparent in the interest of competition. Part of the new regulations mandate that digital platforms must make (at least some parts of) their algorithm's workings public. Unfortunately, brands could soon see their online campaigns become less effective as digital platforms lose their competitive advantage.

With such sweeping changes being introduced within a five-year period, many advertisers are wondering whether more regulation is on the horizon and what they can do to adapt. Here, door drop media offers a solution. The effectiveness, reach and targeting methods of door drop media remain undiminished. By targeting bricks and mortar and not people, the offline advertising channel offers marketers an inherently-compliant advertising solution. This is because door drop media uses census information and other semi-anonymised data sources, each of which is consensually provided or publicly available. Therefore, marketers don't have to worry about compliance with domestic or international privacy laws.

In addition, opt-in schemes within some EU Member States and brands' existing customer information provide further targeting opportunities that are fully compliant.<sup>53</sup> For example, 55% of French consumers plan on using an *Oui Pub* sticker to welcome door drop media.<sup>54</sup> Brands can also enrich their consumer targeting further via geo-marketing strategies that take advantage of satellite data.<sup>55</sup>



<sup>53</sup> Government of the Netherlands (2023): Distributing advertising material

<sup>54</sup> CoSpirit (2023): 1 Français sur 2 souhaite poser l'autocollant Oui Pub pour continuer à bénéficier de réductions

<sup>55</sup> Prospega (2023): Home



# [WHAT DOES DOOR DROP OFFER?]

## SUSTAINABILITY

Consumers perceive digital advertising as more sustainable. For instance, 73% of French consumers aged 35 or under consider *online* flyers and catalogues to be more “green”.<sup>56</sup> However, this isn’t necessarily the case.

Aside from electrical devices relying on precious metals and plastics to work, there’s also the environmental impact of the software itself. A study from the University of Massachusetts showed that training a single AI algorithm can emit as much carbon as five cars in their lifetimes.<sup>57</sup> Therefore, carbon emissions and ecological damage are baked into the whole value chain of digital advertising. Into the future, forecasts suggest that, if left unchecked, the tech industry’s carbon footprint could increase to 14% of global emissions by 2040.<sup>58</sup>

In comparison, door drop campaign materials can be made with minimal environmental impact. If the paper used in door drop campaigns is not already from recycled sources, virgin paper can be manufactured either as a byproduct of the forest industry or farmed sustainably.<sup>59</sup> Further down the supply chain, printing firms can use vegetable inks and dyes that minimise the environmental footprint of campaign materials.

Finally, cardboard and paper packaging is the most recycled material in Europe. For example, more than 80% of EU consumers placed flyers and other packaging materials into recycling channels in 2020.<sup>60,61</sup>



**MORE THAN 80% OF EU CONSUMERS PLACED FLYERS AND OTHER PACKAGING MATERIALS INTO RECYCLING CHANNELS IN 2020**

<sup>56</sup> Bonial (2022): Les Français et les prospectus et catalogues publicitaires (Février 2022)

<sup>57</sup> MIT Technology review (2019): Training a single AI model can emit as much carbon as five cars in their lifetimes

<sup>58</sup> The European Commission (2020): Supporting the Green Transition

<sup>59</sup> Two Sides (2023): Electronic Communication Also Has Environmental Impacts

<sup>60</sup> Two Sides (2023): Paper Packaging Is Part of the Circular Economy

<sup>61</sup> Eurostat (2023): Recycling rate of packaging waste by type of packaging



# [WHAT DOES DOOR DROP OFFER?]

## TRUE OMNICHANNEL ADVERTISING

Digital marketing strategies can disenfranchise vulnerable segments of society, including older or socially deprived consumers who struggle with digital access or literacy. So, overcoming these barriers is becoming an important part of omnichannel campaigns. Therefore, brand interactions must evolve past being digital-only and adopt comprehensive tools to engage customers in different areas of their lives. Namely, offline marketing via channels like door drop media.

Already, between 82-88% of consumer age groups prefer brand interactions delivered through digital and physical channels.<sup>62</sup> Despite this, marketers have yet to fully capitalise on these preferences, as offline channels are a largely neglected part of the customer journey at present.

Digital media spending far outpaces offline media, receiving €115.40 billion in investment versus €13.82 billion in 2023.<sup>63,64</sup> This is in spite of research showing that door drop media is a reliable driver of the customer journey. The latest figures from JICMail show that, of the 83% of consumers aged 16-34 that opened or read a piece of printed media in 2021, 21% then went on to discuss it with a peer, and 14% visited the sender's website.<sup>65</sup> This means door drop is one of the most attention-efficient campaign tools.

For instance, across a typical campaign of 1 million bought impressions, door drop is 90% more cost-efficient at attracting consumer attention and engagement than digital media, coming in at just £0.10 versus £0.19 per minute.<sup>66</sup> Moreover, research from The Data & Marketing Association indicates that 90% of campaigns that included door drop media managed to acquire new customers, compared to 59% of those without.<sup>67</sup>

Therefore, with the right data capture methods (like QR codes with unique tracking links), brands can accurately measure last-click attributes of door drop media and build brand awareness or generate new leads with great success.<sup>68</sup>

**DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGIES CAN DISENFRANCHISE VULNERABLE SEGMENTS OF SOCIETY, INCLUDING OLDER OR SOCIALLY DEPRIVED CONSUMERS WHO STRUGGLE WITH DIGITAL ACCESS OR LITERACY.**



<sup>62</sup> Marketing Dive (2019): Study: Gen Z prefers social media as top influence channel

<sup>63</sup> Statista (2023): Digital Advertising - Europe

<sup>64</sup> Statista (2023): Print Advertising - Europe

<sup>65</sup> JICMail (2021): 4 year trend: Greater numbers of 16-34's reading and using mail, discussing it and going online as a result of receiving mail

<sup>66</sup> JICMAIL (2022): Attention Pilot Study

<sup>67</sup> The Data & Marketing Association (2021): What is 'The' Response Rate From Leaflet Distribution? (Revised Edition)

<sup>68</sup> ktmonitor (2023): Prospekte und anzeigenblätter in zeiten der digitalisierung

# [DOOR DROP MARKETING AT ITS BEST]

## VOGUE ITALIA

### Challenge:

Condé Nast, the owner of Vogue, is one of the world's leading publishing companies for high-end editorial products. Shortly after becoming the magazine's creative director, Giovanni Bianco wanted to dedicate an issue entirely to Italy. Referred to as a 'love letter to its homeland' and totalling 700+ pages, the cover featured famous Italian hotspots and designers.<sup>69</sup> Given this, Condé Nast wanted to build market hype and drive interest in the bold new direction for this iconic brand.

### Solution:

Condé Nast reached out to ELMA to build a door drop campaign targeting women living in luxury residential areas in Milan and Rome and who likely had an interest in fashion.

ELMA helped distribute 6,000 branded bags ahead of the August release date. The bags weighed around 1.5kg and contained various freebies, including a pack of luxury Vogue-branded goods. ELMA partners managed the campaign using Smart Track which delivered real-time tracking via the Copernico web platform.

### Result:

The September covers were hailed as 'groundbreaking' and a 'must read' by a range of industry magazines.<sup>70,71</sup> The daring new artistic direction from Giovanni Bianco, combined with various regional marketing campaigns under editor Emanuele Farneti, meant that Condé Nast Italia reported a 12.5% growth in advertising sales across 300+ pages.

Upon publication, the timely marketing activity also helped promote Vogue Fashion's Night Out scheduled later in the month, which, in turn, also contributed to a further increase in sales. Across the remainder of the month, Condé Nast reported a 30% increase in turnover compared to September last year - a massive success for the then 125-year-old publication.



**ELMA HELPED DISTRIBUTE  
6,000 BRANDED BAGS  
AHEAD OF THE AUGUST  
RELEASE DATE. CONDÉ  
NAST ITALIA REPORTED  
A 12.5% GROWTH IN  
ADVERTISING SALES  
ACROSS 300+ PAGES.**



<sup>69</sup> Fashionista (2017): Must Read: 'Vogue' Italia's September Issue Celebrates Italy, Why Younger Brands Invest in Archives

<sup>70</sup> Design Scene (2017): The Groundbreaking Bacio for VOGUE Italia September 2017 Covers

<sup>71</sup> Fashionista (2017): Must Read: 'Vogue' Italia's September Issue Celebrates Italy, Why Younger Brands Invest in Archives

# [DOOR DROP MARKETING AT ITS BEST]

## SKY

### **Challenge:**

In the streaming age, consumers have unparalleled access to content. As a result, traditional media companies are facing increased competition. While door drop media had been a proven and cost-effective advertising medium for Sky, the company realised it had to communicate its value more effectively to Freeview users in particular.

### **Solution:**

Working with Sky's insights and decision sciences team, the team identified high-intent customers by comparing (among other data points) regional paid TV penetration rates versus household income estimates.

From here, the team built generated media to entice readers using advertising best practices, like featuring characters from the most popular TV shows at the time (Game of Thrones) as well as a half-price subscription offer. Combined, this built a proposition readers would find hard to refuse: entertainment everyone was talking about for less than they expected.

### **Result:**

The campaign's results were outstanding, vastly outperforming Sky's existing use of door drop advertising solutions.

Both customer acquisition and conversion rates were nearly 20% above target, meaning that the unique targeting solution and creative assets complimented each other perfectly. By combining a sense of 'FOMO' (fear of missing out) and providing an attractive deal to resolve the issue, the campaign played on customers' emotions and helped reframe their value appraisal of paid TV subscriptions. By the end, the incremental sales model meant the campaign beat the previous champion format by 22% and delivered a 1.7:1 ROI.



# [DOOR DROP MARKETING AT ITS BEST]

## GILLETTE

### Challenge:

Ahead of releasing a new razor in Europe (and after incurring \$750 million in development costs), Gillette wanted to launch the product with style using a pan-EU giveaway.<sup>72</sup> Though Gillette was already the world's largest maker of shaving products at the time, the 'razor wars' were in full effect against competitor Wilkinson, so a big market release was vital.<sup>73,74</sup>

Gillette identified eight primary European markets: UK, Italy, Spain, France, Portugal, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands for its giveaway – far from a small task for any brand. Given the massive geographic scope of the campaign, partnering with an expert logistical partner was essential.

### Solution:

Gillette contacted ELMA and the two companies worked together to set up a now iconic two-stage door drop advertising campaign:

**Day 1:** Consumers receive a yellow bag at their home address containing 'Get a FREE shaving product from Gillette'. Consumers are asked to complete some information on the back and place the bag outside their door.

**Day 2:** The regional distributor revisits the household to collect the bag. If the consumer has ticked Mach 3, they receive Gillette shaving gel to enhance the Mach 3's performance and fully deliver on their promise of 'The Best a Man Can Get'. If not, they received a Mach 3 Turbo to improve their shaving experience.

### Result:

The entire campaign took 18 months to complete. Campaign activity in each of the eight countries was phased in and out before starting in a new territory to ensure the distribution was consistent. The sales increase amounted to roughly €30 million in additional revenue, securing Gillette's place as the winner of the 'razor wars.'



OVER 8 MILLION RAZORS WERE DISTRIBUTED AND GILLETTE EXPERIENCED A 25% INCREASE IN SALES THANKS TO ITS INNOVATIVE OMNI-CHANNEL MARKETING STRATEGY.



<sup>72</sup> The Guardian (2003): It's Mach 3 versus Quattro as Gillette crosses swords with Schick

<sup>73</sup> The Guardian (2003): It's Mach 3 versus Quattro as Gillette crosses swords with Schick

<sup>74</sup> The Independent (2006): The knives are out in the razor wars



# [HOW TO GET STARTED WITH DOOR DROP]

Door drop campaigns are largely similar to digital advertising campaigns but with a few added logistical elements. Here we examine how brands can adopt door drop media into their marketing strategy to build true omnichannel advertising campaigns using offline touch points.



## TARGETING

As with digital media strategies, successful door drop advertising requires effective targeting. So, while you may already know your target audience, working with door drop media means you need to consider their wider lifestyle, like where they live and how they act.

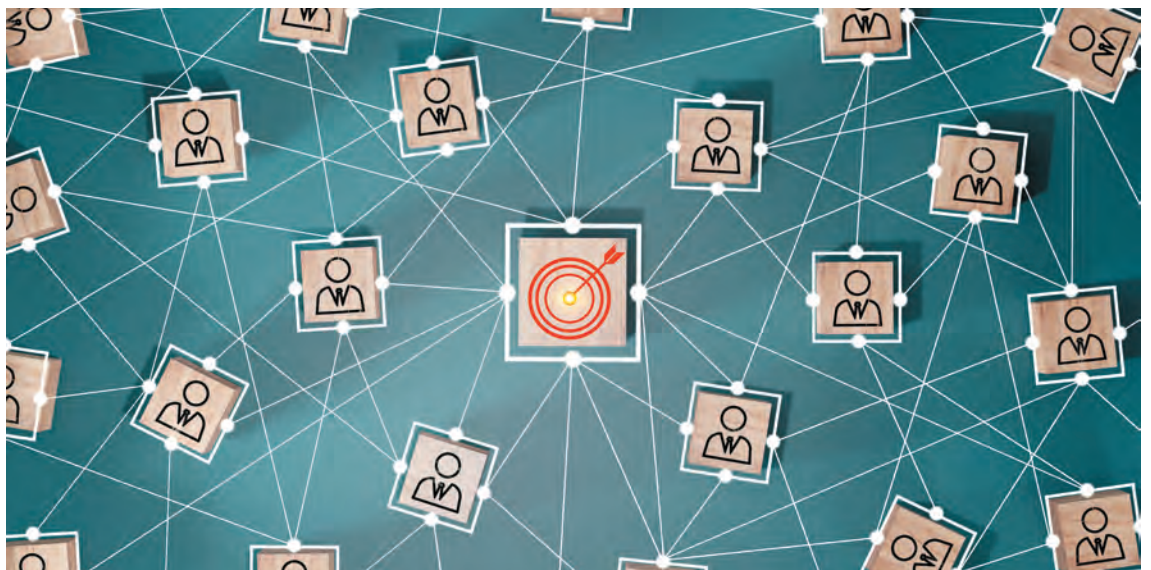
For instance, younger consumers tend to live in more urban areas and more overcrowded housing.<sup>75,76</sup> By contrast, older consumers tend to live rurally or by the coast where there's more space.<sup>77</sup> These differences can have a massive bearing on the logistics of your campaign (as we discuss shortly), so accurately modelling consumer behaviour is essential.

It's also vital to go deeper than demographic data alone since these details only reveal so much. For example, with those under 35s now interacting with door drop media more than any other age group, new opportunities are quickly emerging in this media channel.<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, warm mail (addressed mail) response rates are more than ten times higher than cold mail (unaddressed mail), so targeting your existing customers can prove highly effective.<sup>79</sup>

You can also partner with an expert door drop advertising partner to either fine-tune your existing consumer data or access their additional targeting capabilities to refine your campaign. From here, you can work together to build a long-term plan that incorporates door drop media into your wider advertising activity and build a comprehensive strategy of off and online touchpoints.

**'Mail isn't a one off thing in a box, it's about building connections over time.'**

— *Adrian Hoole, Head of Customer Engagement, Proximity London*



<sup>75</sup> Eurostat (2016): Urban Europe Statistics on cities, towns and suburbs

<sup>76</sup> Eurostat (2022): Young people - housing conditions

<sup>77</sup> Eurostat (2016): Urban Europe Statistics on cities, towns and suburbs

<sup>78</sup> The Data & Marketing Association (2021): What is 'The' Response Rate From Leaflet Distribution? (Revised Edition)

<sup>79</sup> JIC Mail (2023): Response Rate Tracker

# [HOW TO GET STARTED WITH DOOR DROP]



## CREATIVITY

Like all advertising campaigns, the creative quality of assets plays a significant role in the campaigns' success. However, door drop media comes with a few extra considerations that you will have to consider before launching your campaign. Some of which include technical factors like Pantone vs CMYK ink values, print method (screen, litho, transfer, etc.), print bleed, paper quality, and so on.

These will likely vary with your campaign's creative vision; however, it's handy to have some basic rules to follow each time. 2017 research from Focus showed that, across 17 European markets, consumers overwhelmingly preferred A4-sized leaflets. Austria showed the strongest preference, with 77% of respondents indicating the A4 preference, while Bosnia showed a slightly weaker one at 42%.<sup>80</sup>

For example, A3 leaflets tend to have more aggressive pricing and are therefore used more often in regions like Croatia and Bulgaria, where price competition is highest. However, this isn't a trend observed in similar markets like Poland or Romania, so choosing the right page format is essential.<sup>81</sup>

Some other best practices include:

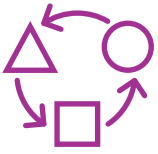
- Using high-quality photographs to engage readers
- Using short, impactful copy that's easy to digest and well-formatted
- Offering deals that contain tangible customer benefits and bold calls to action



<sup>80</sup> Focus (2017): Promotion Consumer Insight Study 2017

<sup>81</sup> Focus (2015): A3 leaflets pretend to be more price aggressive - How strong are these leaflets used by trade? - an international comparison

# [HOW TO GET STARTED WITH DOOR DROP]



## LOGISTICS

The complexity of running a door drop campaign increases with the number of consumers you're targeting and which type of door drop media you're using. Given this, an early decision you'll face in your door drop campaign is whether you want to handle the logistics in-house or outsource them to an external partner.

Keeping everything in-house is relatively easy for smaller campaigns, like the Vogue Italia case study above since the distribution process targets fewer households. However, campaigns covering larger areas or distributing product samples (as opposed to flyers) can quickly become challenging. This is because you'll likely need to hire extra labour support to cover larger geographic regions and distribute heavier campaign materials. For reference, the 6,000 Vogue Italia bags weighed 9,000kg in full, presenting a fixed limit on the number of bags that individual staff could handle. Similarly, running door drop campaigns in more rural areas can bring new problems since consumers don't live as densely, meaning the distribution process can take longer.<sup>82</sup>

By collaborating with an experienced door drop partner, you can ensure your campaign runs smoothly, regardless of whether you're operating at a local or multi-national level. For instance, door drop media distributors can optimise the logistics of your ad campaign by expanding or refining your targeting. You can also plan routes more efficiently so your ad budget is maximised. As a result, external advertising partners can deliver a campaign that has the possible highest impact with consumers.



<sup>82</sup> Eurostat (2021): Population and housing census 2021 - population grids



# [HOW TO GET STARTED WITH DOOR DROP]



## MEASUREMENT

Finally, just like in digital advertising, you'll need to determine the KPIs for your campaign and how you'll measure them. Fortunately, the measurement tools for offline channels can be similar to the online campaign tools since most marketing activity aims to facilitate one of three main goals (brand awareness, customer acquisition/retention, and revenue generation).

For example, a campaign geared towards driving brand awareness or customer acquisition can deploy QR codes to help customers find your website (and make an account) more easily. Alternatively, you can use unique discount codes to convince customers to make a purchase – regardless of whether they're a new customer or a longstanding one. From here, you can use this data to measure how engaged your customers are and use IP address data to compare this to where you've emphasised your media distribution.

ELMA data suggests that around half of consumers use a search engine once they've received a flyer or leaflet.<sup>83</sup> So, once your campaign begins, consider adding a message or prompt on your home page asking customers whether they've seen your flyer. This tactic allows you to establish an omnichannel brand presence in your customers' lives and build stronger relationships with them as a result.



<sup>83</sup> FELMA (2014): Perception of Door Drop Media by European Consumers



## [KEY TAKEAWAYS]

Low trust, stagnating returns, and systemic fraud – it's clear that digital marketing strategies can no longer be the sole focus of today's brands. The online advertising market has grown saturated, and consumers have become distrustful of online offers, meaning the engagement and uptake of online advertising is in decline. If this wasn't enough, the vast majority (+80%) of EU consumers prefer both digital *and* physical brand interactions, meaning a blended marketing strategy is now critical to reliably reach consumers.<sup>84</sup>

Here, door drop media offers a solution. The high reach and creative novelty of door drop means marketers can build brand awareness and convert customers effectively using multi-sensory media and product samples. Door drop is also inherently compliant and more sustainable than online campaigns, meaning marketers can avoid regulatory and reputational stress.

Forward-thinking brands looking to adopt door drop media needn't worry since offline and digital media strategies are largely similar. Effective campaigns require well-made creative assets working towards a singular goal and delivered to a defined target audience. However, expert partners are available to support brands experimenting with door drop campaigns via sophisticated targeting mechanisms, sustainable supply chains and years of logistical expertise in critical European markets.



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<sup>84</sup> Marketing Dive (2019): Study: Gen Z prefers social media as top influence channel

# [ABOUT ELMA]

ELMA (European Letterbox Marketing Association) is the leading European organisation for door drop advertising solutions, including printed media, such as flyers, leaflets and brochures, as well as catalogues and product samples. Our carefully selected membership represents the best-in-class advertisers in each market, capable of delivering quality campaigns at scale and within budget.

Our members are at the forefront of innovations in offline and letterbox marketing; utilising data-driven geo-marketing campaigns to drive sophisticated targeting solutions, better client outcomes and sustainable supply chains to minimise our carbon footprint.

If you would like to know more about why offline channels like doordrop media should be included in your campaign and where it can add value to your business, **get in touch today.**

## FOLLOW ELMA ON



For more information contact Mark Davies at [mark.davies@elma-europe.com](mailto:mark.davies@elma-europe.com)



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European Letterbox  
Marketing Association

