



# Cross Channel CONNECTIONS

Achieve Your Marketing Target

Consolidated Graphic Communications



## Can Direct Mail Stop Competitors from Stealing Your Customers?

Can direct mail stop your competitors from stealing your customers? It certainly can help if you use it right. In fact, print has never been more effective at

protecting your competitive position. Let's look at some of the ways you can use your marketing communications to head problems off before they begin.

### SOME OF THE REASONS CUSTOMERS DEFECT TO COMPETITORS IN THE FIRST PLACE

#### The Marketplace Is Changing

Just look at the past 12 months. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the way consumers shop is changing. Sales of "at home" meal kits are soaring, while gym memberships are struggling. But it doesn't take a pandemic to change the world around you. Cultural, political, and societal changes impact the marketplace, too.

#### The Competitive Threat is Growing—and You Miss It

Years ago, AT&T became the poster child for missing the risk posed by up-and-coming competitors. AT&T built its profit model based on the assumption that calls would be made from landlines for a long time, and its market messaging was based on that premise, as well. When new, nimble mobile and broadband providers began taking chunks out of AT&T's business, the telecom giant started scrambling.<sup>1</sup>

#### Your Customer Mix Is Changing

Traditionally, your sales may have come from twenty-and thirty-something moms, but what if you are now selling to more single fathers and stay-at-home dads? Don't assume that your customer base looks the same now as it did several years, or even six months ago.

### HOW CAN MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS HELP?

#### Get Regular Feedback From Your Customers

Whether through direct mail or email surveys, pop-ups on your website, or on-site events, continually check in to make sure you know who they are and are offering what they need.

#### Solicit Objective Input

It's easy to filter information according to existing biases, so get insights from experts outside your company.

#### Use Creative and Eye-Catching Invitations

Think dimensional pop-ups, high-gloss mailers, or those with die cuts or interactive elements to make potential interviewees feel important and valued. You are asking them to provide in-depth insight that helps your business, so make them feel special.

**Keep that competitive reconnaissance coming.** It should not be a once-and-done thing. Use direct mail, email, and other marketing communications to continually solicit customer input and keep your ear to the ground!

<sup>1</sup>Example provided by Barry Horwitz, president of Horwitz & Co., LLC, in the blog post, "Can You Hear Me Now?"