



SPARK QUARTERLY

A NEWSLETTER FROM VARISPARK



Don't Let the January USPS® Postage Increase Keep You From Experiencing the Growth Direct Mail Can Provide

A [USPS postage increase](#) took effect in late January, with the price of a First Class Mail Forever stamp increasing to \$0.68. This latest price adjustment is part of the [USPS Delivering for America](#) plan, a 10-year initiative that will help provide critical updates to the Postal Service's infrastructure and technology.

Other increases as part of the January 2024 update include:

- Letters (\$0.66 to \$0.68)
- Letters, metered 1 ounce (\$0.63 to \$0.64)
- Domestic postcards (\$0.51 to \$0.53)
- International postcards (\$1.50 to \$1.55)
- International letters, 1 ounce (\$1.50 to \$1.55)

The good news is that direct mail marketing is still an affordable, effective way to connect with and engage your target audience, particularly if you're designing direct mail marketing campaigns that take advantage of new and innovative technologies that are designed to make your direct mail more dynamic and impactful.

In fact, the Emerging and Advanced Technology Program — which is part of the [2024 USPS Promotions and Incentive Programs](#) — offers up to a 4% discount on postage for creating direct mailers that incorporate various digital technologies, including augmented reality and video in print.

While the cost of postage has increased, brands can still achieve a [robust ROI on their direct mailers](#) by partnering with an end-to-end printing and mailing provider that has the knowledge and experience to execute high-volume mailers that are designed to boost response rates.

Not only can we help you navigate the challenge of controlling print costs, we can also help you create targeted, personalized direct mail campaigns that engage and connect with consumers in a way that differentiates your brand and helps grow your business.

[CALCULATE THE ROI OF YOUR NEXT DIRECT MAIL CAMPAIGN](#)



Are Recurring Postcard Programs *Actually* Sustainable? They Can Be...

Regardless of company size or even industry, sustainability ranks as one of the top concerns for brands. But if the continued push for more sustainable practices is making you rethink postcard mailing programs as a part of your overall sales and marketing strategy, there's a bit of good news for you: regular postcard mailing programs are *actually* sustainable, provided you think more strategically about how you execute these kinds of high-volume mailings.

But what does this kind of more strategic approach include?

Thinking more sustainably about the resources and materials used to print direct mail is a good start, and prioritizing more eco-friendly inks and recycled papers can help reduce your carbon footprint while still executing highly effective postcard mailings.

This is just the beginning though, and there's more to creating sustainable postcard mailing programs than choosing paper manufactured using post-consumer fiber. We recently discussed [the environmental impact of regular postcard mailings](#) and how brands can facilitate this kind of recurring print outreach with an eye toward more sustainable practices.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT SUSTAINABLE POSTCARD MAILINGS](#)



Direct Mail Response Rates Are 5x Higher Compared to Any Other Communication Channel, And Brands Are Taking Notice

Digital ad spend is expected to increase in 2024, but this doesn't mean that print marketing communications like direct mail are any less effective — in fact, today's marketers are more frequently leveraging direct mail because of its ability to better connect with consumers and boost response rates.

This is part of the reason why midsize businesses increased their direct marketing budgets in 2023, and why many believe this trend will continue throughout 2024.

For example, direct mail is engaged with on average 4x once it's delivered, and almost 40% of consumers engage with a brand because of direct mail marketing. Plus, more than 35% of consumers actually make a purchase after receiving a piece of direct mail.

With a more strategic approach to direct mail that prioritizes personalization, reduces waste via print-on-demand technology, and integrates digital components like QR codes or custom URLs, brands can create regular direct mail campaigns that are designed to increase response rates and maximize your print marketing spend.

[We partner with brands](#) for end-to-end support in the printing and mailing of targeted, high-quality direct mailers, and our years of experience in direct mail marketing can also help brands take advantage of significant [USPS® promotions and incentives](#) to help reduce postage costs.

Source: The Data Marketing Association (2018)

[BOOST THE ROI OF YOUR NEXT DIRECT MAIL CAMPAIGN](#)



Sending Bulk? 5 Ways to Increase ROI on High-Volume Direct Mail Campaigns

Sending bulk direct mail can provide impressive ROI for your marketing campaigns — if done effectively. The challenge for brands in the digital era is understanding the strategic path to take to help ensure bulk mailers actually