



USPS' NEUROMARKETING STUDY HIGHLIGHTS DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HOW CONSUMERS PROCESS PRINT AND DIGITAL MEDIA

The U.S. Postal Service recently worked with Temple University's Center for Neural Decision Making to conduct a neuromarketing study.¹ The goal was to compare how consumers respond to physical versus digital media during their buying process, including how the media format impacts intent to purchase.

The study used survey questionnaires, eye tracking, core biometrics and neuroimaging to examine all levels of physiological and neural activity. Some of the most interesting results of this study include the following:

- Participants' self-reported assessments of the different ads' impact and efficacy were not at all accurate.
- Digital ads capture attention more quickly, and their content is processed more quickly.
- Physical ads engage participants for a longer period of time.
- Physical ads produce a stronger emotional response.
- Physical ads are better for building a subconscious value and desire for a product or service.
- Physical ads leave a longer-lasting impact for easy recall when making a purchase decision.

For organizations looking to optimize their marketing mix, this study has some very practical implications. For example, as the report points out, "if a busy consumer only has 10-20 seconds to view advertisements, a company is more likely to get its message across quicker through digital, rather than physical, ads." But "Physical ads had a longer lasting impact than digital. A week after the initial viewing, the emotional response and concrete memory of the physical ads allowed participants to more quickly and confidently remember the physical ads than digital ads. This may be crucial when making actual purchases."

To download the full report, visit: <https://www.uspsoig.gov/sites/default/files/document-library-files/2015/rarc-wp-15-012.pdf>.