

mail matters

Fun Facts about Direct Mail

Did you know?

Benjamin Franklin created the **first American mail-order catalog** in 1774. It sold scientific and technical books.

Aaron Montgomery Ward sent out the **first modern mail order catalog** in 1872. It consisted of a single sheet of paper with a price list and merchandise for sale.

In 1888, Richard **Sears published his first of many mail order catalogs**. It advertised watches and jewelry for "The R.W. Sears Watch Co."

Philadelphia pharmacist Asa Candler **invented the coupon** in 1895 by offering free Cokes in a local newspaper.

Between 1908 and 1940, Sears Roebuck and Company **sold over 70,000 homes by mail-order**. They were shipped via railroad boxcars and included all materials needed to build a sturdy and well-designed house.

The **Direct Marketing Association (DMA)** was founded in 1917 to represent the direct mail community. Today, the association has nearly 3,600 members and is the leading global trade association for all direct marketing tools and techniques. This year, direct mail represented 34% of the total advertising and marketing revenue for direct marketers.

In 1959, the U.S. Post Office and the Navy experimented with **using guided missiles to deliver letters** quickly and efficiently.

In 2005, nearly **\$200 billion in contributions were collected** through direct mail for good causes – from charities supporting the poor to foundations conducting important medical research.

Every Christmas, Neiman Marcus unveils a fantasy gift list in their annual Christmas catalog. In 2007, items for sale exclusively by catalog included a **\$1.44 million submarine** and a \$1 million 305-carat uncut diamond necklace.

In 2007, direct mail accounted for 3.5 percent of total U.S. gross domestic product. About **10.6 million American jobs** depend on direct mail.

California, Texas, New York, Florida, and Illinois are the **top five states** who shop the most from catalogs.

According to research, 69 percent of **Americans shop from catalogs**, on the Internet, over the phone, or by mail, while 81 percent of U.S. households usually read some or all of the advertising mail they receive.

Hundreds of millions of pieces of mail are delivered everyday to more than 141 million homes and businesses in the United States.

