

# mail matters

## Keep the Mail Moving

This year, 11 states have had 14 bills before them that could put you out of business. In states around the country, environmental and privacy advocates have mobilized in support of Do Not Mail legislation that would essentially close the mail channel. The threat is growing and the potential impact on your business is more serious than you might imagine. The Direct Marketing Association is working hard to address this issue, but we need your help.

### Direct Mail is Under Threat

Groups supporting Do Not Mail legislation are well funded and organized - they've already raised \$30 million to stop the mail. While they claim they are acting to help the environment, their tactics and solutions are misguided, uninformed, and will do great damage to the economy. These groups are motivated by the successful passage of the national Do Not Call registry and have committed to expanding state Do Not Mail legislation to a federal initiative.

Any state or federal legislation that weakens the postal system and restricts businesses from communicating with customers would have disastrous economic consequences for small and large businesses nationwide. At least 3.6 million U.S. jobs in the direct mail business would be affected and it would undercut \$686 billion in incremental sales a year. Our purpose is to educate policymakers and prove that Do Not Mail registries are a bad idea for consumers and for businesses.

### About Do Not Mail Bills

Increasing numbers of states are working on Do Not Mail legislation. Clearly, as this issue gains attention nationwide, the stakes could not be higher for the mailing community. The movement for Do Not Mail legislation will continue to spread across the country unless we work together to stop it.

Do Not Mail legislation is unnecessary and duplicative because the direct mailing

community already provides consumers with options for removing their names from marketing lists. Consumers have a wide variety of choices ranging from contacting an individual company, to registering with [www.dmchoice.org](http://www.dmchoice.org). Our direct marketing community has demonstrated that it is more than capable of self-regulation and does not require legislation to manage advertising mail. DMA's mail preference service, DMA Choice, prevented 930 million mailings last year, and we are committed to helping consumers to better manage their mail.

The mailing community recognizes that consumers want choice in mailing, are environmentally conscious, and want to secure their personal information. On all three fronts, marketers and the mailing community are working to educate consumers on the actions businesses are taking to address these concerns.

### Supporting the Economy

To many consumers and policymakers, Do Not Mail bills may sound like an idea whose time has come. However, learning even a little about advertising mail and direct mail quickly reveals the many problems that Do Not Mail registries would create.

Direct mail provides an effective and cost-efficient way for businesses and nonprofit organizations to connect with current customers and donors in addition to potential consumers and donors. In 2007, non-profit and commercial marketers spent \$55.3 billion on direct marketing in the United States. In 2007, direct mail accounted for 3.5 percent of total U.S. gross domestic product. Also in 2007, there were nearly 460,000 direct mail employees in the U.S. Their collective sales efforts directly supported 3.1 million other jobs, accounting for a total of 3.6 million U.S. jobs.



The most recent USPS Household Diary study indicated that 81 percent of U.S. households usually read some or all of the advertising mail they receive. A 2005 DMA study shows that 69 percent of people shop from catalogs, on the Internet, over the phone, or by mail. These studies prove that consumers value direct mail.

Direct mail can level the playing field between large and small businesses. You may receive a flyer or coupon for a sale at your local hardware store or drycleaner. Or a postcard letting you know a new restaurant serving your favorite cuisine is opening nearby. This is frequently information you cannot get any other way. These businesses would be seriously disadvantaged without access to advertising mail to reach potential customers.

Non-profit, environmental, and religious organizations use the mail to communicate and raise money. In 2005, nearly \$200 billion in individual contributions was collected through direct mail for good causes – from charities supporting the poor to foundations conducting important medical research. Direct mail also helps non-profits recruit volunteers and educate consumers about important social issues.

### Maintaining America's Postal Service

Rich or poor, urban or rural, every American gets mail. It's America's fairest form of communication. Catalogs and direct mail support the postal service by keeping prices low, deliveries frequent, and locations convenient.

One-third of the Postal Service's annual revenue depends on advertising mail, which helps support and pay for the U.S. Postal Service's 40,000 post offices nationwide and home delivery of mail six days per week.

Do Not Mail legislation will have catastrophic consequences for the U.S. Postal Service already projecting a \$1 billion deficit this year. Significant efforts to reduce advertising mail – historically one of the few growth areas for the U.S. Postal Service – may affect the home delivery Americans enjoy today. Ultimately, Do Not Mail legislation threatens the viability of the Postal Service, which would reduce services, options, and choices for all Americans.

### How You Can Help

The Direct Marketing Association, the leading global trade association of businesses and nonprofit organizations using and supporting multichannel direct marketing tools and techniques, is joining with mailing trade associations, companies, and postal unions to provide a unified voice on this issue through the Mail Moves America coalition.

DMA needs your help to bolster its support of the coalition's efforts to keep the mail channel open. A long-term, sustained effort to combat Do Not Mail legislation in multiple states will be an expensive undertaking and additional resources are required. DMA has already expended substantial resources on this effort, but to stay engaged at the highest possible level, your assistance is needed. Contributions to DMA's Mail Moves America Campaign will provide a foundation for DMA's support of Mail Moves America as well as the additional work that DMA will be doing on its own to defend the mail channel. Ensure that you've done what you can by contributing today. Please visit [www.the-dma.org/donotmail](http://www.the-dma.org/donotmail) for more information or contact Maria Krainova at [mkrainova@the-dma.org](mailto:mkrainova@the-dma.org) and (212) 768-7277, Ext. 1355.

