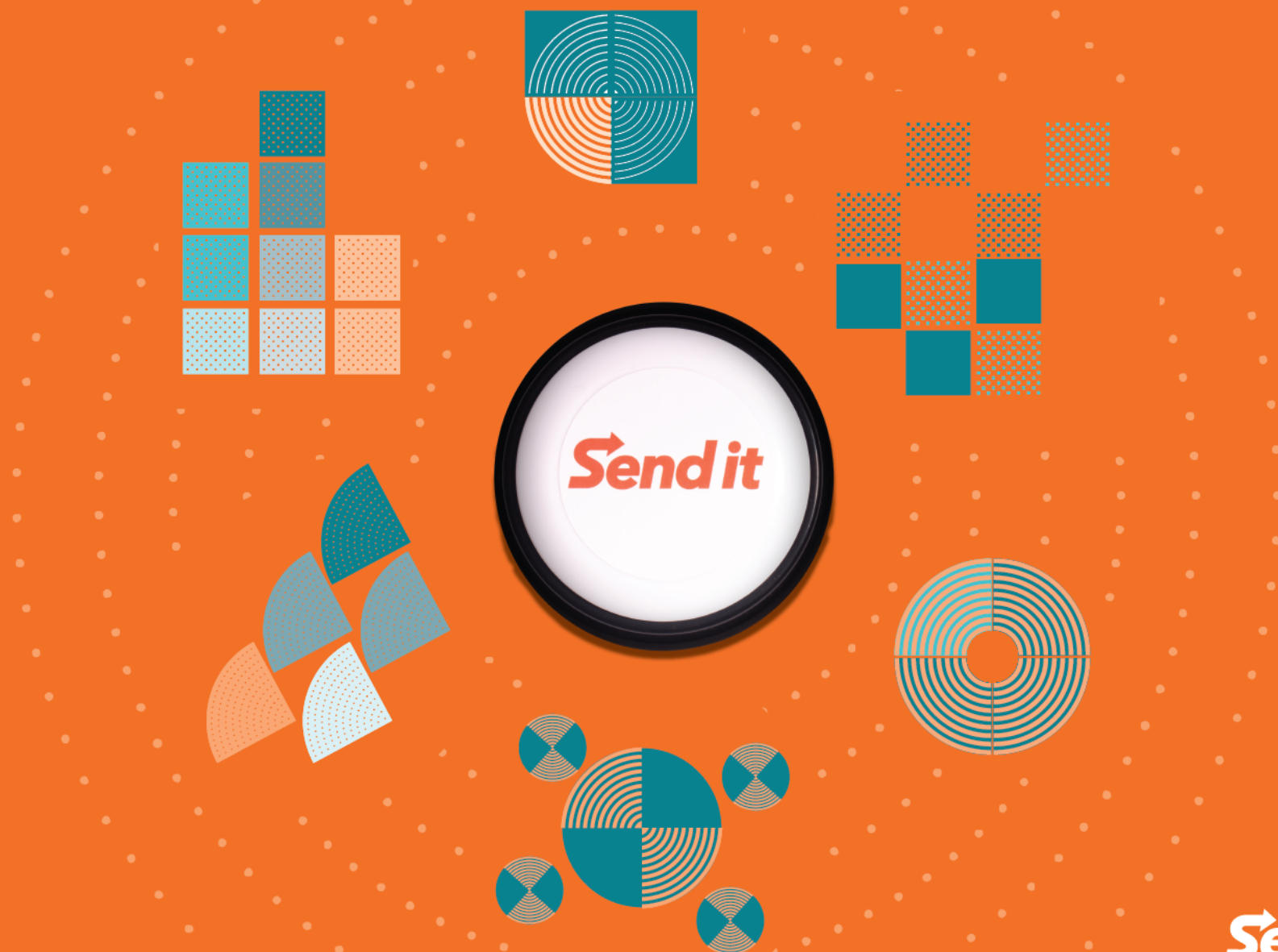


State of Sending

Direct Mail, Gifting, and Swag Management
Trends to Watch In 2020



Sendoso

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RELATIONSHIPS MATTER

In an increasingly digital world, people still have the desire to connect with others in a very real, meaningful way. That's why tactics like events and face-to-face meetings can be so effective*. But traveling to see every single prospect, customer, or employee in person isn't always feasible, so how can companies still create a personal relationship?

Sending direct mail, gifts, and swag has always been powerful ways to engage people, with research showing that it's ...

Enjoyable: 83% of consumers feel positively about receiving packages. [\(Source\)](#)

Memorable: Exposing people to ads shown in a physical format, particularly in sequence, has a stronger memory recognition and brand recall compared to the digital formats. [\(Source\)](#)

Persuasive: Direct mail's motivation response is 20% higher than digital media [\(Source\)](#)

Reciprocal: People are obliged to give back to others the form of a behavior, gift, or service that they have received first. [\(Source\)](#)

Branded: Consumers with an emotional connection to a brand have a 306% higher lifetime value. [\(Source\)](#)

But with the manual processes involved in sourcing, shipping, and tracking, teams tend to opt for more automated and integrated channels like digital; the channels where they can easily measure ROI.

Technology, however, has enabled companies to overcome the barriers of sending direct mail and gifts and managing their swag at scale. Sending Platforms have automated fulfillment and integrated it with engagement and reporting tools—making direct mail, gifts, and swag as easy to send as an email and empowering teams to measure and understand the ROI in the same way they can their digital marketing efforts.

With the ability to send items (and even personalize them) at scale, companies have a new channel to create memorable, offline experiences.

We embarked on this research to understand how companies are adapting (Are they sending more direct mail, gifts and swag than before? And if so, how? What are they sending? What were the results?) So we collected data from over 500 customers and more than 15,000 users across the globe and combined it with survey responses from a sample size of senders.

The result? Information about more than a million sends of direct mail, gifts, swag, and more. We hope you find this information insightful, educational, and perhaps even a little bit fun.

Thanks for taking the time to learn with us, and happy sending.



YEAR-OVER-YEAR GROWTH TRENDS

Since we started collecting data, we've seen a sustained increase in the overall amount of items being sent. The amount that companies are sending on a monthly basis increased 36% from 2018 to 2019. And business executives expect that it will continue to rise ...

"I think that direct mail is one of the forms of traditional media which will actually see an increase in use in 2020. Many digital marketing channels are becoming so oversaturated with brands that the demand outweighs the supply, causing cost-per-click rates to reach levels unprofitable for many brands. For this reason, many brands are experimenting with traditional forms of media like direct mail, which can be tested at small-scale for low cost."

Calloway Cook
President of Illuminate Labs

In the past, direct mail was often an overlooked channel in most marketing and sales toolkits because of the manual processes involved, inability to measure ROI, and fear of costs. But those challenges have been overcome.

Solutions like a Sending Platform automate the manual processes of fulfillment and has the ability to integrate with your marketing automation (Marketo, HubSpot), CRM (Salesforce) and sales engagement

tools (Salesloft, Outreach, Zant) to add digital and physical sends as part of your engagement strategy, as well as to measure the return on your investments in direct mail, gifting, and swag.

That last part is crucial: Compared to CPC, sending seems more expensive upfront. But the ability to measure ROI has enabled marketers to take a closer look at Customer Acquisition Cost. Suddenly, a \$50 send that leaves a meaningful impression doesn't seem as prohibitive when you realize that the number of digital impressions you paid for to acquire an account can go well into the hundreds of dollars.

Companies are also turning to direct mail because of its effectiveness, both in rising above digital noise and building meaningful relationships with buyers and customers.

"I predict sending will 10X in importance for sales and marketing professionals as it cuts through the clutter of emails/social media. I count on it to connect with high-value prospects and build brand awareness with my biggest clients."

George Leith
CRO at Vendasta

36%



increase in monthly sends
per company

"I have a feeling that sending is going to become a standard of most enterprise sales teams in all industries."

Ned Pruitt
Campaign
Marketing
Specialist at
Eventbrite



MOST POPULAR TEAMS SENDING

Typically considered a marketing function, we've found that sending direct mail, gifts, and swag is happening across sales development, sales, customer, and HR organizations, as well. Marketing professionals are expecting this trend to continue.

"Sending will continue to grow as a channel and a means to create a personalized experience at scale. Moving forward, more and more teams like customer success, people operations, and sales will leverage direct mail to reach the audience they want in a unique way. This is just the beginning."

Mariza Mendelez,
Senior Manager of Strategic Marketing
at Lever

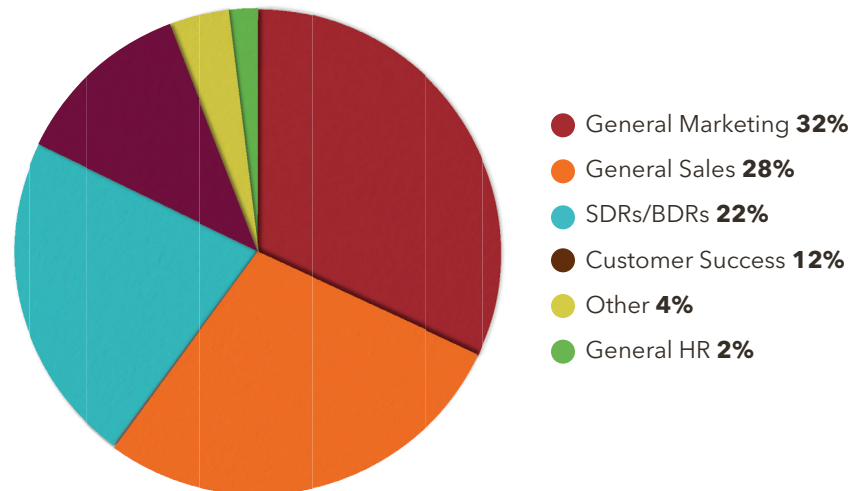
Different types of marketers are sending items to rise above digital noise in order to drive awareness for their brand and responses to their outreach. Sales people build meaningful and personal relationships with their buyers by sending thoughtful items that can surprise, delight, educate, and inform.

Customer teams keep relationships strong by celebrating customers and rectifying bad experiences with tokens of appreciation. HR and people operations teams engage their employees and recruits with gifts that improve both their professional lives and personal lives.

With such a widespread usage of these channels across companies, some marketers predict that we'll start to see more roles dedicated solely to this function.

Teams Sending Direct Mail, Gifts, and Swag

We've witnessed a rise in the number of different types of roles within those teams engaging others with physical and digital sends.



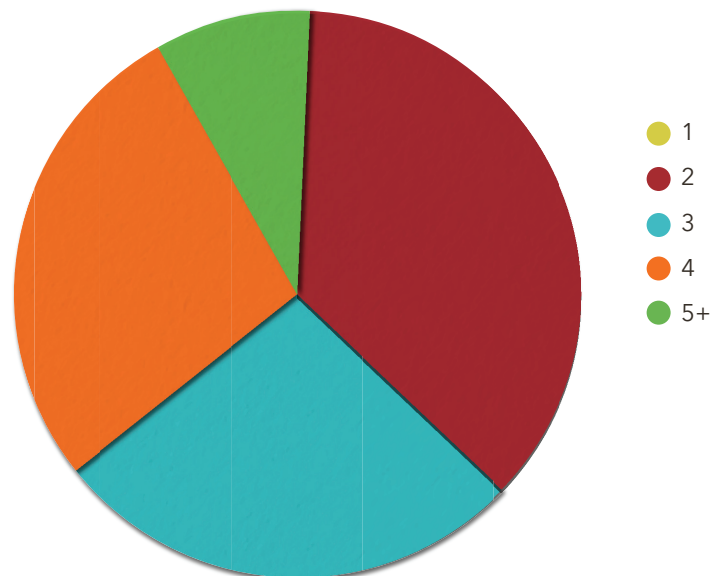
"Sending made major inroads in B2B enterprise marketing in 2017-19 mostly via ABM. In 2020, sending will go mainstream in B2B. Meaning more utility in broader demand generation tactics, more investment in swag, technology, and people, i.e. 'direct mail marketing manager' titles will become a thing."

Brad Zornick
VP of Demand
Generation at
Degreed



Number of Teams Sending

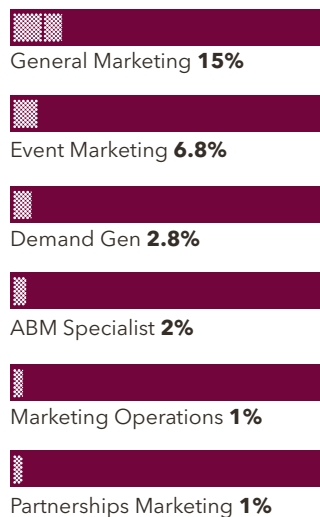
What we've also discovered is that most organizations already have multiple teams using direct mail and gifting.



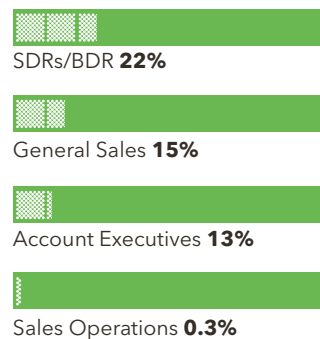
Senders Broken Down by Team and Role

There has also been a rise in the number of different types of roles within those teams engaging others with physical and digital sends.

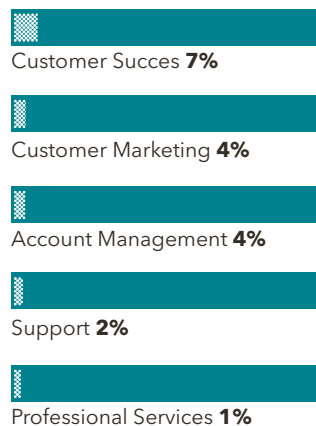
Marketing



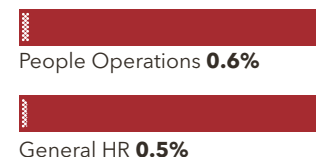
Sales



Customer



HR



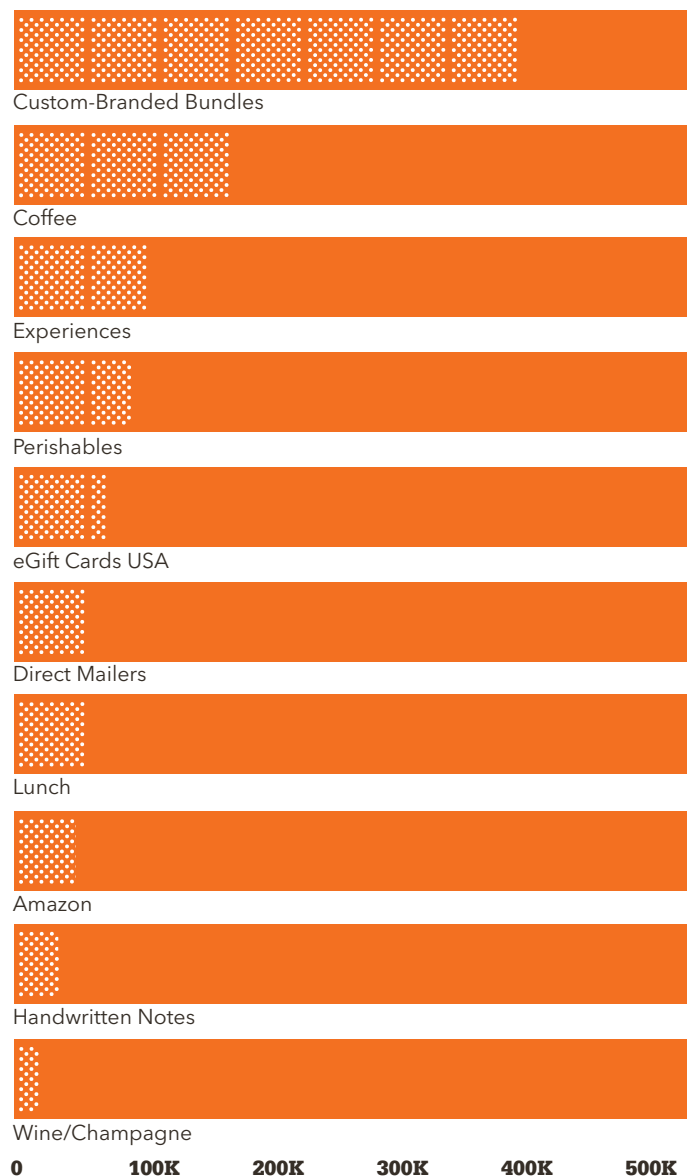
“I see sending being entrusted at the rep level in 2020 and beyond. Right now it’s very much managed and executed by marketing, but **I’m beginning to see marketing teams supply reps with budgets and guidelines and let them manage their own sending programs** as part of their outreach engagement sequences.”

Max Altschuler
VP Marketing
at Outreach.io



TRENDS IN DIRECT MAIL

Top 10 Most Popular Overall Sends



Though direct mail has evolved beyond just postcards and mailers, those were still the sixth most popular item sent on our list of most popular overall sends (pictured on the left). Companies are taking traditional direct mailers to the next level by incorporating unique design and powerful messaging into traditional mailers, as well as experimenting with unique formats like dimensional mailers and video mailers.

Perishables, which took fourth place on our top ten list, have also continued to grow in popularity. These items can add a sweet, savory, or refreshing touch to someone's day. They're also good for bringing together a group of people around a positive experience related to you and your organization (and is often more welcome than a "Reply All" email).

Cupcakes, cookies, and other baked treats may often be thought of as a "go-to" perishable send, but we were interested to see the creativity that's been injected into these sends when we looked at the least of the top 15 most popular perishable sends (pictured on the right) featuring items like wine tasters, soda, and ice cream.

Handwritten notes, by themselves, showed up in the ninth most popular spot on our overall list. Note that many other sends do include a handwritten note; this just measures standalone handwritten notes being sent. The fact that it still made it to our list of the top ten demonstrates the power of a simple, thoughtful handwritten note without anything else attached to it.

Wine and champagne took the final spot on our top ten list. This is a popular send for recipients that you already have a relationship with, or can be a great door opener to send to someone in lieu of meeting for happy hour drinks.

44%



increase in monthly sends of perishables per company from 2018 to 2019

Top 15 Perishables Sent in 2019

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Cookies | 9 Doughnut |
| 2 Succulents | 10 Soda |
| 3 Cupcakes | 11 English Toffee |
| 4 French Macarons | 12 Ice Cream |
| 5 Brownies | 13 Truffles |
| 6 Coffee | 14 Popcorn |
| 7 Cruffles | 15 Plants |
| 8 Wine Taster | |

TRENDS IN GIFTING

Personalization in sending continues to be top-of-mind for companies.

Though personalized physical gifts sent via Amazon come in eighth on our list of top ten overall sends, they're used quite often. (These are often sent on a one-on-one basis, so there is less overall volume than a bulk direct mail send.) Recipients often appreciate the personal experience of a gift selected just for them based on their interests.

Perishables, too, are often used as personalized when they are decorated with company logos. And while a gift is worth a thousand words, a good gift doesn't need to cost a thousand dollars. That's why the simple gift of coffee came up as the second most popular send on our list of most popular sends.

Sharing a cup of coffee (sent via a physical or digital gift card) fosters a sense of camaraderie and costs about \$5 on average. Next on the list of top overall sends is experiences, like tickets to a conference or event, which can also be sent via a gift card.

Lunch gifts came in seventh on our list of overall sends. Gifts cards can be a great way to build personal and meaningful relationships because even if it's sent digitally, your recipient still has a very "real" experience when they redeem that cup of coffee, go to the event, or sit down for lunch.

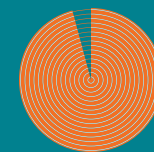
eGifts came in fifth place for the most popular overall sends. Companies sent 96% more eGift cards (including coffee and lunch eGifts) per month in 2019 than they did in 2018. With hundreds of options, they offer the ability to personalize this touch in numerous ways.

We were also intrigued by the creativity and variety of the types of eGifts that appeared in our list of the top 20 eGifts sent in 2019 (pictured below). eGifts are being personalized for the pet lover (Petco), the athlete (Nike), and the movie buff (Fandango). Donating to charity via a CharityChoice eGift is a popular option, as well.

Top 20 eGifts Sent in 2019

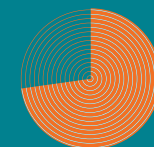
- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Amazon.com | 11 Whole Foods Market |
| 2 Starbucks | 12 Nike |
| 3 Target Gift Card | 13 AMC Theatres |
| 4 Visa Gift Card | 14 MasterCard Gift Card |
| 5 Fandango | 15 Red Robin |
| 6 Wine.com | 16 Dunkin' Donuts |
| 7 CharityChoice | 17 Petco |
| 8 Uber | 18 Chipotle |
| 9 1-800-Baskets.com | 19 Panera Bread |
| 10 Target | 20 iTunes |

96%



percent increase in
monthly sends of eGifts

73%



of senders said they'll be
exploring personalization
in 2020

“Sends are going to be increasingly tailored to the recipient in 2020. The days of generic cookie boxes are numbered.”

Jack Schuth
Marketing
Business
Operations
at Anaplan



TRENDS IN SWAG MANAGEMENT

The overall most popular type of sends we've seen companies using are custom-branded bundles. These bundles often include swag items like tumblers, socks, portable speakers, bags of coffee, etc. accompanied by printed collateral like an eBook or case study with a handwritten note (sometimes sent in a beautifully designed box).

In the age of personalized direct mail and gifts, swag is still an effective tool for building a relationship with your brand. A small gift can look like any other; but a small branded item that sits on someone's desk can keep your company top-of-mind for years to come.

Creativity in swag is on the rise. In addition to evergreen swag ordered and bulk and sent as part of different campaigns throughout the year, companies

are ordering "on-demand" swag to commemorate special events, times of year, various personas, or even different office locations.

Creative outreach helps companies differentiate themselves from competitors and create unique experiences, which is why more and more marketers and salespeople are thinking outside the box in terms of what they should send.

Some people in the industry predict that the need for creativity will bring teams together for brainstorming, alignment, and ideas.

"I predict that sales leaders will make time slots to brainstorm with marketing and with their reps on the right gifts and mail for customers and future customers. The days of bulk swag is (hopefully) done. Give people what they want, which will create less waste and more meaning."

Lori Richardson
CEO at Score More Sales

What's also changing in swag is how companies manage all of their physical promotional products. The swag industry is worth more than \$20 billion, meaning brands spend a lot of money on their swag. But they're also looking to solve the challenges: Part of the adoption of Sending Platforms has come from the need to centralize swag efforts to maximize cost-effectiveness. Sending Platforms allow you to order in bulk and save, while also making it possible to order items in near real time for timely campaigns.

55%



of senders said they'll be exploring creativity in 2020

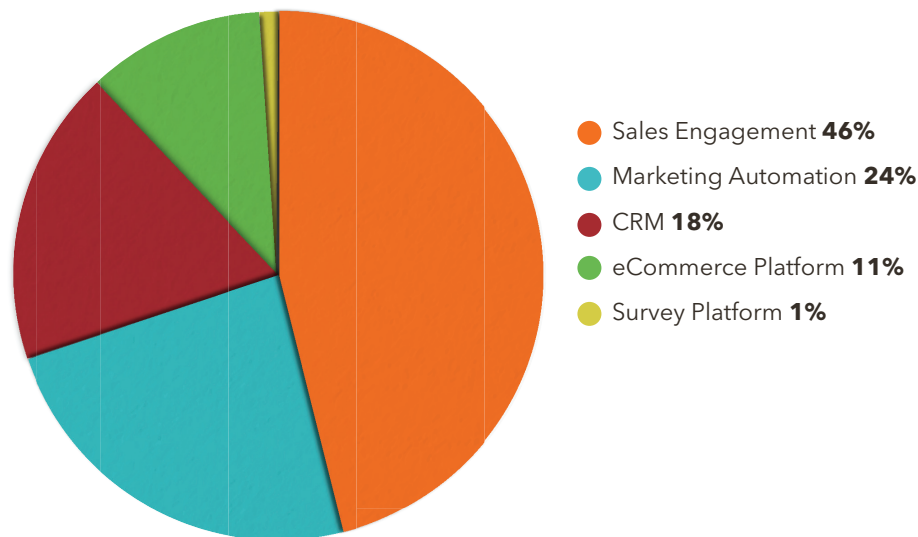
"Thoughtful, creative items will return 10X the results of branded stock items in 2020."

Rex Biberston
Co-founder
and COO
of The Sales
Developers



MOST POPULAR INTEGRATIONS

Integrations Used for Sending in 2019



Integrations with marketing, sales, and customer tools are popular for sending; they can help you automate sends, trigger them based on criteria, and measure the return on the investment of your campaigns.

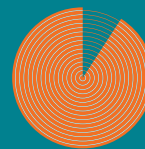
We knew that many sales teams were including a direct mail, gift, or swag send in their automated prospecting sequences, but our research found that this integration had the largest share of voice among integration use. And sales leaders expect that to grow.

As more and more companies incorporate online-to-offline strategies in their go-to-market programs, we expect to see an increase in integrated sending campaigns; where one channel leaves off, another will always pick up—ensuring a cohesive experience for potential customers during their buying journey.

Sendoso Integrations Partners



91%



of senders said they'll be exploring integrated in sends in 2020

“More companies will start doing fully integrated campaigns that include sending instead of just using it as a tactic. This will involve incorporating things like triggered sends into every day workflows.”

Sara Schonfeld
Sr. Marketing Strategist at Cornerstone OnDemand



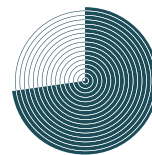
TRENDS IN SENDING ROI

Anonymous survey respondents report numerous different impacts from utilizing direct mail, gifting, and swag.



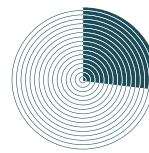
SWEET TO
MEET YOU

73%



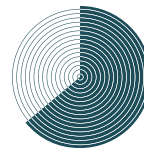
of senders said they've experienced increased opportunity creation from sending

27%



of senders said they've experienced increased close rates from sending

64%



of senders said they've experienced increased campaign ROI from sending

"The biggest problem I solve for is engaging or re-engaging a customer or prospect. I can't tell you how many times I've felt as if a prospect has gone dark, and a small send turns that around. It shows that you care, and shows that you're thinking about the relationship. I can absolutely attribute closing deals to how I was able to utilize gifts in the deal flow."

Grant Nelson,
TripActions




"I've brought back deals that have gone dark, re-engaged old prospects and moved deals forward faster because of sending. I've also managed to strengthen relationships and fulfill new prospecting efforts more thoroughly and quickly with sending."


John Hartunian,
Ansarada



But with the ability to integrate **Sending Platforms** into marketing automation and CRMs, companies can also actually measure the return on their direct mail, gifting, and swag programs. Senders are measuring results across the entire customer lifecycle.

1 in 3 

cold leads converted to conversations

5X 

increase in close rates

20hrs 

saved per campaign

Send it

CONCLUSION

With sending, B2B professionals are finding ways to inject creative, meaningful, and personal engagements into their customer lifecycle. More teams are continuing to adopt this strategy and generate high returns. And they expect that direct mail, gifting, and swag management programs will become even more relevant and have an even bigger impact in the future.

Sending direct mail, gifts, and swag appears to no longer be just a standalone tactic, but rather an integrated, collaborative strategy around sending that's here to stay. And it isn't just about rising above the noise of your competitors and generating ROI. Sending is about being personalized in your outreach, thoughtful in your integrated orchestration, and meaningful in the way you connect via online and offline experiences.

If you're looking for ways to inject sending into your strategy, grab a copy of our eBook, [Getting Started with Sending](#). Already a pro? Get inspired with 70+ send ideas to use throughout the year with our [Sendoso 2020 Calendar](#).

"As organizations implement advanced technology to corral emails and block ads, high-touch, personalized product information via sending becomes even more important to create brand awareness and generate new opportunities within buying teams."

Colleen Jackson
Marketing Manager for Account-Based Marketing at Anaplan

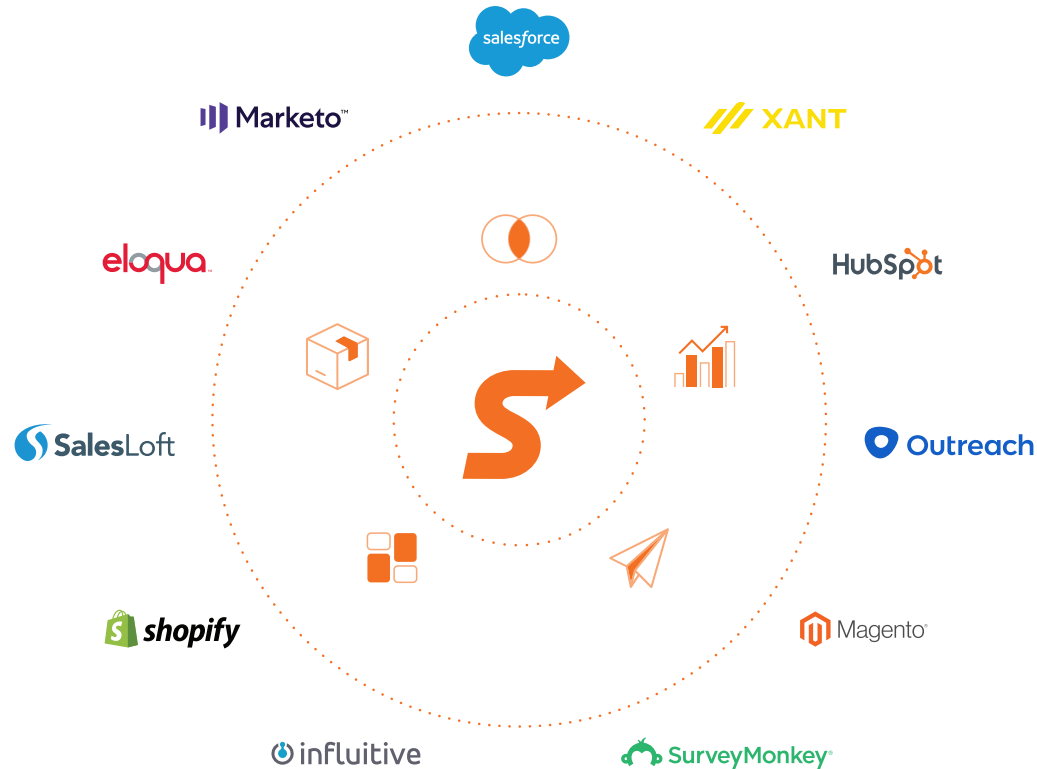
"History repeats itself. In a modern era where executives are constantly inundated with emails, calls and social spam, **sending will make the difference to return to the sales roots of relationship building and personalization."**

Frank Pinder

Chief Innovation Officer at InsideOut



THIS REPORT IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY SENDOSO



Sendoso is a SaaS solution that integrates with your existing tech stack so your sales, marketing, and post-sales teams can **deliver Physical Impressions™** at strategic points throughout the customer lifecycle and **measure the ROI**.

The power behind Sendoso comes from the fully managed fulfillment and logistics service that assures quality, on-time delivery.

Visit www.sendoso.com to learn more.