

Trusted Channels in a Complex World:

CRITICAL ROLE OF MAIL
IN ESSENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS

JULY 2026



In brief

Australians live in an increasingly complex communications environment. Email inboxes are crowded, notifications compete constantly for attention, and concerns around scams, phishing and misinformation continue to grow. While digital channels provide speed and convenience, they do not always guarantee that important information is seen, understood, trusted or acted upon.

This research, conducted in partnership with the Visual Media Association (VMA), explores how Australians engage with physical mail and digital communications, and what role each channel plays when communicating important information. The findings reveal that physical mail remains one of Australia's most trusted, accessible and effective communication channels. It is perceived as more important, more official, easier to retain and safer than many digital alternatives, particularly when communicating government, legal, financial and healthcare information.

Importantly, the research highlights that Australians are not calling for a choice between physical and digital communication. Instead, they favour a balanced, multi-channel approach that provides flexibility while ensuring important messages reach citizens through the channels they trust and engage with most. As organisations navigate increasing communication complexity, physical mail continues to play a critical role in helping important information cut through, build trust and drive action.

Methodology

Vypr is a global product intelligence and consumer insights platform that helps brands make informed product decisions quickly and confidently. Our approach combines mobile-first research tools with engaged consumer communities, delivering insights that are accurate, actionable and agile.

The findings in this report are based on research conducted in June 2026 with a sample of 200 Australian consumers, weighted to the latest population data across age and gender. Our methodology is rooted in behavioural science and captures instinctive, System 1 responses through short, targeted, mobile-optimised questions.

To provide a rounded view of consumer attitudes and behaviours, we combined structured survey data with open-ended feedback, analysed using both traditional quantitative methods and AI-driven sentiment analysis. This approach offers a balanced perspective on consumer preferences, behaviours and the motivations behind them.

To conduct this research, we used the following:

Sample Size and Question Types: We conducted surveys with a robust, national representative sample of 200 consumers. This sample size ensures the data is representative of the broader population, allowing us to draw meaningful conclusions across different demographics.

Single and Multi-Answer Multiple Choice Questions: These questions offered respondents a range of predefined options, enabling us to measure consumer preference and behaviours with precision.

This research was carried out in partnership with the VMA

The Visual Media Association is the recognised peak industry body for the paper, print, publishing, mail, packaging, sign, graphic design, distribution, and media technology industries in Australia, operating for over 144 years, formerly known as the Print and Visual Communication Association (PVCA).

A registered organisation with direct signatory to the nine (9) Awards across our industry and membership. Offering an end-to-end industry association solution that is relevant in all that it undertakes. Whether advocating the relevance of established media – print, mail and publishing – that we all belong to, developing global partnerships and translating to regional requirements, awarding excellence, investing in products, and arming our industry with sales tools, sustainability collateral, industrial relations representation and more.

Highlights



Physical communications continue to capture attention

Half of Australians (50%) say physical mail is one of the channels they pay most attention to, while 84% always or often open and read addressed mail. This demonstrates mail's ability to cut through in an increasingly crowded communications environment. [Page 6](#)

Physical mail remains a highly trusted channel

Physical mail is viewed as the most important communication channel by 65% of Australians. It is also perceived as more official (58%) and more trustworthy (37%) than other communication methods, reinforcing its value for important and sensitive information. [Page 8](#)

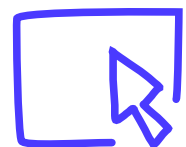


Physical mail for important government communications

78% of Australians want important communications delivered either physically (38%) or through a combination of physical and digital channels (41%). Compliance notices (59%), tax information (53%) and voting information (53%) rank among the most important communications to receive physically. [Page 11](#)

Digital-only communications create challenges

More than half of Australians (57%) have missed important digital communications, while 54% have experienced scam or phishing concerns. Notification overload (46%) and password or login issues (45%) further highlight the risks of relying solely on digital channels. [Page 13](#)



Australians want communication choice

An overwhelming 94% of Australians believe people should be able to choose how they receive important government communications. The findings suggest physical mail and digital channels work best together, combining the convenience of digital with the trust and accessibility of physical communications. [Page 15](#)

Executive summary

Australians are navigating an increasingly complex communications landscape. While digital channels offer convenience and immediacy, concerns around missed messages, scam activity, information overload, and accessibility continue to challenge their effectiveness for important communications. Against this backdrop, physical mail remains a highly trusted and widely used communication channel, providing a level of confidence, attention, and accessibility that many digital alternatives struggle to replicate.

The research reveals that physical mail continues to play a critical role in helping important information reach Australians. 65% of consumers say physical letters feel important when received, while 58% perceive them as more official and 37% as more trustworthy than other communication channels. Engagement remains exceptionally strong, with 84% always or often opening and reading addressed mail, demonstrating the channel's ability to cut through competing communications and capture attention.

Importantly, Australians continue to see physical mail as particularly valuable for government, legal, financial, healthcare, and compliance-related communications. 78% prefer important government communications to include physical mail, either as a standalone channel or as part of a combined physical and digital approach. This reflects a broader belief that critical information should be delivered through channels that feel secure, accessible, and difficult to overlook.

The findings also highlight the limitations of a digital-only communication strategy. More than half of Australians (57%) have missed important information delivered digitally, while 54% have experienced scam or phishing concerns. Notification overload (46%) and login or password issues (45%) further reinforce the risks associated with relying solely on digital communications, particularly for older Australians, regional communities, and those with lower levels of digital confidence.

Ultimately, the research shows that Australians do not see physical and digital communications as competing channels. Instead, they favour a balanced, multi-channel approach that provides flexibility, accessibility, and choice. With 94% of Australians believing people should be able to choose how they receive important government communications, the findings reinforce the continuing role of physical mail as essential communication infrastructure – supporting trust, improving engagement, and ensuring critical information reaches the people who need it most.

Overview of Letterbox

Australia's digital communications landscape has become increasingly fragmented. Consumers now divide their attention across emails, text messages, apps, online portals, social media platforms and phone calls. Yet despite the continued growth of digital communication, the letterbox remains a highly relevant and widely used touchpoint that reaches Australians across every generation and demographic group.

The findings reveal that physical mail occupies a unique position within the communications mix. While digital channels dominate disrupt day-to-day interactions, physical mail continues to command attention, convey importance, and provide accessibility in ways that many digital channels struggle to replicate. Importantly, Australians do not appear to be replacing physical communication with digital alternatives; instead, they are adopting a multi-channel approach where each channel serves a different purpose.

Physical mail remains part of everyday communication

Email (71%) and SMS (63%) remain the most frequently used communication channels each week. However, physical mail continues to play a meaningful role, with 18% of Australians regularly using or engaging with physical mail as part of their weekly communications routine. This places physical mail on par with apps and online portals (21%) and ahead of several channels often considered more modern alternatives.

What makes this particularly noteworthy is the consistency across generations. Physical mail maintains relevance among both younger and older Australians, reaching 27% of Gen Z and 20% of older Australians each week. Rather than becoming obsolete or the other, physical mail continues to operate alongside digital communications as part of a broader communication ecosystem.

The findings reinforce that communication behaviour is increasingly fragmented. No single digital channel reaches everyone, creating a growing need for organisations to consider multiple touchpoints when communicating important information.



Physical mail commands attention

While frequency of use is important, attention is arguably a more valuable measure of communication effectiveness. Here, physical mail performs exceptionally strongly.

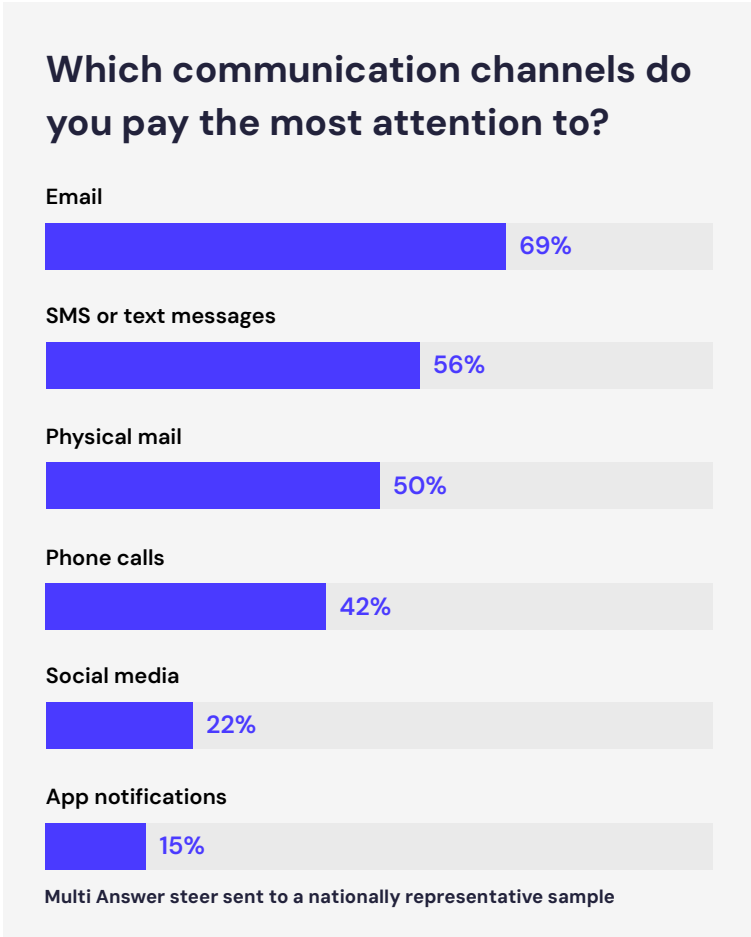
Half of Australians (50%) say physical mail is one of the communication channels they pay the most attention to, making it the third most attention-grabbing channel overall behind email (69%) and SMS (56%). Physical mail outperforms phone calls (42%), social media (22%) and app notifications (15%), demonstrating its ability to cut through competing messages and distractions.

The attention generated by physical mail is particularly striking among younger consumers. Among Gen Z, physical mail (59%) attracts more attention than both SMS (55%) and email (32%), making it the most engaging communication channel for this generation. This challenges the perception that younger consumers are exclusively digital-first and highlights the ability of physical communications to stand out in highly digital environments.

These findings reveal an important distinction between communication frequency and communication effectiveness. While physical mail may arrive less often than emails or text messages, it attracts disproportionately high levels of attention when it does arrive.

Physical mail signals importance

Beyond attention, physical mail carries a unique sense of significance. When Australians were asked which communication channels feel most important when received, physical mail ranked first overall at 65%, outperforming email (59%) and SMS (47%). This perception is remarkably consistent across all age groups, ranging from 57% to 73%.



Among Gen Z, physical mail (64%) is almost twice as likely to be viewed as important compared with email (36%). Older Australians place even greater emphasis on physical communications, with 73% associating physical mail with important information. By contrast, app notifications (13%) and social media messages (11%) rank significantly lower, suggesting consumers clearly differentiate between channels used for convenience and those used for information that matters.

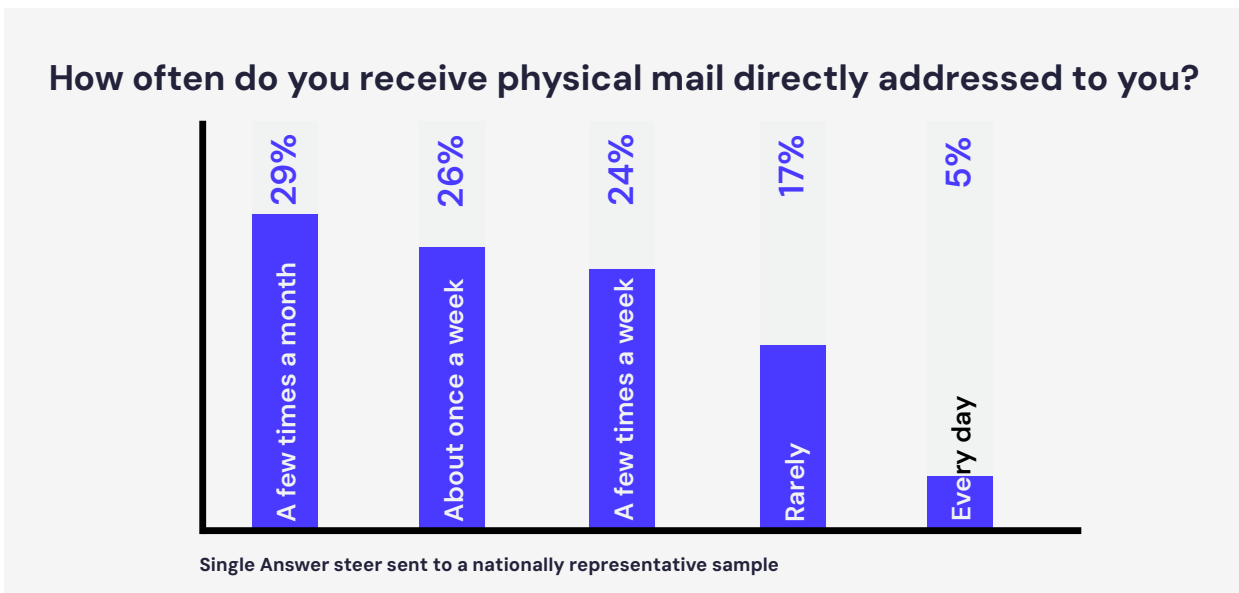
This highlights one of physical mail's greatest strengths: it is not simply seen as another communication channel, but as a signal that the information being delivered carries relevance, significance or consequence.

The letterbox continues to provide consistent reach

Physical mail remains a regular and active communication channel for most Australians. Nearly four in five Australians (79%) receive addressed mail at least a few times each month, while more than half (55%) receive it at least weekly. Specifically, 29% receive addressed mail a few times a month, 26% about once a week, 24% a few times a week, 17% rarely, and 5% every day.

Regular engagement is evident across every generation. Millennials are the most frequent recipients, with 47% receiving addressed mail several times a week or daily, while even among the oldest Australians, 84% receive addressed mail at least a few times a month. Notably, virtually no consumers report never receiving addressed mail.

These findings reinforce the role of the national mail network as critical communication infrastructure, providing organisations with a direct and reliable way to reach households across Australia.



Australians actively engage with addressed mail

Reach alone does not guarantee communication effectiveness. However, physical mail performs strongly not only in delivery but also in engagement.

An overwhelming 84% of Australians say they always or often open and read addressed mail, including 68% who always do so. Only 7% say they rarely read addressed mail, and almost no respondents report never engaging with it.

Engagement levels remain consistently high across generations. Even among younger consumers, 82% always or often read addressed mail, while this rises to 95% among the oldest Australians. These results suggest that once physical mail reaches the household, it is highly likely to be actively consumed.

For organisations communicating important information, this level of engagement provides a significant advantage over many digital channels, where messages can be filtered, ignored, deleted or overlooked.

Physical mail is associated with trust and credibility

Consumers continue to associate physical communications with qualities that are increasingly difficult to achieve in digital environments.

More than half of Australians (58%) say physical mail feels more official, while 37% say it feels more trustworthy than other communication channels. Additionally, 40% say they are more likely to read physical mail, and 29% believe it is easier to remember and understand. By comparison, only 19% say they would prefer communications to be delivered digitally.

These perceptions are particularly strong among older Australians, but they remain evident across every generation. Rather than viewing physical mail as outdated, consumers associate it with authority, permanence and legitimacy.

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Physical communications remain visible long after delivery

One of the defining advantages of physical mail is its ability to remain present and accessible after initial receipt.

Almost nine in ten Australians (88%) keep physical mail for future reference at least sometimes, while 56% do so often or very often. Gen Z demonstrates particularly strong retention behaviour, with 46% saying they very often keep physical mail, while 63% of older Australians say they retain mail often or very often.

This is in stark contrast to email behaviour. New Corduroy research reveals that 54% of Australians often delete emails without reading them to stop their inboxes becoming unmanageable, while 55% say scam concerns lead them to delete emails that could be from legitimate senders. Physical mail's ability to remain present and visible within the home stands as a meaningful advantage in an environment where digital communications are routinely discarded.

This ability to remain visible within the home gives physical mail a longer lifespan than many digital messages, which are often buried in inboxes, forgotten among notifications, or difficult to retrieve later.

Physical mail remains one of Australia's most accessible communication channels

Accessibility is increasingly important as organisations seek to communicate with diverse audiences.

Physical mail ranks almost identically to email as Australia's most accessible communication channel, selected by 33% of consumers compared with 34% for email. It significantly outperforms SMS (26%), social media (6%) and apps or portals (3%).

Importantly, physical mail is viewed as the most accessible channel among older Australians and ties with email among Gen Z. Consumers recognise that not everyone has the same level of digital access, digital literacy, or comfort with technology. Physical mail is therefore perceived as one of the few truly universal communication methods available.

Which communication channels feel the most accessible to everyone?

Email



Physical mail



SMS or text messages



Social media



Apps or portals



Single Answer steer sent to a nationally representative sample

The scale of digital exclusion in Australia helps explain why this perception of physical mail as a universal channel is not simply a consumer preference but a practical necessity. According to the 2025 Australian Digital Inclusion Index, around one in five Australians (21%) remain digitally excluded or highly excluded, or unable to fully access, afford or use digital technology. Exclusion rates are considerably higher among the groups most likely to depend on government and essential service communications: 67% of Australians aged 75 and over are digitally excluded, as are 55% of those who did not complete secondary education, 45% of public housing residents and 41% of First Nations Australians.

Regional and remote communities especially face compounding disadvantages, with digital inclusion scores decreasing consistently with remoteness. For these audiences, a digital-only communication strategy represents a barrier to receiving information.

The Letterbox Continues to Play a Critical Communication Role

The findings demonstrate that physical mail remains far more than a legacy communication channel. It continues to deliver broad reach, strong engagement, high levels of attention and widespread accessibility across the Australian population.

While digital communications dominate routine interactions, physical mail plays a distinct role when information needs to feel important, trusted, visible and memorable. Australians actively engage with addressed mail, retain it for future reference and associate it with credibility and authority. These qualities help explain why physical communications continue to perform strongly across generations despite the incoming ongoing digitisation of communication.

Looking ahead, the letterbox is likely to remain an important part of Australia's communications infrastructure. Rather than competing with digital channels, physical mail complements them, helping organisations reach audiences through a trusted, accessible and highly effective channel that continues to cut through an increasingly complex communications environment.



Why Physical Mail Remains Critical for Government Communications

Government agencies face a unique communications challenge. Unlike commercial messages, government communications often contain information that is important, time-sensitive, legally significant, or requires action from citizens. In these situations, communication effectiveness is measured not simply by delivery, but by whether the information is noticed, trusted, understood, retained and acted upon.

The research shows Australians continue to associate physical mail with many of the qualities required for successful government communication. Physical communications are viewed as more trustworthy, more secure, more official and less likely to be overlooked than digital alternatives. While consumers recognise the convenience of digital services, they continue to value physical mail for communications where certainty, visibility and trust matter most.

Australians Want Physical Mail Included in Government Communications

The findings reveal strong support for physical mail as part of government communication strategies.

When asked how they prefer to receive important government communications, 78% of Australians selected either a combination of physical and digital communications (41%) or a predominantly physical approach (38%). By comparison, just 22% preferred primarily or exclusively digital delivery.

The preference for physical communication becomes even stronger among older Australians, where more than half (55%) prefer government information to be delivered mostly or entirely through physical mail. However, support extends well beyond older generations. Across every age group, the most common response includes physical mail as part of the communication mix.

This demonstrates that consumers view important government communications differently from everyday messages. While digital channels offer convenience, physical mail provides reassurance, permanence and confidence that important information will be received and noticed.

Some Government Communications Are Seen as Too Important for Digital-Only Delivery

The preference for physical communications becomes even clearer when examining specific types of government information.

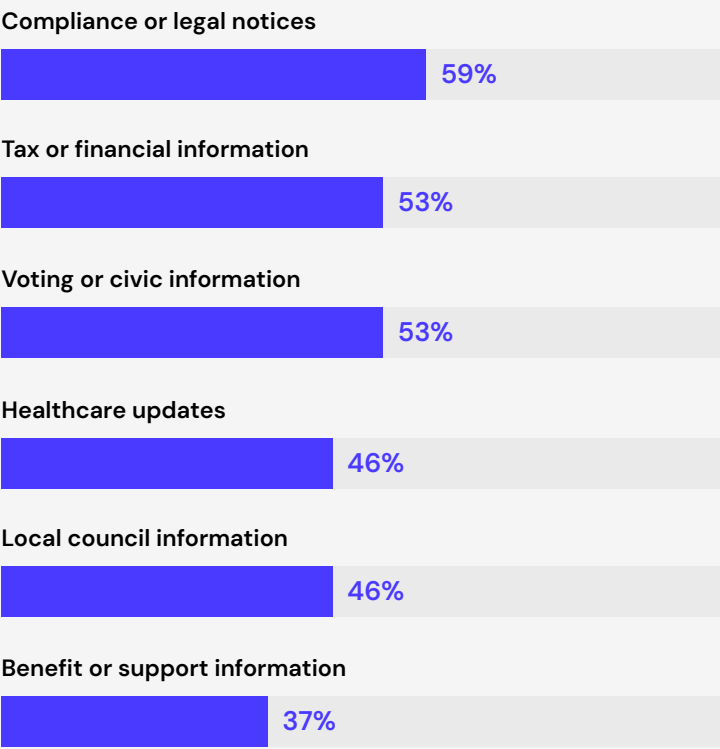
Australians place the highest value on receiving compliance or legal notices physically (59%), followed by tax and financial information (53%) and voting or civic information (53%). Healthcare updates (46%) and local council information (46%) also generate strong support for physical delivery.

These are communications that often carry significant consequences, require future reference, or involve legal, financial or civic obligations. Consumers appear to place greater importance on certainty of delivery when information is considered critical or may require future action.

The consistency across generations is particularly notable. Even among younger Australians, around half believe tax, voting and compliance-related communications are most important when received physically. Among older Australians, support rises even further, with 73% saying compliance notices should be delivered through physical mail.

The findings reinforce the idea that consumers do not view all communications equally. The more important the information becomes, the stronger the role physical mail plays.

Which government communications are important to receive physically?



Multi Answer steer sent to a nationally representative sample

Trust Remains a Defining Strength of Physical Government Communications

Trust is one of the most valuable assets available to government communicators.

More than half of Australians (55%) believe physical government communications feel more official and trustworthy than digital alternatives. A further 46% say physical communications are easier to keep and revisit, while 38% believe they stand out more than digital messages. Only 24% would prefer government communications to be delivered digitally.

These perceptions are remarkably consistent across generations. Millennials are most likely to associate physical government communications with trust and authority (61%), while older Australians place particularly high value on their ability to be retained and referenced later.

Digital Communications Are Frequently Missed

One of the strongest arguments for maintaining physical communications comes from the challenges consumers experience with digital channels.

More than half of Australians (57%) report missing important information delivered digitally either sometimes or frequently. Only 14% say they have never missed an important digital message.

The issue is not limited to any one demographic. In fact, younger consumers are particularly vulnerable, with 73% of Gen Z and 69% of Millennials saying they sometimes or frequently miss important digital communications.

These findings highlight a fundamental challenge with digital-only communication strategies. Messages may be delivered instantly, but they can still be overlooked among crowded inboxes, notifications, apps and online accounts.

Have you ever missed important information sent digitally?

Frequently



Sometimes



Rarely



Never



Single Answer steer sent to a nationally representative sample

For government agencies responsible for communicating important information, this creates a significant risk that critical messages may never receive the attention they require.

The results suggest physical government communications provide benefits that extend beyond simple delivery. They are perceived as more credible, more authoritative and more likely to attract attention than digital messages alone.

Australians Face Multiple Digital Communication Challenges

The challenges extend beyond simply missing messages.

More than half of Australians (54%) have experienced scam or phishing concerns. Notification overload affects 46%, forgotten passwords impact 45%, and 37% say emails are often overlooked. Only 8% report experiencing none of these issues.

Different generations face different challenges. Younger consumers are particularly affected by notification overload and overlooked emails, while older Australians are more concerned about scams and phishing attempts.

The scale of the email engagement challenge is significant. While headline open rate figures for Australian email campaigns can appear strong, Campaign Monitor's 2025 Australian Email Benchmarks report, based on 2.4 billion Australian sends, puts the adjusted open rate at 22% once Apple Mail Privacy Protection inflations are removed.

On that basis, close to 80% of delivered marketing emails are not opened. New Corduroy research adds a behavioural dimension to this picture, with 54% of Australians saying they often delete emails without reading them simply to manage inbox volume, while 55% say scam concerns lead them to delete messages even from senders who could be legitimate. For organisations depending on email to deliver important information, these figures suggest that delivery alone is a poor indicator of whether a message has been received or acted upon.

These issues help explain why physical communications continue to hold value. Unlike digital messages, physical mail is not affected by inbox clutter, notification fatigue, forgotten passwords or concerns about fraudulent links.

Physical Mail Is Viewed as the Safest Channel for Important Information

Trust and security are closely linked, and physical mail performs strongly on both measures.

When asked which communication channel feels safest for important information, 43% of Australians selected physical mail, making it the highest-ranked channel overall. This significantly outperformed email (27%), phone calls (12%), online portals (11%) and SMS (9%).

The preference is particularly strong among older Australians, with 57% of Baby Boomers and 61% of the oldest generation viewing physical mail as the safest communication option.

In an environment increasingly shaped by cybercrime, phishing attacks and online scams, physical mail provides a level of reassurance that many consumers believe digital channels cannot consistently match.

Australians Want Communication Choice

Perhaps the strongest finding throughout the research is the overwhelming support for communication choice.

An extraordinary 94% of Australians believe people should be able to choose how they receive important government communications. Half (50%) believe this choice should always be available, while a further 44% support it in most situations. Just 2% believe digital communication should become the default approach.

Support is consistently high across every generation, reflecting a broader expectation that communication strategies should be designed around citizen needs rather than channel efficiencies alone.

Rather than advocating for one channel over another, Australians clearly favour a flexible, multi-channel approach that allows important information to be delivered through the channels they trust and engage with most.



How to Make Best Use of Physical Mail

The findings throughout this research demonstrate that physical mail continues to deliver unique advantages in trust, attention, accessibility and engagement. However, its greatest value comes not from replacing digital communications, but from being deployed strategically where it can deliver the greatest impact.

Consumers clearly differentiate between routine communications and information that is important, complex, sensitive or requires action. In these situations, physical mail offers benefits that extend beyond simple delivery, helping organisations improve visibility, understanding, retention and response rates. For both government organisations and businesses, the opportunity lies in understanding where physical communications add the most value and how they can complement digital channels as part of a broader communication strategy.

Physical Mail Is Preferred for Information That Matters Most

Australians continue to associate physical mail with communications that are important, trustworthy and worthy of attention.

When asked which information they prefer to receive physically, legal or compliance information ranked highest at 47%, followed by government communications (45%), healthcare information (42%) and bills or financial information (42%). These results demonstrate a clear preference for physical delivery when information carries significance, permanence or potential consequences.

Importantly, the preference extends beyond government and essential services. More than one in four Australians (26%) actively prefer receiving promotions and catalogues through physical mail, while 21% favour appointment reminders delivered physically. Among Baby Boomers, preference for promotional communications rises to 40%, highlighting the continuing role of direct mail within brand communications.

Only 20% of Australians say they would prefer everything digitally. Across every generation, the majority continue to see value in receiving at least some information through physical mail.

These findings suggest that physical mail remains most effective when the information being communicated is important, personal, complex or requires future reference.

Trust and Simplicity Drive Engagement

The research shows that consumers are motivated less by channel convenience and more by trust, clarity and confidence.

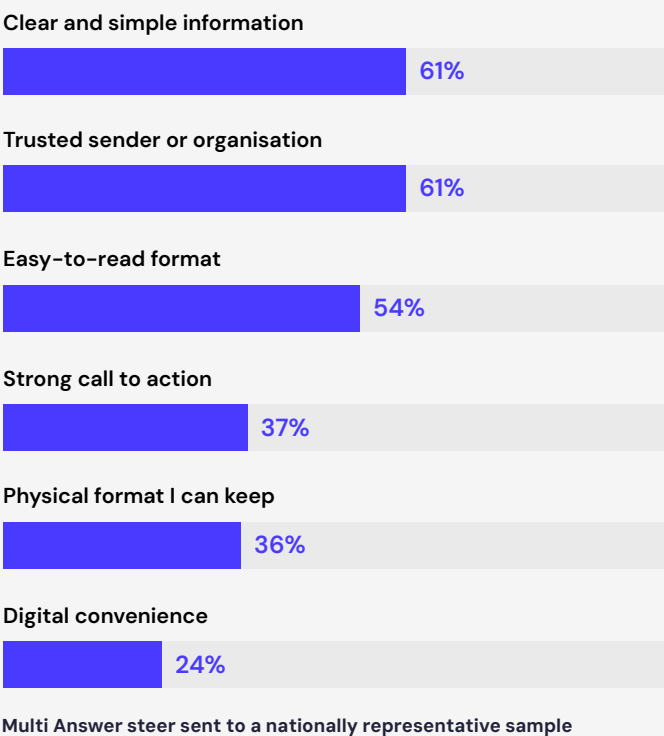
When asked what makes them most likely to read and act on a communication, Australians identified clear and simple information (61%) and a trusted sender or organisation (61%) as the two most important factors. Easy-to-read formats were also highly influential, selected by 54% of respondents.

Physical mail provides an additional advantage through permanence. More than one-third of Australians (36%) say a physical format they can keep makes them more likely to read and act on a communication, significantly higher than those who prioritise digital convenience alone (24%). Among Baby Boomers, this rises to 50%.

The findings reinforce that effective communication is not simply about reaching consumers. It is about ensuring information feels trustworthy, understandable and easy to revisit when needed.

For organisations, this highlights the importance of designing communications around simplicity, readability and clarity, regardless of channel.

What makes you most likely to read and act on a communication?



Physical Mail Supports Long-Term Recall

One of physical mail’s most significant strengths is its ability to remain memorable long after it has been received.

When Australians were asked which communication formats are easiest to remember later, physical mail was selected by 55% of respondents, narrowly behind email (58%). It significantly outperformed SMS (41%), app notifications (12%) and social media messages (10%).

Physical mail performs particularly strongly among older consumers. Seven in ten Baby Boomers (70%) identify physical mail as the easiest communication format to remember later, making it the highest-ranked channel within that generation. Among Gen Z, physical mail (59%) actually outperforms email (50%), demonstrating that tangible communications continue to create lasting impressions even among younger audiences.

The ability to create stronger recall helps explain why physical communications continue to perform well when organisations need information to remain top-of-mind over an extended period.

Physical Communications Drive Action

Capturing attention is important, but however driving action is often the ultimate objective of communication.

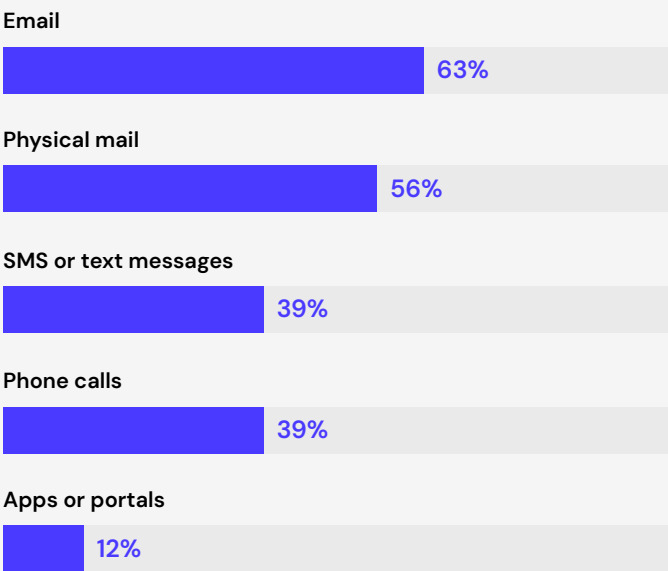
The research shows physical mail remains one of the strongest action-driving communication formats available. More than half of Australians (56%) say physical mail is likely to make them take action on a communication, second only to email (63%). Physical mail significantly outperforms SMS (39%), phone calls (39%) and online portals (12%).

Among Baby Boomers, physical mail is the most effective action-driving channel of all, selected by 73% compared with 60% for email. Among the oldest generation, physical mail and email perform equally strongly at 59%.

These findings build upon earlier results showing that physical communications are viewed as more trustworthy, memorable and official. Together, these characteristics appear to translate directly into behavioural outcomes, with consumers more likely to respond when information arrives through a channel they trust and value.

For both government organisations and businesses, this demonstrates the potential of physical mail to support compliance, response rates, customer engagement and service uptake.

Which communication formats are most likely to make you take action?



Multi Answer steer sent to a nationally representative sample

Physical Mail Remains Easy to Revisit

Important communications often need to be referenced after they are first received.

While email ranks highest for ease of revisiting at 71%, physical mail performs strongly at 51%, making it the second most accessible format for future reference. It significantly outperforms SMS (38%), apps and portals (13%) and social media messages (11%).

Older consumers place particularly high value on physical communications as a reference tool, with 67% of Baby Boomers and 64% of the oldest generation saying physical mail is easy to revisit later. Even among younger Australians, half of Gen Z consumers (50%) believe physical mail is easy to return to when needed.

Unlike many digital communications, physical mail does not require passwords, apps, portals or search functions. It remains visible and accessible within the household, supporting future action and reference.

Physical Mail Stands Out in a Crowded Communications Environment

Consumers continue to identify several reasons why physical communications are more noticeable than digital alternatives.

More than half of Australians (51%) say physical mail stands out because it is easier to keep and refer back to, while 50% say it feels more personal. A further 45% believe it feels more trustworthy and 42% say it is easier to notice than digital communications. Only 14% say physical mail does not stand out to them.

These findings reinforce a recurring theme throughout the report: physical mail benefits from operating in a less crowded environment. While consumers are exposed to hundreds of emails, notifications and digital messages each week, physical communications often receive greater visibility simply because there is less competition for attention.

This creates opportunities for organisations to use physical mail strategically when they need communications to be noticed, remembered and acted upon.

The Future of Communication Is Integrated, Not Digital-Only

The research consistently shows that physical mail delivers its greatest value when used as part of a broader communication strategy rather than in isolation.

Consumers prefer physical communications for information that is important, trusted, complex or requires action. They are more likely to remember, retain, revisit and respond to information delivered physically, while also valuing the accessibility and reassurance physical mail provides.

For government agencies, this means using physical mail to support communications that carry legal, financial, healthcare or civic significance. For businesses, it means leveraging direct mail, personalised offers, loyalty communications, appointment reminders and service updates to cut through digital clutter and improve engagement.

The findings reinforce that the future is not about choosing between physical and digital channels. Instead, the most effective communication strategies will combine the strengths of both. Digital channels provide speed, convenience and efficiency, while physical mail delivers trust, attention, memorability and action.

In an increasingly complex communications environment, organisations that successfully integrate both approaches will be best positioned to ensure important information is received, understood and acted upon.



Key takeaways



Here are some of the top strategic takeaways for brands:

1. Physical mail remains one of Australia's most trusted communication channels

Physical mail is strongly associated with trust, importance and credibility. 65% of Australians say physical letters feel important, while 58% perceive them as more official and 37% as more trustworthy than other communication channels, making mail particularly effective for critical communications.

2. Important information performs best when delivered physically

Consumers place the greatest value on receiving legal, compliance, government, healthcare and financial information through physical mail. 78% prefer important government communications to include physical mail, demonstrating its continued role in supporting engagement and confidence.

3. Digital-only communication creates real risks

More than half of Australians (57%) have missed important digital communications, while 54% have experienced scam or phishing concerns. Notification overload, forgotten passwords and competing digital distractions reinforce the need for communication strategies that extend beyond digital channels alone.

4. Physical mail drives attention, retention and action

Physical mail continues to generate strong engagement, with 84% of Australians always or often opening and reading addressed mail. Consumers are also more likely to keep, revisit and act upon physical communications, particularly when information is important or requires future reference.

5. The most effective communication strategies are multi-channel

Australians do not want physical mail replaced by digital communications. With 94% believing people should be able to choose how they receive important information, the findings highlight the value of combining physical and digital channels to maximise reach, trust, accessibility and response rates.

Conclusion

The findings from this research reinforce the continuing importance of physical mail in an increasingly complex communications environment. While digital channels offer speed and convenience, Australians continue to associate physical communications with trust, importance, security and credibility. Physical mail remains highly effective at capturing attention, supporting comprehension, and encouraging action, particularly when information is important, sensitive or requires future reference.

Importantly, the research highlights that consumers do not see physical and digital communications as mutually exclusive. Instead, they recognise the strengths of each channel and overwhelmingly support a balanced, multi-channel approach. With 94% of Australians believing people should be able to choose how they receive important communications, there is a clear expectation that organisations provide flexibility while ensuring critical information reaches people through channels they trust and engage with.

For government agencies, physical mail continues to play a vital role in delivering compliance notices, healthcare information, tax updates and other essential communications where confidence and certainty matter. For businesses, physical mail provides an opportunity to stand out in an increasingly crowded digital landscape, helping improve visibility, recall and customer understanding while supporting stronger engagement outcomes.

As concerns around digital overload, scams, misinformation and accessibility continue to grow, the role of physical mail extends beyond simple delivery. It serves as trusted communication infrastructure that helps ensure important information is noticed, understood and acted upon. The most effective communication strategies will not be built around a single channel but around combining the immediacy of digital with the trust, permanence and accessibility of physical mail to create better outcomes for organisations and the people they serve.