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6 Direct-Mail Trends to Watch:

- 67% of respondents to the latest Direct Marketing Association List Usage Survey, according to a report in the November Sales & Marketing Management, said that they had increased the number of their mailings between 1997 and 1998. Only 11% reported a decrease.
- 53% of List Usage Survey respondents noted that their companies had increased their budgets for alternative media. Of them, 82% advertised on the Internet, while 51% invested in telemarketing.
- Internet advertising will grow five times faster than direct mail in the period 1999-2004, according to a Marketing News report on a study by WEFA Group, Inc. But direct mail (\$293.3 billion) still will outstrip the Internet (\$53.4 billion) as a business-to-business advertising medium in 2004.
- Direct-mail advertising will grow from \$29 billion today to \$40 billion in 2003 and \$52 billion by 2008, according to Graphic Arts Marketing Information Service research reported in American Printer.
- Business-to-business mail will grow from 39% of direct-mail expenditures in 1998 to 45% in 2008—a \$12.1 billion increase—according to the GAMIS study.
- “Amazingly,” comments Scott Nelson in Executive Edge, most businesses—despite today’s sophisticated data-mining and campaign-management systems—still mail offers of no interest to their customers. He advises companies to focus their direct-marketing efforts on customers who have demonstrated their interest by past responses. “Untargeted direct mail is dead,” he says.

Businesses that learn how to target their mail advertising will decrease costs and increase response.

—Scott Nelson, in *Executive Edge*

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