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March 21, 2005

News Release No. 05-023

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NATIONAL STUDY CONCLUDES CONSUMERS VALUE THE MAIL

Businesses benefit from mail that connects them to customers

Nashville, TN - The mailbox hasn't been eclipsed by the age of the Internet. A new national research study concludes that consumers value and use their mail. In fact, almost 70 percent report that mail is more personal than the Internet.

InnoMedia Inc. surveyed 1,500 households and devoted more than 35 hours of in-depth, qualitative interviewing to determine how consumers engage with their mail and how businesses can reach consumers in a compelling and effective way.

The Mail Moment study, conducted in the fall of 2004 on behalf of the U.S. Postal Service, shows that mail offers a rare opportunity for a marketer to capture the undivided attention of a consumer. Included in the findings are the facts that messages are noticed and the offer is considered by a target audience for longer than the often-assumed 30 seconds and that almost 80 percent of all consumers sort through their mail immediately.

"When combined with other marketing channels, mail brings brands to life and drives each phase of awareness and consideration, ultimately leading to purchase," said Anita Bizzotto, chief marketing officer and senior vice president for the Postal Service.

Bizzotto announced the study results today at the National Postal Forum here, the mailing industry's premiere trade show.

"The Postal Service is here as a valuable resource for businesses that want to gain a better understanding of how their customer base can grow through the effective use of direct marketing," Bizzotto said. "As an advertising channel in today's media marketplace, where marketers place a high level of accountability on each dollar spent, mail offers the ability to target customers directly and with measurable results."

The "Mail Moment" is that point when consumers bring in their mail to sort, organize and read, and it offers a clear, compelling perspective for marketers to incorporate efforts to reach consumers.

The Mail Moment study determined several key findings:

- **Mail gets marketing messages immediately into the hands of consumers who are eager to see what's in their mail**
 - 98% of consumers bring in their mail the day it's delivered, and of these, 72% bring it in as soon as possible;
 - 77% of consumers sort through their mail immediately.
- **Mail boasts a loyal readership and consumers spend a significant amount of time each day with their mail**
 - Consumers spend an average of 30 minutes reading their mail on any occasion;
 - Consumers spend 45 minutes with magazines, 30 minutes with catalogs and 25 minutes with Direct Mail.
- **Mail may be the easiest way to reach the person in charge of managing household operations and finances**
 - 96% of household mail sorters determine which mail is kept for review;
 - 90% of these sorters pay the bills;
 - 92% of these sorters are the principal grocery shoppers.
- **Mail is useful and consumers are more likely to read it if it helps them perform one of these three household job functions**
 - Browsing for new purchases;
 - Managing the home;
 - Overseeing finances.
- **Mail evokes emotion among consumers**
 - 67% feel mail is more personal than the Internet;
 - 56% say receiving mail is a real pleasure;

- 55% look forward to discovering the mail they receive.
- **Mail and the Internet are complementary marketing mediums**
- Consumers browse mail catalogs to assist with online shopping;
- Consumers who receive a company's mail catalog account for 22% of the company's Web site traffic and 37% of the company's e-commerce dollars.

"The role of mail remains very much distinct from e-mail marketing and the Internet, yet the two continue to work well together, especially when a direct mailpiece drives consumers to the Internet for information or to make a purchase," said John Palmer, president of InnoMedia Inc.

Since 1775, the Postal Service has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. It is an independent federal agency that visits 142 million homes and businesses every day and is the only service provider delivering to every address in the nation. The Postal Service receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations, but derives its operating revenues solely from the sale of postage, products and services. With annual revenues of more than \$69 billion, it is the world's leading provider of mailing and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. The Postal Service delivers more than 46 percent of the world's mail volume- some 206 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year- and serves seven million customers each day at its 37,000 retail locations nationwide.

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