



NEWS RELEASE

# RRD Survey: Converging Macro Trends Drive Marketers to Tune Up Channel Strategies

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A new generation of buyers, sustainability pressures, shifting political landscape and dynamic workforce change the rules in marketing playbooks

CHICAGO--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- A study released today by R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company (**RRD**) reveals marketer perceptions of macro trends impacting today's consumers, which in turn influences the approach to reach them. **The Macro Marketing Report** showed primary concerns include shifting of buying power to new generations (89%), ESG-related concerns (84%), a changing political climate (80%), and workforce changes (78%).

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<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20221005005226/en/>

Nine out of 10 marketers feel there needs to be an adjustment to marketing strategy as purchasing power shifts into the hands of Gen Z. (Photo: Business Wire)

embracing new channels, such as the metaverse, they are also looking for innovative ways to leverage more traditional approaches. Marketers are turning to direct mail to engage with today's digitally fatigued consumers, with nearly three-quarters (73%) reporting direct mail has either kept the same level of importance or increased in the last year.

"Marketers are currently experiencing a watershed moment: Gen Z now accounts for a larger share of consumer spend, the evolving work-from-home movement is continuing to shift how marketers reach consumers, and many shoppers are coping with soaring prices of their everyday items," said Al duPont, Chief Commercial Officer at RRD. "Our survey found that marketers who can navigate this complex environment with nimble strategies that capitalize

The company's third annual marketing industry report found that while marketers are

on the optimal channel mix will be the most successful in engaging with today's consumers."

Surveying 500 in-house marketing decision-makers and 1,000 consumers in the U.S., The Macro Marketing Report results highlight four transformative industry themes:

## Marketers are bullish on emerging channels

Despite an array of concerns converging to create a tough marketing climate, marketers are still testing a variety of channels to find the best ROI. The survey found all channels have increased in importance to marketing strategy or stayed the same over the past year for the majority of respondents, with social media (73%), online or digital ads (69%), and streaming services (57%) growing in the most importance for the majority of marketers.

Further, many are opting to make big bets and test-drive emerging channels like the metaverse. A whopping 94% of marketing decision-makers agree the metaverse is a new and exciting way to reach potential customers and 77% have plans to experiment with the metaverse channel in the next few years. Meanwhile, only 15% of consumers said they're currently involved with the metaverse, signifying marketers are ahead of the curve when it comes to this emerging channel.

## Direct mail feels novel for digital natives

More than four in 10 consumers are more excited about direct mail now than they were a year ago and this percentage is even higher among younger generations (63% of Gen Z and 62% of Millennials). The data may suggest digital natives find physical brand communications to be more compelling and novel. Further, consumers believe direct mail to be more personal (+11%), more likely to catch their attention (+17%), and more trustworthy (+17%), in comparison to email brand messages.

Similarly, marketers also value direct marketing as a core component of their strategy, with nearly three-quarters (73%) reporting direct mail has either kept the same level of importance or increased in importance in the last year. Additionally, a vast majority of marketers (85%) are adjusting their digital marketing strategy due to data privacy concerns – of those, three out of four (76%) have opted to reallocate budget to direct mail.

## The shift in generational buying power is underway

Nine out of 10 marketers feel there needs to be an adjustment to marketing strategy as purchasing power shifts into the hands of Gen Z. In doing so, over half of marketers agree that visual communications (64%), tone of communications (62%), channel strategy (61%), and frequency of communications (53%) needs to be restructured for a Gen Z audience.

As an example of the impact of shifting buying power, a majority of consumers (63%) believe that brands should take a stance on political or social issues – and they're more likely to purchase from the brands that do. That percentage climbs to 80% among Gen Z respondents.

The data suggests marketers optimizing channels, messaging and KPIs for a younger generation will gain competitive advantage in capturing a growing segment of customers.

## CX continues to be a tough nut to crack

Improving the customer experience (45%), making data-driven decisions (34%), and rising prices (33%) were likely to rank in the top three challenges that marketers are currently facing. Compounding this, 55% of consumers feel that brands have the responsibility to accommodate for recent inflation, with 66% believing brands should offer discounts or promotions.

To read the full report, visit: [rrd.com/macro-marketing](https://rrd.com/macro-marketing).

## Methodology

As a leading global marketing solutions provider, RRD commissioned a survey of over 500 US marketing decision makers with in-house roles across a variety of industry sectors as well as 1,000 US consumers, representative of the US population in gender, age, region, and race/ethnicity. The survey, conducted by FINN Partners in August 2022, was conducted online and is weighted to be nationally representative. The Macro Marketing Report is RRD's third annual survey of marketers. Prior studies include the 2020 [Pivot Report](#) and the 2021 [\(Un\)Expected Report](#).

## About RRD

RRD is a leading global provider of marketing, packaging, print, and supply chain solutions that elevate engagement across the complete customer journey. The company offers the industry's most trusted portfolio of creative execution and world-wide business process consulting, with services designed to lower environmental impact. With 25,000 clients, including 92% of the Fortune 100, and 32,000 employees across 29 countries, RRD brings the expertise, execution, and scale designed to transform customer touchpoints into meaningful moments of impact.

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