



FOR MAXIMUM  
IMPACT,  
THINK PRINT

Health  Monitor<sup>®</sup>  
NETWORK

Building brands by empowering patients™

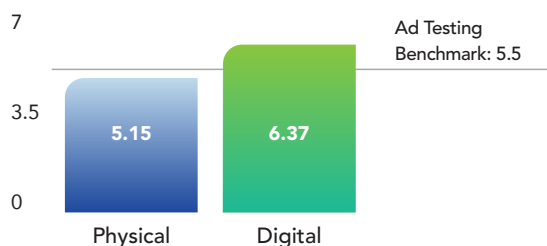
To paraphrase Mark Twain, the reports of the death of print are greatly exaggerated. In fact, in a world where digital media is the constant companion of anyone with a smart phone (that's 85% of Americans, according to the Pew Research Center<sup>1</sup>), print outperforms screen reading where it matters most. Consider the following:

**TRUST** With digital media now perceived as the principal purveyor of “fake news,” paper instills readers with greater confidence. In the 2017 Print and Paper in a Digital World survey, 56% of U.S. respondents said they trust what they read in printed newspapers compared with just 35% who have faith in stories found on social media<sup>2</sup>. That translates to advertising, too, with print ads ranking no. 1 in terms of trustworthiness—and social media ads dead last<sup>3</sup>. Consumers also put more stock in print because they are mindful of the care (the editing, vetting and proofreading) that goes into printed pieces, which, unlike their digital counterparts, can't be revised with a simple click.

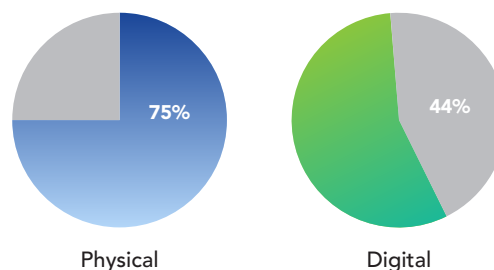
**ENHANCED COMPREHENSION AND RETENTION** People learn more from print, period. For one, it's easier to process, requiring 21% less cognitive effort than digital media, and in the marketing world, that translates to 70% higher brand recall<sup>4</sup>. Plus, “paper provides a contextual cue that the material is serious and deserving of focused attention,” says Virginia Clinton-Lisell, PhD, Associate Professor of Educational Foundations and Research at the University of North Dakota and author of a 2019 meta-analysis of all studies to date comparing print and screen reading<sup>5</sup>. Digital screens, on the other hand, promote a “shallowing” effect, says Clinton-Lisell: “You're used to reading screens for brief, superficial interactions—social media, news blurbs, entertainment. So there's the tendency to equate what you're reading on a screen to something light, even though you may be reading a science textbook. When looking at comprehension of higher-order complex reading and literal memory of the text, there is a benefit of paper over screen.”

## Paper vs Digital: Cognition and Recall Variances

**Cognitive Effort Required**  
Average Cognitive Load Scores



**Unaided Brand Recall**



Source: True Impact & Canada Post study  
<https://romax.co.uk/blog/mailbeatsemail/>

- <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/fact-sheet/mobile/>
- [https://twosidesna.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2018/05/Two\\_Sides-Print\\_and\\_Paper\\_In\\_A\\_Digital\\_World\\_US-KEY-FINDINGS.pdf](https://twosidesna.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2018/05/Two_Sides-Print_and_Paper_In_A_Digital_World_US-KEY-FINDINGS.pdf)
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- <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/1467-9817.12269>





## IMPROVED FOCUS

“Task-unrelated thoughts,” or mind wandering, is more common with screen reading, says Clinton-Lisell. Not only are screen readers combating distractions such as pop-up ads, screen glare and multiple browsers, but Clinton-Lisell also cites “technostress,” or screen fatigue, in the COVID era as a factor: “A lot of [study subjects] talk about how they just feel exhausted being in front of a screen so much,” she says. Interestingly, neuroscientists have found that digital reading actually engages a different part of the brain than print, shifting the mind toward “non-linear” reading—i.e., a tendency to skim text and dart around the screen<sup>6</sup>. When it comes to patient education, these are important considerations as the more a person knows about their health condition, the more likely they are to engage with their healthcare team, adhere to their treatment plan and ultimately enjoy better outcomes<sup>7</sup>. And of no small consequence, adds Clinton-Lisell, is the plain fact that people generally prefer to read from paper, as shown by multiple studies.

## EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT

People connect with print on an intellectual and emotional level far surpassing that of digital media. In a neuromarketing study at Temple University using MRI technology, researchers concluded that reading materials which people can touch, hold and smell leave a deeper footprint in the brain. Their evidence: Print ads activated the parietal lobes of the brain, which make information more “real” and memorable. Print also triggers activity in parts of the brain associated with emotional engagement, translating to greater focus on and “feeling” for the material<sup>8</sup>. Finally, print stimulates the ventral striatum (VS), the brain’s “reward center”—which correlates closely with desire and, ultimately, ad effectiveness<sup>9</sup>.

## GREATER ENDURANCE

Print has proven staying power. The average life span of a social media ad is mere seconds compared with 17 days for print, according to research by Go Inspire Group<sup>10</sup>. That translates to increased opportunity for conversion. Certainly, print’s long shelf life is good news for the Rule of 7—the idea that a consumer needs to see a message at least 7 times before it sinks in<sup>11</sup>.

## INTRINSIC APPEAL

People find print to be more thoughtful, more personal and therefore, more worthy of their attention. Think about how you respond to a handwritten card in the mail compared with a text, email or social media greeting. Not surprisingly, 90% of direct mail gets opened, compared to only 20%-30% of marketing emails<sup>12</sup>. And in the Print and Paper survey mentioned above, 71% of U.S. respondents say they don’t pay attention to most online ads, 63% try to block or avoid them and 66% say they can’t remember the last time they clicked on one willingly<sup>13</sup>.

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6 <https://s3.amazonaws.com/oboclientassets/ADP/assets/Deliverables/Print+vs+Digital.pdf>

7 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4912447/>

8 [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58ee4bac414fb53d228c3532/t/5d30cff8e172f9000121e612/1563480057602/MillwardBrown\\_CaseStudy\\_Neuroscience.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58ee4bac414fb53d228c3532/t/5d30cff8e172f9000121e612/1563480057602/MillwardBrown_CaseStudy_Neuroscience.pdf)

9 <https://www.forbes.com/sites/rogerdooley/2015/09/16/paper-vs-digital/?sh=5f62e53e33c3>

10 <https://www.marketingdive.com/press-release/20181220-go-inspire-group-study-reveals-relative-performance-of-direct-email-versus/>; <https://www.adweek.com/sponsored/print-works-and-heres-the-brain-science-to-prove-it/>

11 <https://siglcreative.com/2019/06/07/rule-of-7/>

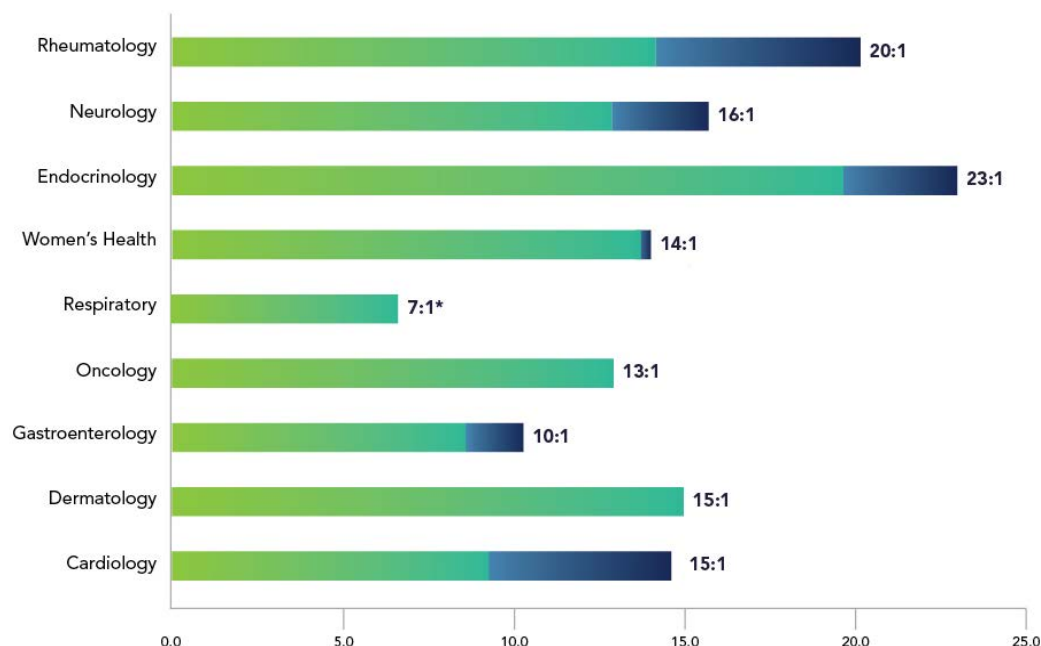
12 <https://www.smallbizgenius.net/by-the-numbers/direct-mail-statistics/#gref>

13 [http://twosides.info/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Two\\_Sides\\_Print\\_and\\_Paper\\_In\\_A\\_Digital\\_World\\_UK-KEY-FINDINGS.pdf](http://twosides.info/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Two_Sides_Print_and_Paper_In_A_Digital_World_UK-KEY-FINDINGS.pdf)

# HEALTH MONITOR'S KEY FINDINGS

The efficacy of print is borne out in Health Monitor's ROI studies. Over the past two years Health Monitor has conducted over 30 ROI research studies looking at POC campaigns with a print magazine component. These magazines are either geared toward people suffering from a particular illness or disease or healthcare providers who treat patients with a specific condition. The results of these ROI studies have been remarkably consistent and positive in favor of print. The average ROI for print campaigns is over 15:1 and almost twice that of campaigns that were entirely digital in nature. These results are from a wide array of therapeutic areas ranging from more common ailments such as type 2 diabetes to more esoteric conditions such as melanoma. These findings clearly highlight the important place printed materials hold in the most successful POC marketing campaigns.

## Health Monitor ROI Results Across Therapeutic Areas



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To learn more about the effectiveness of print, visit <https://www.healthmonitornetwork.com/current-news>