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# Consumers Prefer Direct Mail as the Major Tool to Build Effective Customer Relationships

## New Study Reveals Direct Mail Provides High Value Connection with Consumers, Ahead of Print Ads, Television, Radio and Email/Internet

Stamford, CT - June 27, 2001 - Direct mail is the most effective CRM (customer relationship management) tool to reach customers, according to a survey released today by Pitney Bowes (NYSE:PBI). The study, conducted in conjunction with Peppers and Rogers Group, a management consulting firm specializing in customer-focused business strategies, surveyed more than 350 U.S. households with annual incomes greater than \$35,000 and yielded surprising results that electronic-based communication and marketing tools such as e-mail and the Internet are not as effective for building customer relationships as expected.

- The majority surveyed (34%) said direct mail contributes most to establishing a relationship with them and keeping them informed and involved with a business, followed by print ads (30%), TV (25%), radio (5%), e-mail (4%), Internet (2%), and telemarketing (0%).
- Direct Mail is effective at building customer relationships because it is familiar (95%), convenient (94%), interactive (93%), universal (93%), private (87%) and personalized (84%).
- Now more than ever, consumers value organizations that make an effort to communicate and build a relationship with them through the mail (57%), up 10% since a 1998 study.

"This research shows that direct mail does the best job of providing consumers with the information they want, when they want it, and how they want to receive it," said Kevin Weiss, President, Customer Marketing, Pitney Bowes Global Mailing Systems. "Effective customer relationship management is critical in acquiring and retaining customers. While e-mail and the Internet are important communication and research tools, our report indicates that they are not perceived as valuable as direct mail in building and sustaining customer relationships."

"It is critical for companies to realize that CRM is not a simple tool to be installed, but a process by which a company can build solid relationships with their customers. Direct mail has the potential to enable companies to effectively build that relationship, especially when companies use the information from their customers to provide more customized services either by mail or other forms of interaction," said Don Peppers, partner with Peppers and Rogers Group.

The survey discovered that Direct Mail:

- Inspires action -- Forty-five percent of the respondents said that if they received a targeted direct mailing they would

mention the company to their friends, call if more information was needed (44%), open a second piece of mail sent by the company (43%), further investigate the company on the Internet (39%) and buy something being advertised (22%).

- Has a purpose -- Consumers said direct mail educates, organizes and relaxes them.
- Has positive attributes - Eighty two percent of the recipients enjoy the control in choosing when to open a mail piece, 78% appreciate its non-intrusive nature, 65% feel positive about its security, and 56% feel more involved with an organization that stays in touch using the mail.

Direct mail accounts for more than one-half of the total mail received by a household today (65%), up from 56% in 1987. Not surprisingly, as household incomes increase, the amount of direct mail received increases.

### **About the Study**

Pitney Bowes, in conjunction with the Peppers and Rogers Group, surveyed via telephone a representative sample of more than 350 US households, with annual incomes greater than \$35,000. This survey explored consumer opinions on communication channels used to build customer relationships, beliefs and opinions about direct mail and perceptions of direct mail usage to foster relationships in nine industries. The survey, consisting of seven questions, was designed and administered by Peppers and Rogers Group and the fielding was conducted in May 2001. The sample size meets minimum requirements for aggregated public release.

### **About Peppers and Rogers Group**

Headquartered in Norwalk, Connecticut, Peppers and Rogers Group was founded in 1993 by Don Peppers and Martha Rogers, Ph.D. They are co-authors of a series of books and articles on managing customer relationships, including *The One to One Future* (1993), which first popularized the term "one-to-one marketing." Steve Skinner, a former partner at McKinsey and Company, is President and CEO.

As the preeminent management consulting firm specializing in customer-focused business issues, Peppers and Rogers Group helps clients devise strategies and plans for strengthening their customer relationships. The firm assists clients in the operational implementation of their customer relationship initiatives; offers training and e-learning programs, research studies, workshops and keynote presentations; and helps clients locate and evaluate CRM professionals through its 1to1® Executive Search subsidiary. Peppers and Rogers Group's advertising-supported newsletters and magazines reach more than 250,000 CRM professionals around the world.

### **About Pitney Bowes**

Pitney Bowes Inc. is a \$4 billion global provider of integrated mail and document management solutions headquartered in Stamford, Connecticut. The company serves over 2 million businesses of all sizes through dealer and direct operations globally.