

## 6 Reasons Why Print & Electronic Award Catalogues Make A Great Partnership

---

*The temptation to cut costs on your incentive program by opting for a Web-based, rather than a printed, award catalogue might be more costly than you think. Research shows that not only do print catalogues broaden the appeal of your award range; they actually increase Web-based traffic and redemptions.*

Several years ago, when the Internet was in its infancy, many Web experts predicted that it would signal the end of print-based media as we know it. The reality is different. Yes, printed award catalogues do occupy a different position in the market in the face of their electronic counterparts; but, as Maritz Rewards argues, when used effectively together, they bring more value than they do individually.

Here are six reasons why print and online catalogues make such a great partnership.

### **1. Together, they offer a "multichannel approach"**

Incentive program participants can now choose how to select their awards, which increases the likelihood of redemptions.

A case in point: in 1999, US-based retailer Lands' End decided to cut down on the number of printed catalogues it released in reaction to growing online sales. Unexpectedly, sales dropped, and only returned to previous levels when it increased distribution of its printed catalogues.

According to David Towers, vice-president of e-commerce at multi-million dollar bricks-and-clicks retailer J. Crew: "We have found that the catalogue and the Internet have a synergistic effect. We have customers that shop in just one channel but many shop in all three channels."

(Catalogue, online, retail)

In the South African context, Web access is still limited to the lucky few - and, where it is available, it isn't always at the lightning-fast speeds enjoyed by countries that work primarily on a broadband (i.e. fast Internet) platform. Which is why print catalogues are still very popular.

## **2. Print increases Web traffic and sales**

Figures consistently show that print award catalogues have a positive impact on online traffic and sales. A primary reason for this is that participants can browse at leisure, then buy online, giving them the best of both worlds.

The pitfall of only having a Web-based award catalogue is keeping the award opportunities top of mind with your participants. In fact research shows that those who receive print catalogues tend to be more engaged shoppers: in an extensive survey, it was found that those with a print catalogue "were twice as likely to make an online purchase, more likely to spend 'quality' time on the retailer's site and made 15% more transactions than those who didn't receive catalogues."

## **3. Catering to browsers as well as buyers**

While some shoppers know what they want and don't have the time or inclination to browse, others like to take their time – making the Internet the better option for the former, and print catalogues better for the latter.

If your online catalogue team has done its job well, participants who prefer the instant gratification of shopping online will be able to make a purchase in just a few clicks of the mouse; while those who prefer the sensation of paging through a full-colour glossy will get their kicks with a

more leisurely, print-based experience. Which is why it's always a good idea to offer both options to your incentive program participants.

#### **4. Print helps deliver the Wow effect**

Maritz Rewards suggests that "online purchasers might miss something that purveyors of print catalogues often find: the Wow effect." It's not that easy to drive cross- and up-sell in a process as linear as online shopping, while flipping through a print catalogue can unearth lots of new award ideas.

In a 2004 survey conducted by the Millard Group, "80% of consumers said receiving a print catalogue prompted them to shop online", and 65% said they used the printed catalogue as a reference tool when making their online purchases. In other words, printed catalogues help participants see products they wouldn't have otherwise considered, while the Web helps them find the items and order them at leisure.

#### **5. Easy portability vs. endless possibility**

Unlike online catalogues (which tend to be a little unwieldy to carry around in spite of the advent of the laptop!), participants can pick up a print catalogue at whim, and take it with them if they feel like it. It's also common for a well-produced catalogue to become a coffee table book, extending its shelf life in the process.

On the other hand, online award catalogues can house a far larger selection of awards than most printed publications, as well as list more detailed features and benefits – great for those who like to shop around.

## 6. Getting the family involved

Finally, many participants go through the printed catalogue with their families, and complete their order online. This lets everyone actively share in the selection process, which is a great motivating factor to keep meeting those program goals.

Source: *A Powerful One-Two Punch: How Print and Online Catalogs Complement each other.* (2005). Maritz Rewards.

This article was first published in *Insight* September, 2005

---

### Achievement Awards Group (Pty) Ltd

**Head Office:** Tel No: 021 700 2300 Fax No: 021 700 8750 Physical: Achievement Awards Group Business Campus, 14 Stibitz Street, Westlake, 7045 **Postal:** PO Box 234, Plumstead, 7801

**Business Development Office:** Tel No: 011 884 6225 Fax No: 011 884 6447 **Physical:** 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Sandton City Office Tower, Chr Rivonia Road & 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Sandton, 2196 **Postal:** PostNet Suite No 97, Private Bag X9924, Sandton, 2146

**Email:** [info@awards.co.za](mailto:info@awards.co.za) **Website:** [www.awards.co.za](http://www.awards.co.za)