

## Direct marketing 'important' financial products channel

**27.02.2009**

A third of consumers (33pc) in the UK believe that direct marketing communications are an important means of finding out about new financial products and services, according to a new survey.

The *Financial Services Tracking Study*, which was carried out by CCB fast.MAP for the UK-based Direct Marketing Association (DMA), also indicates that more than half of consumers (56pc) who use financial services comparison websites do so in conjunction with direct mail or literature received from their bank or building society. This compares to 38pc of consumers who report using independent websites, 36pc who turn to friends and relatives, and nearly 10pc who mention marketing emails.

The study also looks at consumer perceptions of named bank, credit card and insurance companies, as well as the percentage of consumers 'shopping around' when insurance and other products come up for renewal. The study is based on an online survey of more than 1,000 consumers.

Commenting on the report Eric Austin, chairman of the DMA Financial Services Council, said: "The report demonstrates that, right now, consumers weigh up the information in comparison and independent websites and track down the best deals; but nevertheless, depend on the printed word delivered to their door to provide the detail. They aren't relying on high-impact TV adverts. Unless they go deeper into the data to understand what motivates specific groups of consumers, brands are in danger of missing profitable opportunities."

"The credit crunch has greatly eroded trust in the financial services industry," said David Cole, managing director of CCB fast.MAP. "However, despite people's understandable distrust of the industry in general, this research has shown that many have retained faith in the banks, building societies, insurance companies and financial advisers they actually use. This is a key area in which direct marketers can make a strong impact - by building upon personal contact with customers, using the tone of voice and contact route those individuals prefer."