



Trend Report # 2

AUSTRALIA



Digital Fatigue

Print and physical mail
are bringing peace of mind
back to Australians.



The contradiction of our connected age.

Australians are switching off – and tuning back in to mail.

In an age of constant connection, Australians are showing clear signs of digital fatigue, a mental and emotional exhaustion born from too much screen time, endless notifications, and overflowing inboxes.

According to *The Source 2025*, nine in ten Australians (86%) report at least some sign of digital fatigue, with over half actively taking steps to reduce technology's impact on their mental wellbeing.

**"The physical letter
reminds me that I have to
deal with it. Without
those, I'd get anxious that
I'd forget."**

Female, Melbourne

42%

say the flood of online
information makes it
difficult to concentrate.

4/10

are returning to physical
media, books, magazines,
physical mail, and
newspapers, rather
than online versions.

4/10

want to reduce time on
their phones but don't
know how.



Younger Australians are feeling it the most.

Raised in a digital world, they are now leading the charge to reclaim real-world calm through analogue escapes.

The data paints a clear emotional picture, Australians are not anti-technology, but pro-balance. The tactile nature of print and mail offer grounding in an otherwise intangible world, providing structure, routine, and comfort.

Distrust in digital, trust in tangible

When everything online feels uncertain, print and mail feel true.

Australians' relationship with digital information is increasingly sceptical.

Three-quarters of Aussies question the accuracy of what they find online, while four in five (78%) believe digital communications are more susceptible to scams or fraud than physical mail.

In a climate of misinformation, hacking, and AI-generated content, physical mail provides an anchor of authenticity.



It is seen as **private, deliberate, and safe.** Tangibility equals trust, and trust equals attention.

The irony is striking, the same technology that promised connection has created chaos. Brands seeking credibility and connection are rediscovering the power of print, not as nostalgia, however as a modern trusted channel.

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75%

are concerned about how their personal data is stored or shared online.



52%

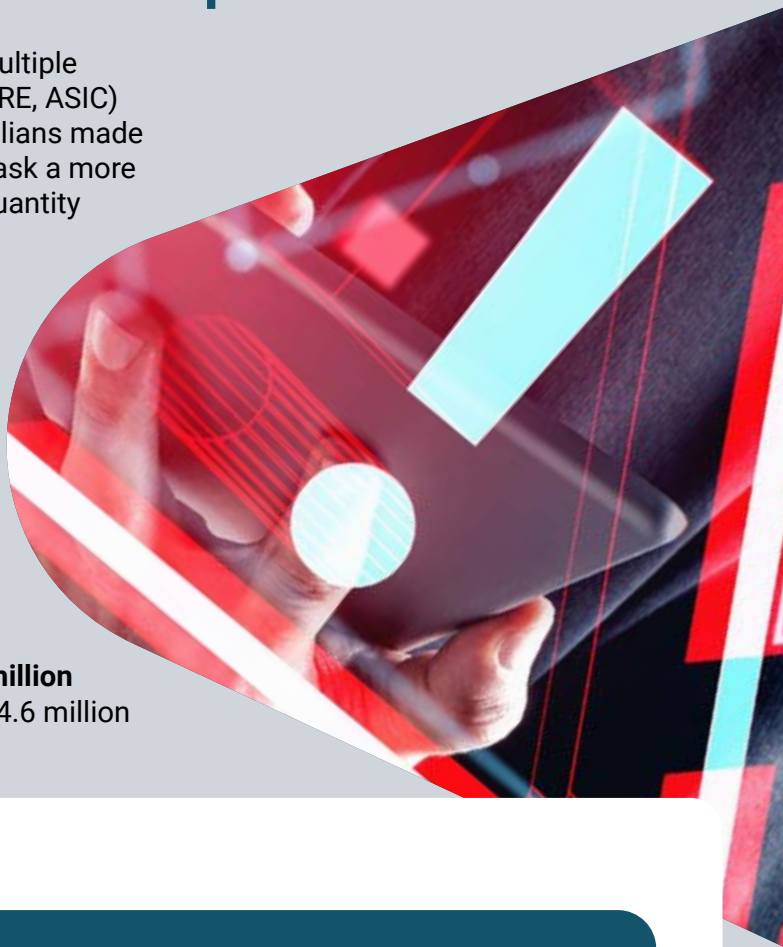
prefer to receive sensitive documents through physical mail due to online security concerns.

Australians are significantly more concerned about digital security than New Zealanders, the result of Australia experiencing **EIGHT TIMES MORE BREACHED ACCOUNTS.**

Australia continues to grapple with rising losses from digital scams, even as the number of reported incidents dips.

In 2024, the combined reported losses across multiple agencies (Scamwatch, ReportCyber, AFCX, IDCARE, ASIC) totalled **AUD 2.03 billion**. That same year, Australians made 494,732 scam reports, however, these figures mask a more volatile reality, scams are shifting, fading from quantity into higher-impact losses.

Into 2025, the trend is stark and worrying. In the first half of 2025 alone, Australians reported **108,305 scams** with **~AUD 173.8 million** in losses, a 24% drop in report count compared to the same period in 2024, but a **26% increase** in financial losses. In the first four months of 2025, over **AUD 119 million** was lost across **72,230** reported scams, despite a 24% decline in overall reports, meaning many scams are becoming more financially damaging. Notably, phishing scams alone accounted for **AUD 13.7 million** in losses in that early 2025 period, up from AUD 4.6 million in the same stretch of 2024.



KEY FINDINGS:

AUD 2.03 billion — combined reported scam losses in 2024.

494,732 — number of scam reports in 2024.

~AUD 173.8 million — losses reported in H1 2025.

~AUD 119 million — losses in first 4 months of 2025.

AUD 13.7 million — phishing-related losses in early 2025.

Australians are craving human connection — and print and the letterbox is helping them find it.

The emotional reset:
human connection and peace of mind

The constant ping of online life has eroded our sense of community. The report finds:



73%

of Australians
value face-to-face
interactions more
now than ever.

72%

believe digital
communication
has made us
less genuinely
connected.

59%

actively seek
out real-world
interactions
over online ones.

~50%

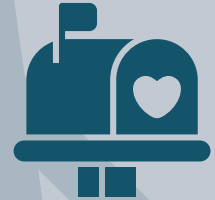
say they would
remove social
media entirely
if they could.

Print and physical mail quietly satisfy this yearning for authenticity. The act of walking to the letterbox, holding something in hand, and taking a moment to pause becomes a miniature ritual of mindfulness, a **mental exhale** in the day.

Unlike the dopamine-charged scroll, print delivers calm, credibility, and continuity. It doesn't interrupt; it invites.



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The research also shows that **'email overwhelm'** is creeping into Australians' daily stress.

Insight for Marketers is that as audiences become more selective about where they give their attention, print and physical mail stand out by not shouting.

The physical form signals care, effort, and intention are the very qualities that build loyalty and recall.

50%

of respondents say their inbox feels overwhelming due to message volume.



45%

admit to missing important information because of inbox clutter.

Those with
500+ unread emails

are 70% more likely to feel digital burnout than those with fewer than 50.



The case for print in a fatigued world:

Print cuts through digital noise — quietly, confidently, credibly.

Despite being checked less frequently than email, weekly rather than daily, physical mail remains a trusted leader in information and advertising usefulness:

In marketing terms, print occupies the “quiet premium”, fewer impressions, but higher impact. It earns attention instead of demanding it. It is remembered, re-read, pinned to fridges, and discussed around kitchen tables.

The Big Insight:

As Australians experience cognitive overload online, print's physicality is providing something technology cannot.

Peace of mind.

It is no longer about being analogue in a digital world, it's about being human in a hyperconnected one.



Print and mail rank among the top 3 channels for receiving advertising and information, alongside television and email.

Print media is the most trusted advertising channel, scoring 6.4 out of 10 for trust, higher than any digital format.

Physical mail is among the least likely to be considered spam and one of the few channels where perceived spam has decreased over the past three months.



About Open up to Mail

The Open Up to Mail campaign has been developed to share insights into the role of the letterbox across societal balances and consumer trends throughout Australia and New Zealand. The research will run across three (3) years and has been independently conducted by well-regarded research agency, The Source brings expertise in market research across the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand, having worked across sectors including media, retail, government and telecommunications. From fact sheets to shareable resources, the Open Up to Mail campaign website is your hub for downloadable content, quarterly industry insight events, and networking.

Funding is secured from the Visual Media Association and industry stakeholders. For more information go to: www.openuptomail.com.au.

About the Visual Media Association

The Visual Media Association is the peak industry body representing the paper, print, packaging, labels, sign, display, publishing, mail and distribution sectors across Australia. An employer association, the Visual Media Association reports to the Fair Work Commission representing the industry across skills, promotion, protection and regulation. For more information go to: www.visualmediaassociation.org.au.