

Alternative Email Footers

Information Sheet

All too often we see email footers with negative and misleading messages about the environmental impacts of print and paper. Messages like “Think before you print – Our forests will thank you” and “Please consider the environment before printing this email” imply that electronic communication always has a lower environmental impact than printed materials. But this conclusion is not supported by credible and reliable scientific evidence. Such claims not only ignore the unique sustainable features of print and paper, but also fail to consider the growing environmental footprint of our electronic infrastructure.

The Facts

Contrary to the common misconception that paper use destroys forests, forest area in the United States grew more than 18 million acres between 1990 and 2020, an area equivalent to 1,200 NFL football fields every day, while forest area in Canada remained stable over the same period.¹ Young, growing and expanding forests help the environment by absorbing CO₂ from the atmosphere, supporting biodiversity and providing other ecosystem benefits. The U.S. and Canada have world-class recycling rates for paper and paper-based packaging of 66% and 70% respectively^{2,3} - higher than all other materials, including glass, metals and plastic. Research shows that consumers prefer to read important documents and bills in printed format and they gain a better understanding from printed information.⁴

So, if you need a more convenient or permanent copy of emails, don't feel guilty about printing them! But please be sure to recycle those you don't need as a permanent record.

Here are some alternative, more positive email footers you may want to consider:



Responsibly produced paper has unique environmental features. It's made with a renewable resource and is highly recyclable. If you print, please recycle.



Print on paper is a practical, attractive, and sustainable communications medium. If you print, please recycle.



The demand for sustainably produced paper supports sustainable forest management in North America. The income landowners receive for trees grown on their land encourages them to sustainably manage, renew and maintain this valuable resource.



Paper is one of the most recycled products in the world and is made from trees grown in sustainably managed North American forests – a natural and renewable resource.

You can find more alternative email footers [here](#).

Sources:

1. UN Food and Agriculture Organization, 2020
2. American Forest and Paper Association, 2020
3. Forest Products Association of Canada, 2020
4. Two Sides, Print and Paper in a Digital World, 2017

About Two Sides

Established in 2012, Two Sides North America is an independent, non-profit organization that promotes the sustainability of print, paper and paper-based packaging, and dispels common environmental misconceptions about paper-based products. We are part of the Two Sides global network which operates across North America, South America, Europe, Australia and South Africa.

By enabling a fact-based understanding of our industry's unique sustainable features, Two Sides and its members help ensure that print, paper and paper-based packaging endure as a versatile, effective and powerful means of marketing, communications, knowledge sharing, information security and product safety.



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