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Cloth envelopes give written word extra touch

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It's a safe bet that few people feel as good about the post office as Scottsdale's **Cindy Zimmerman**.

Zimmerman is a big believer in using the handwritten word to make an impression. A letter from her often includes a sprig of rosemary, which symbolizes the remembrance of friendship.

So it's not all that surprising to find that she addressed a recent gathering sponsored by the postal service in Orlando - via video - to extol the virtues of cloth envelopes.

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That's right, cloth envelopes.

Zimmerman gets the envelopes from **Rose Scharmen**, who runs a Traverse City, Mich., company, the Cloth Envelope Co. The envelopes come in a variety of sizes, colors and patterns, and custom orders are available, too.

"The reason those envelopes get the customer's attention is it appeals to two of your senses, visually and texturally," Zimmerman said. "With my rosemary, I appeal to a third sense as well, smell. The point being it stands out in your mail."

Zimmerman was asked to speak at the conference, which was designed to showcase innovative ways for businesses to use direct mail. With so many other ways to reach consumers these days, so-called snail mail isn't the top choice.

You won't get Zimmerman to say that.

"I was talking to the top marketing person for the whole post office," Zimmerman said. "She said, 'I think you love the post office more than I love the post office.'"

For more information about cloth envelopes, visit www.clothenvelope.com. Zimmerman's Writing in Style, organization can be reached at (602) 300-8600 or www.writinginstyle.org.