

Access Mailing Information Through the Internet — It's Right at Your Fingertips

An Internet Resources Guide with easy-to-understand explanations of mailing standards is located on the following five pages and the Postal Web site

To stay responsive and competitive in the current business environment, the Postal Service has made a major commitment to improve customers' ease of use when accessing information or completing a mailing.

This commitment means offering high-quality services and products at a reasonable cost. It means friendly and knowledgeable postal employees who ensure customer satisfaction in every transaction — in the postal lobbies, at the loading dock, and at each delivery point. And, it also means providing easy-to-understand explanations of mailing standards.

Enhanced customer service includes new Internet applications that put a wealth of postal information within easy reach of customers.



Internet applications specifically for business mailers include Business Mail 101, Postal Explorer and the domestic, international, and business rate calculators.

Customers who want to take full advantage of these tools will find the next five pages especially useful. This "Internet Resources Guide" is richly illustrated with graphics and quick tips that demonstrate techniques to help customers quickly find the information they need.

Improving customer satisfaction is a continuous process that will take many forms in the coming months and years. In particular, the Postal Service will continue to use new Internet technologies to bring the information you need just a mouse "click" away.

Technology Upgrades Help Customers Track Mail

The Postal Service has received funding approval from its Board of Governors to invest in computer technology that will provide real-time information on mail flow for both large-volume mailers and postal management.

The funding will be used to upgrade 300 existing Integrated Data Servers (IDSs), a primary source of operational and mail sorting data for the Information Platform, and to purchase

25 new systems to support emerging postal and customer data requirements.

New data collection will provide information that will enable mailers to track their mail as it flows through the automated mailstream, while Postal Service management will be able to better match equipment and staffing to workloads, improving productivity, and reducing operating costs.

— Information Platform

Contents

Internet Applications and Technology Upgrades	cover
Internet Solutions	2-6
Flat Testing	7
Federal Register Notice	8
Updated Communications	9
DM Updates	10
MAC Software Certification	11
Flat Sorting Machine Upgrades	11
Request Mailers Companion	12

Internet Resources – Business Mail 101

Smart Choices for Beginning Mailers

Overview

“Smart Choices for Beginning Mailers” guides new and infrequent mailers through the critical decision points for making a mailing. The written narrative combines existing rules, information, and Internet tools with commonsense “smart tips” and helpful graphics.

Major topics help you:

- Choose the right class of mail for you
- Apply for a mailing permit
- Choose the best way to pay for postage
- Sort your mail
- Fill out a postage statement

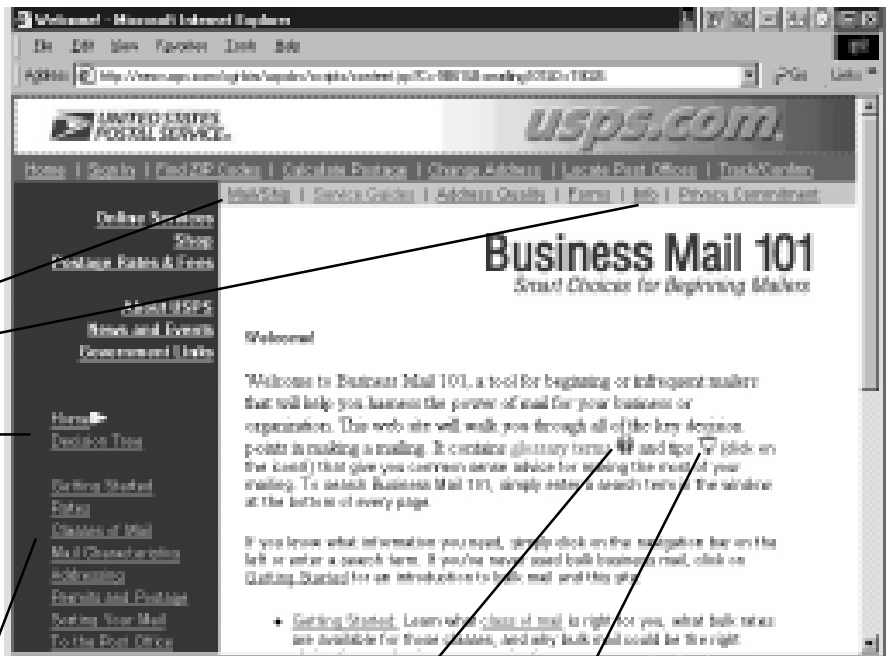
Audience

New or beginning mailers, small businesses, charitable organizations.

Business Mail 101 Can be found under “Mail/Ship” and “Info.”

Decision Tree Answer a few basic questions, and the Decision Tree directs you to the Quick Service Guide that meets your mailing needs.

Navigation Bar Click on a topic to see additional information.



Glossary Terms Pop-up definitions help you understand mail terminology.

“Smart Tips” Click on the light bulb to learn commonsense ways to save time and money on your mailings.

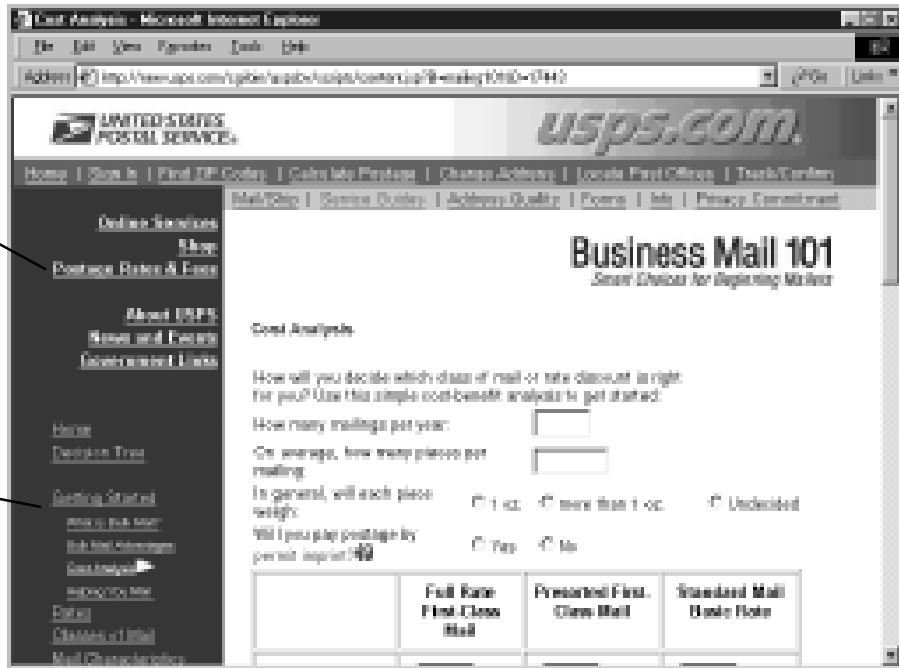


Did You Know


- 4 The Business Mail 101 Decision Tree will help you choose the mailing option best suited for your needs.
- 4 Business Mail 101 contains more than 150 “smart tips” that can save you time and money.

Simple Cost/
Benefit Analysis
will help you decide
if bulk mail is the
right choice for your
business or
organization.

Navigation Bar
expands to show
related topics.



Customer Benefits
Customers will find it
easy to get started
with the Postal
Service. Business
Mail 101 answers all
of your questions in
easy-to-understand
language and
includes "smart tips"
to help you prepare
your mail right the
first time.

 **UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE.**

Mailers Companion

Volume 6, Issue 4 – April 2001
Anita Bizzotto
Vice President
Pricing & Product Design

Connie Totten-Oldham
Manager
Pricing & Classification Implementation

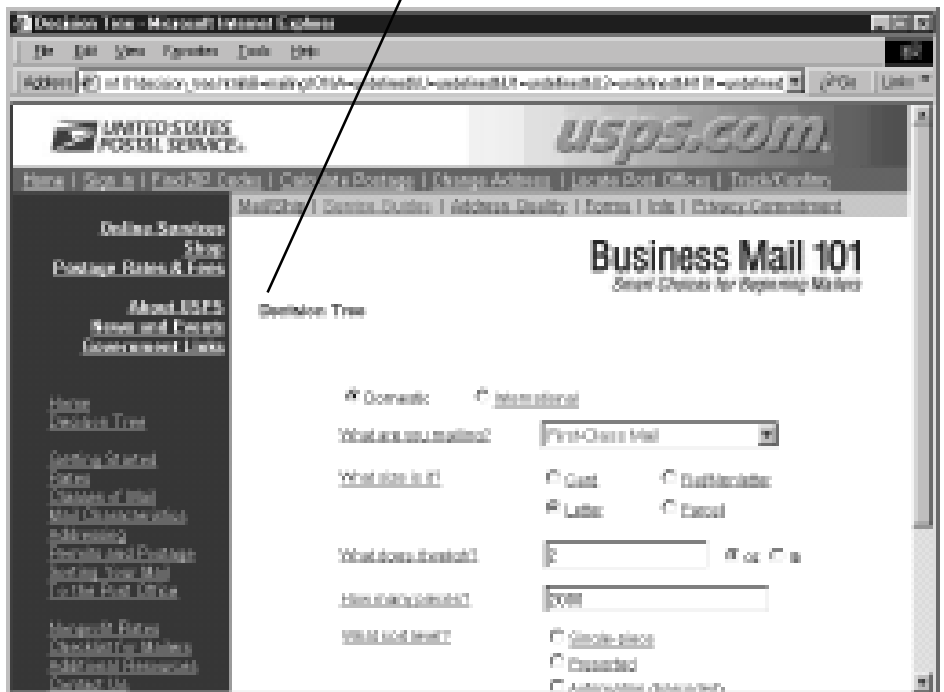
Bill Halstead
Gloria Cundiff
Editors
1735 NORTH LYNN ST
ARLINGTON VA 22209-6039

Mailers Companion is published monthly by U.S. Postal Service Pricing and Product Design. The USPS eagle and logotype are registered trademarks. Send subscription requests and address changes with original mailing label, to:

**MAILERS COMPANION
DATA ENTRY
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
6060 PRIMACY PKWY STE 201
MEMPHIS TN 38188-0001**

Fax: (901) 681-4542
Printed on Recycled Paper

Decision Tree
An interactive questionnaire that helps
you quickly decide which mailing
option is best for you.



Internet Resources—Postal Explorer

Mailing Manuals and Quick Service Guides

Overview

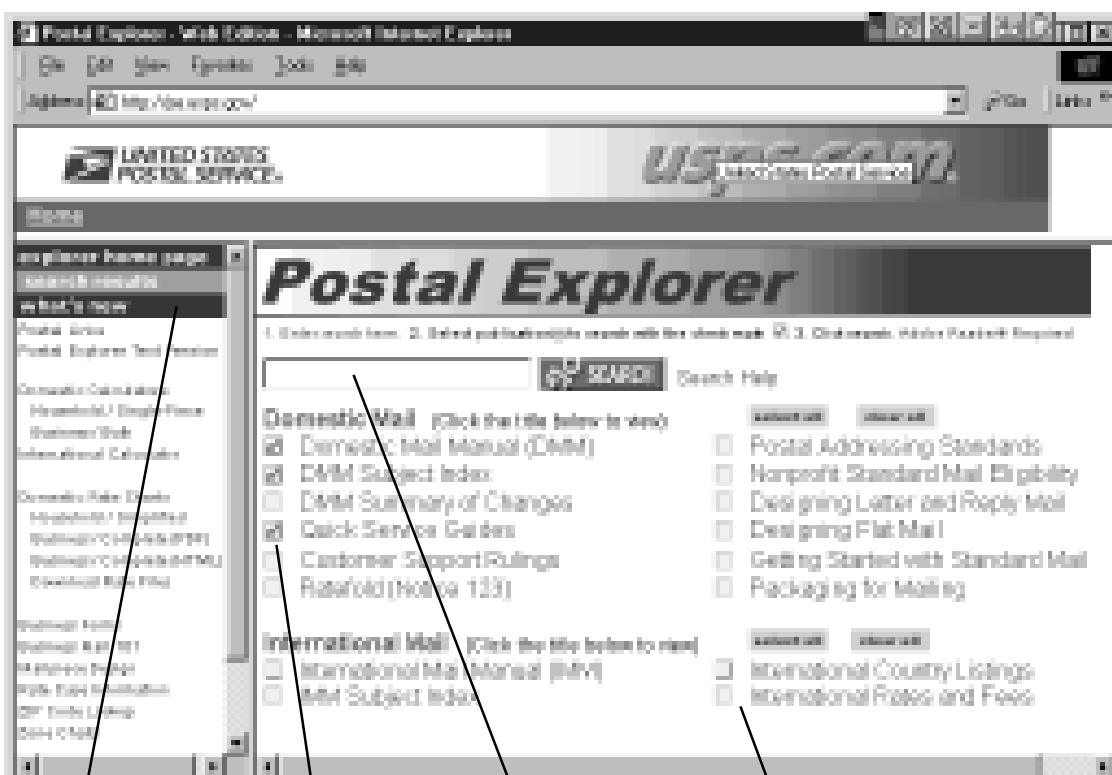
Postal Explorer lets you view and search the *Domestic Mail Manual*, Quick Service Guides, *International Mail Manual*, and related publications. The powerful, easy-to-use search feature lets you search one or all publications.

Audience

Medium to large mailers, anyone who needs access to official USPS mailings standards for domestic or international mail.

Quick Service Guides

Access the complete collection of popular 2-page Quick Service Guides — all linked to the *Domestic Mail Manual* for complete reference.



What's New
Link to a concise list of recent mail preparation changes that may affect your business.

Check Boxes
Click to search one or more publications. A green checkmark means that the publication on that line will be searched.

Search
Enter a search term or phrase.

View Publication
To view a publication, simply click on the document title.



Did You Know

- 4 Postal Explorer is your official source for up-to-the-minute information.
- 4 The *Domestic Mail Manual* is updated monthly on Postal Explorer.

Internet Address: pe.usps.gov

Mailpiece Design Specifications

Postal Explorer (pe.usps.gov) · Mailpiece Design

Mailpiece Design contains Business Reply and Courtesy Reply Mail templates, the Mailpiece Quality Control Program, and a lookup tool to find Mailpiece Design Analysts.

These links will help printers, graphic artists, and form designers to better understand mailpiece design specification and to produce pieces that qualify for the lowest rates.

The site also is useful for small and large businesses that design their own mailpieces.



Customer Benefits

Postal Explorer is an easy-to-use information tool that can save you time and money by providing access to accurate, up-to-date mailing information. Postal Explorer displays and prints information as it appears in the printed publications, complete with graphics and charts.



Business Reply Mail and Courtesy Reply Mail Templates

Graphic designers will love these letter-size and card-size templates that are saved as Adobe® Illustrator® or Macromedia Freehand® files. Adobe® Illustrator templates are available for both Macintosh® and Windows®. Download a template, then add your permit number, delivery address and barcode to create a Business Reply Mail mailpiece in minutes. View-only files are available for use with Acrobat® Reader.

The Mailpiece Quality Control (MQC) Program

This program will help graphic artists, administrators, and sales representatives design and create a mailpiece that can qualify for the best possible postage rates. It also offers useful background information for anyone involved in the preparation of large mailings.

Mailpiece Design Analysts

Mailpiece Design Analysts are specially trained to answer your questions regarding mailpiece design. Use the lookup tool to find one in your area. Mailpiece Design Analysts provide advice and issue rulings regarding acceptability for automated rates. These employees also provide technical assistance on mailpiece design to envelope manufacturers, printers, advertising agencies, and graphic designers.

Internet Resources – Calculators

Domestic, International, and Business

Internet Address: usps.com • Postage Rates and Fees or from the Postal Explorer Home Page <http://pe.usps.gov>

Overview

The domestic, international, and business rate calculators compute rates for these types of mail, as well as for available special services.

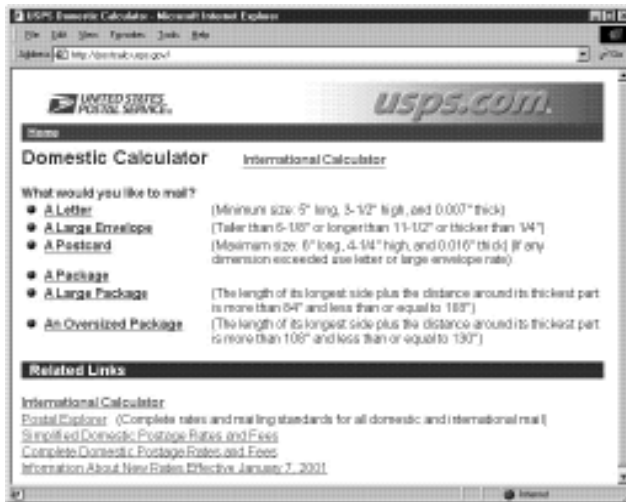
Audience

Households, small businesses, and large mailers.

Customer

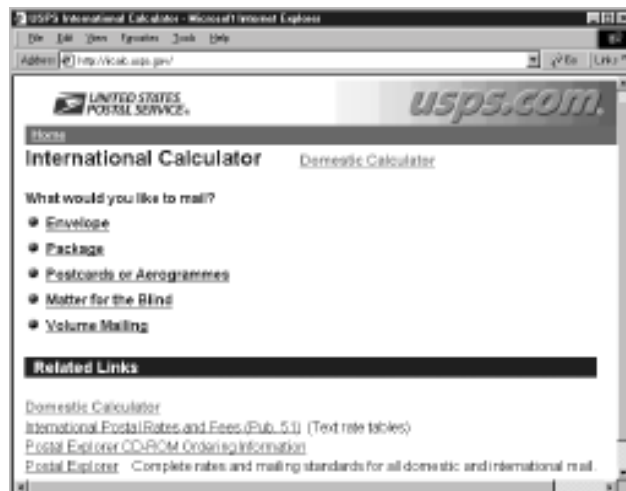
Benefits

Calculate postage rates 24 hours a day without having to call or visit your post office.



Domestic Rate Calculator

The Domestic Rate Calculator computes rates for single-piece letters, flats, and packages. Enter the weight of the piece and the origin and destination ZIP Codes, and the calculator provides the rate and estimated delivery. You also can calculate the cost of available special services, such as Delivery Confirmation™ or certified mail.



International Rate Calculator

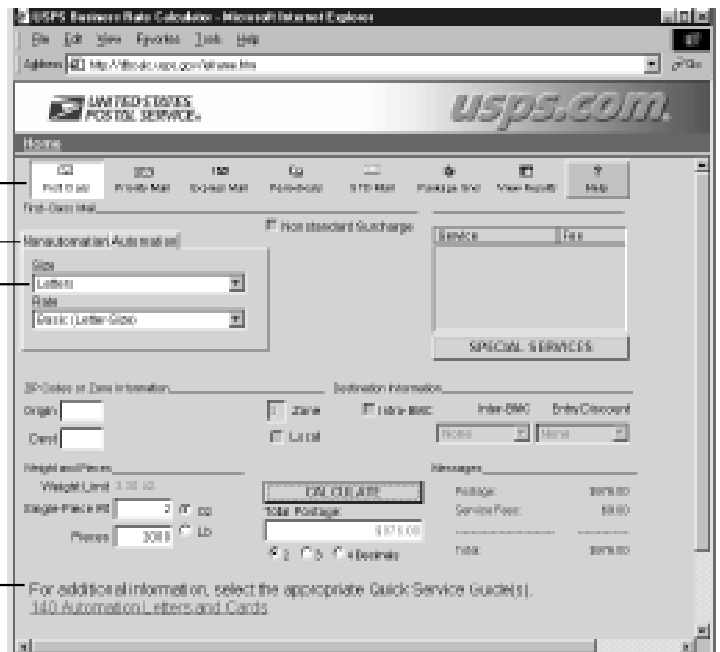
Need to send a package to Canada or Zimbabwe? The International Rate Calculator provides fast, easy access to all foreign mailing destinations. Select a country and enter a weight, and the calculator provides mailing options complete with price, estimated delivery and maximum size dimensions.

Business Rate Calculator

The Business Rate Calculator computes rates for volume mailings of all classes of mail and for worksharing discounts. The “Special Services” button lets you add special service fees.

The convenient “View Results” button lets you print the results of several rate calculations.

For additional information, the Business Rate Calculator automatically links to the appropriate Quick Service Guide as you select a class of mail, preparation option, or mailpiece size.



Flats Prep Test for Periodicals Is Underway

Tests Will Help Improve Flat Sorting Efficiency And Will Result in Reduced Costs and Better Service

Both the Postal Service and the mailing industry recognize the need for flat-sized mail preparation that best supports current and future flats processing methods, and that will improve flat sorting efficiency, resulting in reduced costs and better service.

Efforts are underway to help achieve that goal. Beginning March 31 and continuing through June 30, 2001, Periodicals mailers will have the opportunity to participate in a limited, alternative flats preparation test.

The test will determine if the proposed preparation is compatible with Postal Service transportation and automated flats processing methods.

The 90-day test will apply to mail that meets the FSM881 automation-compatible standards as described in *Domestic Mail Manual C820.2*, including the polywrap requirements in *DMM C820.4* (if applicable).

Participants must prepare flat mail loose on 5-digit/scheme pallets for auto zones, 3-digit pallets and SCF pallets for four test sites.

The mail must be destined for either Carol Stream, Ill., Kansas City, Mo., Royal Oak, Mich., or Washington, D.C. These sites have been chosen based on destinating volumes reported by mailers and the number of AFSM 100 units at those plants.

A USPS employee from the Detached Mail Unit (DMU) will perform normal verification procedures. A team of postal and



The Model 100 Automated Flat Sorting Machine will be used to test the preparation of flat-sized mailpieces on automated sorting equipment.

industry representatives will evaluate the findings, including Postal Service and participant costs, and savings

Beginning March 31 through June 30, 2001, Periodicals mailers will have the opportunity to participate in a limited alternative flats preparation test.

The test will determine if mail preparations are compatible with USPS transportation and automated flats processing methods.

and service impacts, and will prepare a written report describing the findings and making future recommendations.

Existing DMM preparation requirements will remain in effect for all other test participants' mail — for example, 5-digit/scheme pallets to non-auto zones, merged 5-digit/scheme pallets and ADC-level pallets.

Flats must be prepared using one of the containerization methods described in detail in *Postal Bulletin 22044* dated February 22, 2001.

Participants will be required to provide the USPS with Mail.dat files for all test mailings (based on existing mail preparation requirements) no less than seven days prior to mail arriving at the destination facility.

The mail must be securely loaded on the pallets so that the integrity of the mail is maintained throughout shipment and processing.

For each pallet in the test, participants must complete two placards (labels) provided by the Postal Service to identify the mail as "test" mail. These labels should be

continued on page 8

AFSM Flats Prep Test for Periodicals

continued from page 7

TEST MAIL
Periodicals – Carrier Route Presort

Mailer: Place copies of this form on pallet adjacent to existing pallet label (on 2 sides of pallet)

To: _____
(USPS Processing Plant)

Publication Title: _____

From: _____
(Printer and Plant)

From: _____
Name/Phone Number of Printer

USPS Employee Handling Pallet: _____

(For each test pallet, attach one copy of this completed test from to pallet label and collect for AFSM 100 test coordinator or supervisor.)

To identify “test mail,” participants must complete two placards (labels) provided by the Postal Service.

The labels should be affixed to the pallet adjacent to normal pallet labels, required under current Domestic Mail Manual (DMM) standards.

affixed to the pallet adjacent to each of the normal pallet labels required under current DMM standards.

Prior to the start of the test, participants will be asked to provide a three-month average of volume by pallet and presort level for analysis. This data will be used as a gauge to

establish the baseline data for the test.

Flat mailpieces bearing correct and properly prepared ZIP+4 Codes or delivery point barcodes may be prepared and claimed at the automation flats rates, provided the

TEST MAIL
Periodicals – Notify AFSM 100 Supervisor

Mailer: Place copies of this form on pallet adjacent to existing pallet labels (on 2 sides of pallet)

To: _____
(USPS Processing Plant)

Publication Title: _____

Contains 5-digit schemes: Y N
(3-Digit and SCF pallets only) (Circle one)

Contains CR-RT packages: Y N
Preparation Method: (Circle All That Apply)

1. All pieces loose (with or without slipsheets)
2. Large packages secured with bands or shrinkwrap
3. Cardboard sleeve with dividers
4. Cardboard carton / “Gaylord”
5. Other _____

PVDS: Y N

From: _____
Printer and Plant

Mailer Contact: _____

USPS Employee Handling Pallet: _____

(For each test pallet, attach one copy of this completed test from to pallet label and collect for AFSM 100 test coordinator or supervisor.)

“test” mail meets the requirements outlined in *Postal Bulletin 22044* dated February 22, 2001.

— Mail Preparation and Standards

Federal Register Notice Seeks Customer Comments On Four Proposed Mail Preparation Changes

On March 16, 2001, the Postal Service published a notice in the *Federal Register* asking for comments from customers and the general public on proposed changes to the *Domestic Mail Manual* (DMM) that would affect mail preparation standards for flats. The proposed changes are as follows:

- Packages of First-Class Mail Presorted rate flats and automation rate flats that are part of the same mailing job would be required to be co-trayed according to the standards in M910.
- Packages of Standard Mail Presorted rate flats and automation rate flats that are part of the same mailing job would be required to be

co-sacked according to the standards in M910.

- Standard Mail Enhanced Carrier Route and 5-digit flats would be required to be sacked or palletized using the labeling list L001 scheme sort. This includes the scheme sorts cited in the optional preparation methods in M920, M930 and M940.
- Bound Printed Matter Carrier Route and 5-digit flats would be required to be sacked or palletized using the labeling list L001 scheme sort.

The proposed changes are intended to align mail preparation more closely

with the way the USPS transports and processes flat-sized mail.

Details outlined by class of mail and the proposed DMM language are included in the *Federal Register*.

The full text of the *Federal Register* notice can be accessed by customers and employees via RIBBS at <http://ribbs.usps.gov/files/fedreg/usps2001/>.

Federal Register notices are listed by title and are available in PDF and text-only formats.

Comments on these proposed changes must be submitted by April 13, 2001. The proposed implementation date of these changes is September 1, 2001.

— Mail Preparation and Standards

Updated Publications, Guides, Posters, And the New Ratefold are Available Now

The Postal Service has revised several familiar documents that reflect changes that are part of the R2000-1 omnibus rate case implemented January 7, 2001.

Quick Service Guides, Postage Statements, Notice 123 (*Ratefold*), and other business publications are available for free to customers, and can be obtained through most larger post offices, Postal Business Centers, or Business Mail Entry Units.

Electronic copies of Publication 49, *Getting Started with Standard Mail*, and the *Ratefold* also are available through the Postal Service Web site in PDF and HTML at <http://pe.usps.gov>.

The following information provides a brief description of the revised and updated communications tools:

Publication 49, *Getting Started with Standard Mail*

This publication gives beginning mailers help with advertising mail. It is updated with rate case information, including instructions for filling out the new "EZ" Standard Mail postage statements.

The publication includes tips for designing a mailpiece, checking the addresses in a mailing list and presorting letters and flats. This publication was updated January 2001.

Notice 123, *Ratefold*

This 10-page foldout guide lists every postage rate for all classes of domestic mail and all special service fees.

Publication 95, *Quick Service Guides*

This publication includes color versions of the popular Quick Service Guides, which are two-page "snapshots" of preparation requirements and methods for each class of mail.

Publication 95 is dated January 2001, and was mailed to post offices and Business Mail Entry Units in mid-March.

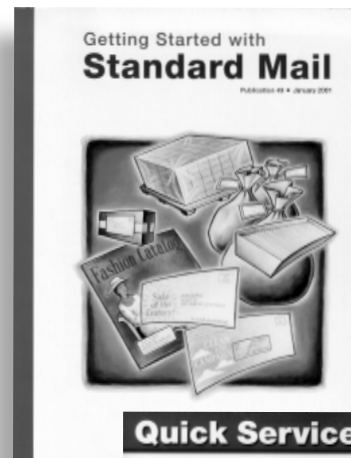
Quick Service Guide Posters

Thirteen of the most popular Quick Service Guides are printed as large color posters for distribution to customers and for displaying in post offices.

Quick Service Guide Posters, dated January 2001, were mailed to post offices and Business Mail Entry Units in mid-March.

Electronic versions of all 55 Quick Service Guides are available on the Postal Explorer Home Page.

— *Mail Preparation and Standards*



Domestic Mail Manual (DMM) Updates

Mailing Clinical Specimens Using Business Reply Mail

Clinical specimens that are not known, or reasonably believed, to contain an infectious substance (etiologic agent) are mailable when properly packaged as detailed in *Domestic Mail Manual (DMM) C023.8.4*.

Clinical specimens include materials such as urine, blood, and saliva samples being tested for medical reasons, drug programs, or insurance purposes.

Many commercial laboratories that test clinical specimens provide pre-addressed business reply mail (BRM) packaging to their clients. If a problem occurs with the packaging

while the mailpiece is in the mailstream, the Postal Service will contact the BRM permit holder so the packaging deficiency can be promptly corrected.

When a BRM address format is used to send a clinical specimen to a laboratory for testing, a complete return address is not required. (The customer using the BRM to return a clinical specimen has little, if any, control over the packaging design.)

That's because the BRM permit holder has designed the return packaging to the USPS specifications in DMM C023 and S922.

A complete return address is only required on regulated quantities of hazardous materials.

Under the U.S. Department of Transportation regulations in Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (49 CFR) 173.134(b), noninfectious clinical specimens are exempted from the requirements that apply to hazardous materials.

Questions about packaging for clinical specimens should be directed to the district manager of business mail entry.

— Mail Preparation & Standards

Labeling List Changes

Automation Rate Mailings and AADCs Letter-Sized Mailings

Effective January 7, 2001, *Domestic Mail Manual (DMM) L801* is corrected to show footnotes for four entries. These footnotes were left out of the printed version of DMM Issue 56. They will, however, be incorporated into the printed version of DMM Issue 57 and the March 8, 2001 update of the electronic DMM, available via the Postal Explorer Web site at <http://pe/usps.gov>.

— Mail Preparation & Standards

Domestic Mail Manual (DMM)

L Labeling Lists
* * * * *
L800 Automation Rate Mailings

L801 AADCs – Letter Size Mailings

[Add footnotes to the following entries to read as follows:]

Column A	
Destination ZIP Codes	
090-098	AMF JFK APO/FPO NY 00309 ¹
090-098, 340	MILITARY CENTER NY 090 ²
331,332,340	AADC MIAMI FL 331 ³
331,332	AADC MIAMI FL 331 ⁴

New Handbook DM-110

Centralized Postage Payment (CPP) System for Periodicals Mail

A new Handbook DM-110, *Centralized Postage Payment (CPP) System for Periodicals Mail*, is now available.

It is designed as an internal document for postal employees in Business Mail Entry Units and for other personnel who have responsibilities for ensuring proper collection of postage for Periodicals

mail submitted under the CPP system.

Handbook DM-110 defines the organizational responsibilities and reporting structures for the (CPP) system for Periodicals mail.

It will only be available in an electronic format on the USPS internal Web site. No hard copy will be printed or stocked at the Materials Distribution Center (MDC).

To view or print the electronic copy, access the USPS intranet Web site at <http://blue.usps.gov> (click on "Information," then "Policies and Procedures," then "Handbook," then either "By Document ID Number" or "By Title," and then scroll down to Handbook DM-110).

— Business Mail Acceptance

2 MAC-Certification Software Evaluation Simplifies Process for Manifest Mailing Systems

The Postal Service, working with the mailing industry, has developed an evaluation program of vendor-supplied manifest mailing software that will create a simplified and consistent application and approval process for manifest mailing systems.

It's called MAC—Manifest Analysis and Certification. This voluntary certification program examines and certifies the accuracy of software packages used to calculate postage payment for single-piece and presort-rated mailings at domestic and international rates. These calculations are consistent with the standards of the *Domestic Mail Manual*, the *International Mail Manual*, and Publication 401, *Guide to the Manifest Mailing System*.

MAC is available to all eligible manifest mailing product developers of software for single-piece rates mail (itemized) and presorted, non-identical piece mail (batch). It's

available to test personal, midrange, or mainframe computer software.

For purposes of MAC certification, eligible manifest mailing software product developers are defined as those companies that initially develop an in-house, proprietary manifest mailing software product for commercial use.

Manifest mailing system users have a wide variety of needs based on type, class and volume of mail. Some users need only a basic single-piece listing for one or two classes of mail; some users manifest only international mail. Others, however, manifest a wide variety of mail types and classes and often use many of the special services offered by the Postal Service, such as Delivery Confirmation, certified mail, insured mail, return receipt service and COD service.

The Postal Service tests and certifies manifest mailing software in specific package groups.

To be MAC-certified, software must, at a minimum, accurately manifest a basic package of specific class and rate categories.

Additional, optional packages of other rates and special service categories are available to vendors who desire to offer users a greater range of manifest capabilities.

To be certified for a specific package, the manifest mailing product must be able to calculate postage and fees accurately, as applicable, and produce required documentation for each class, processing category, and rate listed in the package.

MAC also tests and certifies the ability of software to generate facsimile mailing statements and other documentation that must meet USPS standards.

— *Marketing & Technology
& Channel Management*

Equipment Upgrades to Model 1000 Flat Sorting Machines Changes Will Increase Productivity and Reduce Staffing Needs

The Governors of the Postal Service approved additional funding to add Optical Character Readers (OCRs) and automated feeders to all Model 1000 Flat Sorting Machines.

Equipment upgrades began in February of this year, and are expected to

be completed by December 2002.

The USPS hopes that, over time, equipment upgrades will enable the Postal Service to increase productivity, increase daily volume capacity, and reduce staffing in the affected operations.

"With the Optical Character Readers now playing a key role," explained retired Vice President of Engineering, William J. Dowling, "customers who provide newspapers, magazines and other large flat mail pieces will receive better service."

MAC-CERTIFIED PRODUCTS SUMMARY Itemized Manifest Products
Ascom Hasler Mailing Sys Inc. IMCM-MAIL CENTER MANAGER 3.3
Harvey Software Inc COMPUTERIZED PARCEL SYSTEM 7.0
Intrepa, LLC LOCISTICS PRO 5.1
Kewill APSS FOR WINDOWS 0280
Mos International Inc MCM-Mail Center Manager 3.3
Neopost ASX ENTERPRISE SHIPPING SOLUTION 2.01/Neopost FRIENDSHIP 2.01
Pic Professionals, Inc OUTBOUND 4.0
Scandata Systems VSAMS-OUTLOOK 8.0
Tandata Corp PROGISTICS CS 5.0
Tanner Technology Sys LLC EAGLE FOR WINDOWS 9X/NT 5.2
Transcape, a Pitney Bowes Co ASCENT-MAC 0370
V-Technologies STARSHIP FOR WINDOWS 9X/NT 5.2
Window Book, Inc Postal Package Partner 2.01A
Yantra Corporation PURE ECOMMERCE DCS 6.0/ Yantra Corporation PURE ECOMMERCE PLATFORM 2.0
Batch Manifest Products Group 1 Software mailstream Plus 6.3
MAC Gold Certification Window Book, Inc. POSTAL PACKAGE PARTNER GOLD 2.04

For a detailed listing of options supported by the above products, please go to <http://ribbs.usps.gov/files/vendors/macblast/pdf> and [macgoldlist.pdf](http://ribbs.usps.gov/files/vendors/macgoldlist.pdf). For more information on MAC certification, or if you would like to participate, contact the National Customer Support Center at 1-800-331-5746, Ext. 4692.

Today, the USPS utilizes 350 FSM 1000s in major processing plants nationwide. Upgrading the equipment with both an automated feeder and OCR should produce substantial labor savings.

— *Technology Acquisition
Management*

Request Mailers Companion Today!



KEEP in touch with the latest mailing developments. Use this request form to have Mailers Companion delivered right to your mailbox, or through the Internet at www.usps.gov, Mailers Companion.

Subscription Form

You can subscribe, change address information, or cancel subscription one of three ways:

- Email it to mncsc@email.usps.gov
- Fax it to (901) 681-4542
- Mail it to:

MAILERS COMPANION
DATA ENTRY
US POSTAL SERVICE
6060 PRIMACY PKWY STE 201
MEMPHIS TN 38188-0001

- Subscribe
- Change Address Information*
- Cancel Subscription

X _____
Name

Title

Company Name

Delivery Address

City State ZIP+4

* Clip and enclose a complete address block from the back of your *Companion* — or enclose at least the long number at the top (such as “1234 5678 9012 3456”).

MAILERS COMPANION
DATA ENTRY
US POSTAL SERVICE
6060 PRIMACY PKWY STE 201
MEMPHIS TN 38188-0001

PRSR STD
POSTAGE & FEES
PAID
USPS
PERMIT NO. G-10

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED