Ways to Save with Postal Pricing and Mailing Strategies

The United States Postal Service (USPS) usually applies for a postal rate increase every year. However, there is no time like the present to evaluate your mailing practices and implement strategies and solutions to reduce postage expenditures. Here are a few recommendations for mitigating the increased cost of postage.

Converting from flat to letter size envelopes

Any flat envelope that you can convert to a letter size envelope will save you a significant amount of postage in higher volumes.

You can take the following steps to reduce the weight of mail pieces and materials by:

- duplexing pages using lighter-weight paper stock
- narrowing margins on each page
- moving to slightly smaller fonts

Other strategies that can ultimately result in postal savings by reducing the weight of mail pieces and material costs include:

- utilizing two-way (reusable) envelopes
- taking advantage of the low additional ounce rate for commercial First-Class Mail® letters ~ 12.5¢ vs.17¢ for flat size mail pieces

There are other ways that can help you get the lowest possible expenses. Here are some tips and suggestions, based on USPS regulations and rules:

Automation compatible

Make sure that your mail piece is able to be processed on automated equipment. The fewer times someone at the USPS has to touch your mail, the less you'll pay in postage. "Nonmachinable" mail will cost your company more money.

To make sure your letter size mail can be processed by automated equipment, AVOID the following:

- avoid an aspect ratio (L÷H) < 1.3 or > 2.5
- avoid enclosing anything in plastic
- avoid pieces having a non-paper exterior surface (such as plastic wrap)
- avoid clasps, strings, buttons on the outside envelope
- avoid enclosures that cause the piece to be uneven
- avoid enclosures that cause the envelope to be too rigid
- avoid pieces with a thickness less than 0.009" if the envelope is larger than 4 ¼" x 6"
- avoid incorrect delivery address placement, such as parallel to the shorter dimension
- avoid improperly sealed booklets or self-mailers

Redesign parcels to flats

Work on redesigning parcels to flats, which can save up to 30% in postage. Recognize that flats must be rectangular, uniform in thickness, and flexible. Commercial flats must also meet the specific deflection criteria of the USPS.

Utilize delivery point validated addresses

This helps to reduce "undeliverable as addressed" (UAA) mail. It also decreases material, postage and labor waste!

Implement barcoding on your mail

A barcode is a series of thin black bars of different heights that you can print on each mail piece. A scanner reads the bars and reconfigures the code into numbers and letters for a computer to interpret. This will help your mail piece to be considered automation-compatible.

Consider the class of mail

Not all classes of mail are the same. Be sure to select the class that will get your mail piece to the intended recipient in an appropriate time frame at the lowest possible cost.

For example, when mailing non-personal letters and flats, consider Standard Mail® which has postage rates lower than First-Class Mail®. In addition, Nonprofit mailing prices are 40% less than regular Standard Mail® if you qualify for that category.

There are many ways to be careful and save with each mailing you do. Be sure to review each mailing individually, to explore the many ways you can save.