

BROKERS WORLDWIDE NEWSFLASH

USPS Implementing New Addressing Requirements for Flat-Size Mail, Effective March 29th
January 12, 2009

The US Postal Service is implementing new address placement and formatting requirements for Periodicals, Standard Mail, Bound Printed Matter, Media Mail, and Library Mail flat-size pieces sent at automation, presorted, or carrier route prices. In addition, the USPS is implementing related revisions for automation and presorted First-Class Mail flats. These changes will be effective on March 29, 2009.

In summary, the USPS is implementing a new technology, the Flats Sequencing System (FSS), to automate delivery sequencing for flat-size mail. Currently, flat-size mail is sorted mechanically only to the 9-digit ZIP Code™ or carrier level, and then manually sorted into delivery order by carriers. FSS can sort flat-size mailpieces into delivery sequence, increasing efficiency by reducing carriers' time sorting mail, and allowing carriers to begin delivering mail earlier in the day.

Below we have summarized some of the key changes being implemented by the USPS:

- New standards will require the delivery address in the upper portion of all Periodicals, Standard Mail, Bound Printed Matter, Media Mail, and Library Mail flat-size pieces mailed at automation, presorted, or carrier route prices. Mailers may place the address parallel or perpendicular to the top edge, but not upside down as read in relation to the top edge. The new standards define "upper portion" as the top half of a mailpiece, but the USPS is encouraging mailers to place the address as close to the top edge as possible (while still maintaining a 1/8-inch clearance from the edge).
- Mailers must address all presorted, carrier route, and automation flat-size mailpieces using a minimum of 8-point type or, if the mailpiece bears a POSTNET™ or Intelligent Mail® barcode with a delivery point routing code, a minimum of 6-point type in all capital letters. In addition, for all automation price pieces, the characters in the address must not overlap, the address lines must not touch or overlap, and each address element may be separated by no more than five blank character spaces.
- The USPS' font preference is "sans-serif" and they prefer the use of ALL CAPITAL LETTERS.
- The USPS points out that mailers can take advantage of the Intelligent Mail® barcode to save space within the address block. For example, the Intelligent Mail® barcode can include tracking and routing information that currently requires human-readable ACS™ codes and keylines. The USPS also reduced the amount of clear space required under the Intelligent Mail® barcode to 0.028 inch. Mailers can access the full technical specification for the Intelligent Mail® barcode at <http://ribbs.usps.gov/onecodesolution>.

For a comprehensive overview of the upcoming changes, please refer to the USPS' *New Address Requirements for Automation, Presorted, and Carrier Route Flat-Size Mail*, which can be found online at http://pe.usps.com/Flats_Addressing_Requirements.pdf

A local USPS Mailpiece Design Analyst (MDA) can assist mailers with specific designs to ensure they comply with the new standards. Use the MDA lookup tool on the USPS' Postal Explorer (go to <http://pe.usps.com/> and click "Postal Locator" in the left frame) to locate a local MDA. A direct link to the "Mailpiece Design Analyst Lookup", where you can search for an MDA by Zip Code, is <http://ribbs.usps.gov/mda/index.htm>. Brokers Worldwide customers may also contact their dedicated Account Manager with questions regarding the new USPS requirements. As always, we are here to assist with all aspects of your mailing.

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