

US PAF Updates

A couple of updates for customers using the iAddress™ US NCOA^{Link™} module:

1. The Processing Acknowledgement Form (PAF) is valid for one year. It must be updated annually. The USPS has changed its rules and now also requires an updated Letter of Intent with this renewal. We will contact you prior to the expiry of your PAF to ask for a new PAF and Letter of Intent.

2. The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code is required for both the mailer and the Broker/Agent on the PAF. NAICS has been updated for 2012 and we have noted some codes have changed. The following are links to both the Canadian and US databases. If there is a discrepancy between the two databases, we recommend using the code shown in the US data as this is the reference tool the USPS uses.

Canadian NAICS site:

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/subjects-sujets/standard-norme/naics-scian/2012/index-indexe-eng.htm>

US NAICS site:

<http://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/>

Canadian NCOA Update

We remind our customers that Canada Post requires a new NCOA Acknowledgement Form to be signed each year. You will not be allowed to process NCOA without a valid Form on file. Our office will contact you approximately one month before expiry of your Form to ask that a new one be completed. If you should have any questions about either Canadian or US NCOA/NCOA^{Link™}, please contact Kristi@flagshipsoftware.com.



The LFT is Coming!

The new letter-flat-tainer (LFT) has been used internally at Canada Post for several months now. It is a smaller version of the lettertainer but does not require a lid. Plastic inserts are available which can be placed into slots to keep the mail upright in less than full containers. The LFT is designed for short/long mail and can be nested without lids and without damaging the mail in the container.

Although it was initially intended for internal Canada Post use only, some mailers have received these LFTs inadvertently or when lettertainers or flat tubs were not available. As there is a large supply of these containers, Canada Post will be allowing the use of LFTs for short/long mail in 2013. Currently, Canada Post is updating their technical specifications to include the new dimensions and product options. These will be incorporated into iAddress™ and available to mailers in 2013.

New Machineable Mail Specifications

As new equipment is rolled out and tested in the plants, Canada Post has had the opportunity to review the Machineable Mail specifications. After consultation with their engineers, postal transformation staff and industry, changes were made that took effect in January, 2012. These included a reduced quiet zone around the address block and an increase in the variety of fonts supported.

The specifications are still under review and additional changes should be coming into place in July, 2012. One of these is the ability to use vertical addresses on mail pieces. As well, self-mailers will be accepted with a single tab on either the top or right edge of the mail piece. Coins have also been tested and should be allowed under the new specifications.

We will monitor the changes to Machineable Mail specifications and provide an update in the fall. In the meantime, please check the Canada Post website for additional information and on how to have your mail pieces evaluated prior to mailing.

Does DM Work in the Summer?

Many Canadians celebrate our short, Canadian summer by getting out, whether that is vacationing, heading to the cottage or just enjoying the back yard. So if Canadians aren't hanging out inside, do they still read their mail?

Summer is a traditionally low mail volume time. Many mailers don't believe there is value to direct marketing in the summer when consumers are busy with families and businesses are slower as many employees take vacations. However, this doesn't necessarily mean there isn't a place for a well-designed, well-executed advertising campaign.

Fewer pieces in the mailbox mean more of an opportunity for advertisers to stand out. Catchy creative will increase the open rate even more. Consumers often have more time to review their mail in the summer as do businesses. Creative pieces that embrace or celebrate summer are even more likely to be opened and considered by recipients.

One type of direct mail to consider for the summer is a catalogue. Data from the US-based Direct Marketing Association (DMA) shows that catalogues are still an important tool for retailers, with 12.5 billion catalogues sent to homes last year. This resulted in purchases from almost 90 million Americans and drove brand awareness. Eric Beder, a retail analyst and managing director at Brean Murray, Carret & Co., believes the catalogue trend will continue with more companies adding catalogues to their advertising mix than dropping them. Catalogues can be tailored for specific events or certain customer bases. With time to flip pages by the lake, pool or campfire, summer seems an excellent time to get catalogues into the hands of prospective buyers.

So when you or your clients are considering the next campaign, make sure to consider the summer months. With less competition in the mailbox and more time for consumers and businesses to review your information, summer might just be the right time to get a catalogue or other cool creative into the mail!

Have a Great Summer!



With the extended spring felt across Canada, it looks like we are in for a long, hot summer. To give you more time to spend enjoying the catalogues and other direct marketing pieces in your mailbox this summer, we won't be publishing a newsletter in July or August. We will restart our industry and product updates in September.

We wish you a wonderful summer with your family and friends!



Web Training Available

Flagship Software continues to offer web training over the summer! If you are a new customer, would like a refresher course on **iAddress™** or if you have new hires, please contact Carolyn at carolyn@flagshipsoftware.com to schedule a web session.



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