Yikes – Look at all those invalid addresses!

We are often asked to look at addresses flagged as uncorrectable (invalid) by the software. Mailers may use the *iAddress™* look-up program and find the address falls within a valid range for that postal code or they may use the web or direct contact to verify addresses.

There are many reasons addresses may be returned as uncorrectable. Here are some of the most common ones we have found from our review of these files for both business and residential addresses.

1. Address is "out of range". For example, the valid range is 1 to 99 Main Street and your address is 101.

2. A rural route was provided but Canada Post requires a civic style address or vice versa. Or, Canada Post requires both and both were not provided. Also known as the Canadian Rural Headache and often difficult to resolve even after contacting the recipient.

3. A PO Box is required but a civic address was entered. This often happens with business addresses such as warehouses or factories when the mail is delivered elsewhere.

4. A suite number is missing and one is required. This may not impact deliverability as much for business addresses as for residential addresses. Picture finding "ABC Company" in an office building versus "John Smith" in a 1,000 unit apartment building.

5. The address and postal code are in conflict. The address, city and province are valid and the city, province and postal code are valid but the two sets of information do not match each other. The software is not allowed to guess under Canada Post rules.

6. Large Volume Receivers (LVRs) require a different postal code even if their street address appears in a valid range. LVRs are generally universities/colleges, hospitals, government facilities, and large companies likely to receive a large volume of mail.

When looking at business addresses, it is important to note that suite numbers are very important for validation purposes even though a business may be well marked at their location. Canada Post requires a suite number for businesses in multi-unit complexes and if your data does not have one or it does not fall within the range found in the Canada Post data, your address will be flagged as uncorrectable. Please see the October, 2012 newsletter for information on identifying and resolving Excluded Addresses.

With the popularity of GPS devices, many companies are providing a "locatable" address to facilitate deliveries and customer visits even if the mail is not delivered to that location. These locatable addresses have worked their way into many databases and appear valid when compared against a range-based database system. However, if Canada Post does not deliver to these addresses, they are not considered "valid" for the purposes of address correction as the point is to ensure the mail reaches the intended recipient.

Beware the web! Companies will often post their locatable address on their website, often with directions to their facility. Look for the words "Mailing Address" when verifying addresses on the web. When searching business or residential addresses on the web (e.g. with Canada411 or a similar service), take note if the address does not contain a postal code. This is a big flag that the address is likely a physical and not a mailing address. The best option, where possible, is to contact the recipient directly to ensure you have the complete and correct mailing address including any suite information.

If you have any questions about your uncorrectable addresses, please contact **Kristi@flagshipsoftware.com**. We can review your records and provide back a statistical report giving you an idea of what the issues are. If there are addresses that you or your customer have verified as being valid and deliverable but flag as uncorrectable, please let us know and we can pass them to the appropriate department at Canada Post for resolution.

Update to CanSpam

The CanSpam Act proposed by the CRTC was passed in December, 2010 and certain regulations are coming into effect spring, 2013. This Act covers the sending of commercial electronic messages (CEMs) in the course of a commercial activity. The fundamental principal is that of consent. The regulations describe acceptable forms of consent.

One of the guidelines deals specifically with toggling. Many websites provide the ability for a user to determine which types of information a company may provide to them electronically, such as marketing messages or newsletters. If the user is required to register, the consent mechanism is often a statement such as "Yes, I do want to receive coupons and marketing materials" with a check box. The Act states that the box must NOT be checked by default but that the user must explicitly consent by checking the box themselves. Essentially, this means all users do not consent until they indicate otherwise. To further assure consent, the CRTC recommends a mechanism whereby the user enters their e-mail address as part of this check box process.

Requests for consent must be "sought separately". This means a user must have the opportunity to consent individually to each type of activity being requested by the person seeking that consent. For example, CEMs, newsletters and the installation of a computer program on another person's computer (such as an app) would each require consent from the user.

Consent must be clear and not part of general terms or conditions of use or sale. Generally this information is recorded electronically through such methods as check boxes. However, consent can be obtained orally as well, as long as the oral consent has been recorded or can be verified by an independent third party. If collected in writing, consent can be either on paper or electronic. If required, the party collecting the consent must be able to prove it exists.

As outlined in a previous newsletter, there is specific information which must be included in any CEM. This includes contact information, a mailing address and a clear and easy way for the recipient to opt out. Please refer back to our May, 2012 newsletter for further information.

It is very important that all organizations sending CEMs adhere to the new laws. For further information, see the CRTC website under Decisions, Notices and Orders.

LFTs Coming Onboard

Canada Post has indicated that the letterflattainers (LFTs) will be released for use in two phases, commencing in January, 2013. On January 14, 2013, LFTs will be available for Short/Long Machineable Lettermail and Short/Long Machineable Addressed Admail. Phase 2 begins July 17, 2013 and will make LFTs available for Short/Long LCP Lettermail and Short/Long LCP Addressed Admail.

Having additional containers enter the mailstream will be helpful for many mailers currently facing a shortage. The iAddress™ software will offer the LFT as a containerization option in January. An important consideration, however, is that the mailing must be packed completely in either LFTs or Lettertainers. Canada Post does not have a contingency plan for situations in which insufficient containers of either type are available for mailings. They consider it to be the mailer's responsibility to ensure they have enough containers on hand to complete a mailing. At the current time, it appears there is a large number of LFTs in the system so hopefully this situation will not be common. Although LFTs will require additional labour because of their small size, this may be offset by their availability.

Picture courtesy of Canada Post

Letterflattainer

Web Training Available

Flagship Software continues to offer web training. 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.

If you wish to be removed from this newsletter list, please email us at **newsletter@flagshipsoftware.com** or call 1-866-672-0007.