Intelligent Mail Barcode

This article is a follow-up from an article titled "IMb™ update", published in the February 2011 iAddress™ newsletter, which discusses the cancellation of the Intelligent Mail barcode due to the concern of the readiness for adaptation.

The United States Postal Service recently announced the launch of the Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb™), an upgrade from POSTNET™ barcode. The IMb™ allows for automation pricing of letter-size and flat-size mailpieces. The POSTNET™ barcode can still be used, however, it will not allow automation pricing. The use of the IMb™ is applicable on First Class, Standard and Periodical Mail letters and flats and Bound Printed Matter flats.

What makes the Intelligent Mail barcode better?

• The IMb™ has a better data capacity than the POSTNET™ barcode.

• The IMb™ includes four additional fields: Barcode ID, Service Type ID (STID), Mailer ID (MID) and Serial Number.

> • This allows mailers to view the class of mail, the services they may wish to obtain and unique identification of mailpieces.

• Each mailpiece is identified and unique in its own way.

• Basic Service- migrate from POSTNET™ to IMb™.

• Full Service- includes a discounted postage price, start-the-clock information and address correction information. This provides data that specifies location of mailing and the expected delivery date.

Overall, the Intelligent Mail Barcode offers a cost-effective method of mailing. It is also more efficient, as it increases the visibility of mailpieces through the postal mail stream. The IMb™ is expected to greatly impact and improve mailing services.

Image courtesy of USPS

Canadian NCOA Changes

Effective mid-September, 2013, Canada Post has made a change to the National Change of Address (NCOA) family move data. As you may be aware, there are three types of records:
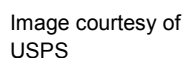
I – Individual

F – Family

B – Business

Under NCOA matching rules, family matches can be based solely on last name plus address. However, if a first name was available for the record, iAddress™ would treat the name as an individual match. Canada Post has formalized this process as of September 15, 2013. In situations where first name data is available for family moves, the record has been modified to become individual moves. It is felt this will increase confidence in matches and potentially reduce complaints Canada Post receives on occasion.

Since the software was already taking this step, we do not anticipate a noticeable impact on match rates when processing records through NCOA. We have been monitoring usage and match, and nixie rates are comparable to those seen prior to the change in data. We will continue to monitor to ensure there is not significant change to results.

Should you have any questions about the modification to the data or your NCOA results, please feel free to contact Flagship Software at 1-866-672-0007 or support@flagshipsoftware.com

Update	IAddressID	NCOA	Ncoa_Fnal	Ncoa_Mnan	Ncoa_Lnam	Ncoa_Sfx	Ncoa_add1	Ncoa_add2	Ncoa_City	Ncoa_PC	Ncoa_Prov	Ncoa_Cntry	ORIGFNAM	ORIGLNAI
Y	912	UI							PRINCE ALI		SK	CANADA		
Y	914	UF							ANCASTER		ON	CANADA		
Y	616	UF							THREE HIL		AB	CANADA		
Y	652	UI							NORTH YO		ON	CANADA		
Y	656	UI							AURORA		ON	CANADA		
Y	678	UF							CALGARY		AB	CANADA		
Y	680	UI							RENFREW		ON	CANADA		
Y	691	UI							MONTROSI		BC	CANADA		
Y	704	UB							CALGARY		AB	CANADA		
Y	716	UI							NEWMARK		ON	CANADA		
Y	722	UI							COBBLE HII		BC	CANADA		
Y	724	UI							GRANDE PI		AB	CANADA		
Y	726	UF							TORONTO		ON	CANADA		
Y	729	UI							QUEBEC		QC	CANADA		
Y	731	UF							NORTH BA		SK	CANADA		
Y	740	UI							EDMONTON		AB	CANADA		
Y	752	UI							SAINT-FELI		QC	CANADA		
Y	753	UF							DAWSON C		BC	CANADA		
Y									MILTON		ON	CANADA		

Common Induction Issues

At a recent NAMMU Toronto Chapter meeting, Canada Post induction staff provided results of their work into the most common induction issues by service. Here are the top defects:

For all services:

• Sample does not match live mail

• Mail size/weight do not meet specifications

• Mail size/weight do not match declared size/weight

For LCP mailings:

• DMC code wrong or expired

• Containers/volume do not match mailing plan

• Mailing plan does not exist

Unaddressed Admail:

• Mailing inducted too late or too early to meet date-specific home deposit date

• Mail inducted at the wrong location

• Labels or tags missing

• Transportation fee missing

Transactional Mail:

• Weightbands not declared

• Quiet zone issues

• Volumes do not match the order (Machineable)

Mailing Tips

Businesses send billions of mailings to customers each year, but how many customers actually take the time to read these mailings? Here are a couple of cost-effective tips to ensure that your mail stands out amongst the crowd:

Highlight an offer: Make sure customers know what you're offering them, whether it's a discount, gift or rebate. Build on this offer by setting an expiration date, which has proven to be an effective marketing tool.

Emphasize Benefits: By outlining the uses of your product, customers get a sense of the potential benefit it may offer them. Including a few customer references always serves to build credibility.

Make it personal: Address the customer by their name rather than using a general greeting. This creates a personal relationship, making customers more inclined to read your mailing.

Mail Frequently: The more often the mail, the more your company stands out. If a situation arises where a customer needs a product/service that your company offers, you'll be the first to come to mind.

Add a free gift to the envelope: Free gifts are a good way to gain a customer's interest. It also adds weight and creates an odd shape in your package, enticing the customer to open the mailing. However, increased weight and odd shapes will increase the cost of your marketing campaign along with an increase in postage.

Change the mailing: Instead of sending your company's standard mailing, why not change it up with different sizes, shapes and colours? This gives the company a unique and creative identity. Again, be aware of increased costs.

Using these tips, you can review your promotional mailings to maximize your marketing dollars while giving your company an advantage when it comes to your advertising your products and services through direct mail.

Web Training

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.