iAddress™ Updater

Our Menu Option's Name is Changing!

As of June 1, 2017, we will be renaming "NCOA/DNM" on the main menu bar to "Move Update". We are doing this to better reflect the data processing. With the addition of our enhanced deceased data, our Change of Address and Do Not Mail processing services have expanded beyond the current title. This name change will also better align the menu option with our US software.
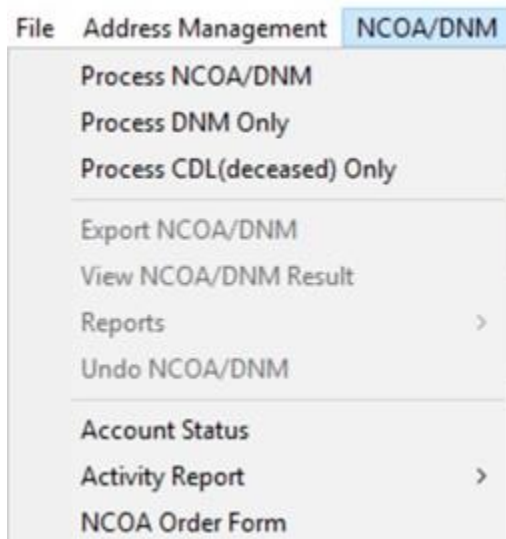
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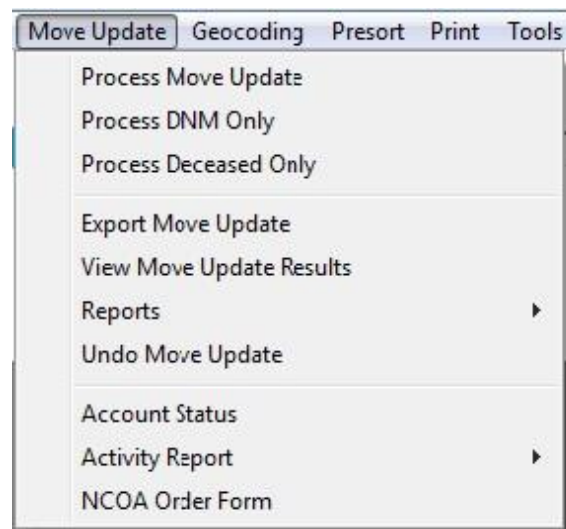
USPS proposes Address Quality Measurement and Assessment Changes

US mailers are required to use a Move-Update method on their First Class, Standard Mail, and Parcel Select Lightweight mailings. Validation that a Move-Update method has been applied has been done through the use of the MERLIN verification process. USPS has filed notice that it wishes to change this to an Address Quality Census Measurement and Assessment Process.

The following is the proposed change:

1. Mailers will use an approved Move-Update process (most often this is NCOALink).
2. Once inducted, mail pieces are scanned on the Mail Processing Equipment (MPE) as they are being processed.
3. Any addresses identified as UAA (undeliverable as addressed) will be checked for a COA (change of address) on file.
4. If a COA is identified, the address will be sent to the NCSC for evaluation.
5. Any addresses found to have a COA between 95 days and 18 months old will have an error logged against the mailer's scorecard.
6. The proposed error threshold is 0.5% and penalties will be assessed against all qualified mail pieces entered by an eDoc submitter in that calendar month.

Although this change has not yet been approved, it is important that mailers verify they are using a Move-Update method for all US First Class, Standard Mail and Parcel Select Lightweight mailings. To understand the different options available, please visit the ribbs.usps.gov website and select the Move-Update tab.

The Link Between Direct Mail and Digital Marketing

In April's newsletter, we described the roll-out of Informed Delivery, the latest innovation by the USPS. Their newly released app lets consumers know mail has arrived for them through an e-mail notification and gives them a preview of the pieces. This is just one more way that direct mail and digital marketing are working together.

Although digital marketing has been the "shiny new toy" for the past years as a way to sell products and services, some of the shine has been disappearing and direct mail has been seeing a comeback as it has been shown to directly contribute to the success of multi-channel marketing. It consistently drives consumer traffic to digital platforms whether that is an online store, website, or social media site. Studies show the results of these cross-channel campaigns: increases in spending of up to 25% are seen when using a mix of both direct and digital marketing.

Direct mail and digital marketing are best together. E-mail has been the most popular form of digital marketing and both e-mail and direct mail offer different strengths and weaknesses. They are better suited to different roles within the sales cycle. Consumers move between the physical and digital worlds which means direct mail has a direct link to online efforts.

Digital marketing has a wider reach whereas direct mail shows its best qualities when highly targeted and often more local. Think of real estate agents, pizza parlours and lawn care companies sending flyers to targeted neighbourhoods. It is also important to remember that there is still a large segment of consumers who aren't fluent in social media and many of them are not e-mail pros either. By focusing solely on digital marketing, companies are potentially missing out on this offline market.

A concern about e-mail marketing is that good lists are hard to find and maintain as consumers change their email addresses more often than their physical address. They may also maintain multiple e-mail addresses which may not be checked even as often as they check their mail. Spamming is an issue and, although much has been said about "junk mail" over the years, the general public sees direct mail as much more trustworthy than e-mail marketing. Spam filters may remove marketing messages before they are even seen and consumers can opt out if they are frustrated with the content, approach, or frequency of contact. Direct mail cuts through these issues and enhances the relationship between the consumer and the marketer.

Physical pieces are more real to the human brain and better connected to memory which aids in brand recognition. Brand reinforcement through direct mail helps make e-mails and digital marketing more credible to consumers. It is one more connection to a company's brand across a number of digital platforms. Direct mail encourages recipients to go online to make a purchase, visit a website, or engage with social media.

Digital marketing is fast; often real-time and interactive which complements direct marketing's staying power and ability to convey your message. E-mails must be compelling in a single subject line and other digital platforms need to catch the consumer's attention in seconds. Direct mail is handled, read, and kept around for hours or even days, allowing the recipient time to process and respond to your messaging before going online.

The link between digital and direct mail has never been more apparent than in today's marketing campaigns. Multi-channel marketing builds on the strengths of both and maximizes the effectiveness of the channels. For example, marketers are using online behavioural data including such things as abandoned shopping carts and likes on social media to drive highly targeted, personalized direct mail pieces which then direct the recipients back online.

Direct mail bypasses the traffic and volume of the internet which helps drive consumers to action and maximizes the return on digital marketing. It extends the reach of digital marketing and engages customers in a way that has proven to increase retention and built loyalty. It is a great way to acquire new prospects by piquing their interest and then driving them to online resources.

It will be interesting to follow the results of the USPS's Informed Delivery app to see how consumers respond. Pilot projects have shown an enthusiastic response by mail recipients. If this reception continues after full roll-out, it will provide US marketers with another way to tie physical mail pieces to digital content and improve their bottom lines.

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iAddress™ 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 416-410-6357 x. 1 or TF 1-866-672-0007 ext. 1 or carolyn@flagshipsoftware.com to schedule a web session.

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