



You've Got Mail!



Tips on Designing Mailpieces for Automation Pricing

The goal for any mailpiece is to get it to the intended addressee. You want to get it there in the fastest, most effective pricing and the best shape you can. Design can help!

- If you are intending to send your mailpieces out at any type of discounted rates, contact the Mail Center Supervisor x3274 or Manager x3951 so they can check design and content to meet USPS regulations and get pre-approval from the business mail entry unit supervisor. Nothing slows down a mailpiece more than having it stopped at the Post Office! This especially is true if you are using an outside designing firm that would not be aware of how we process our mail.
- Non-profit rates for mailing have been dictated by the US Congress to average about 40% cheaper than Business Standard rates. The US Post Office is very tough on following the regulations for Non-Profit. Please use the checklist attached for basic rules to follow regarding content and mail ownership.
- Must have at least 200 identical pieces of mail in order to do a standard (bulk) mailing. The only personalization allowed is when you are creating a form letter and all fields that are used are the same for each letter. **Any handwritten message** on any piece will make the mailing ineligible.
- When you are meeting with a designer tell them **you want the design to meet all regulations for mailing at fully automated, non-profit rates.**
- On any mail piece, there should never be any type of coating on the mailing panel and the paper used must be compatible with **water-based ink** being used in an inkjet printer.
- All self-mailers should have the fold at the bottom and be open at the top of mailing panel.
- Postcard size is between 3.5 and 4.25 inches height and 5 and 6 inches length. If you are going to do a 1/2 sheet size mailing, you may want to redesign it to meet postcard size. This includes the Business Reply that are longer than 6" or higher than 4.25 inches because the postage coming back is .40 for a 1 oz. letter vs. .26 for a postcard. Reasons for doing this:
 - 1) Thickness requirement for a postcard is still .007, whereas anything larger is now .009, thus also driving up the printing cost because of thicker paper.
 - 2) A postcard going out at first-class rates is .23 vs. anything larger is .37. There is still a 5-6 cents saving if you are mailing at non-profit rates. However if you are mailing a postcard at business bulk rates, it will actually cost more with the processing fees than sending it first-class.
- If you have used the design in the past - folding an 8.5 x 11 sheet of 20# paper in half, tabbing at the top and mailing it, this is no longer acceptable and a surcharge will be placed on each piece. This can easily be solved, by changing the design to a trifold on 20# paper, which meets the .009 requirement.

- A non-profit standard mailing piece can weigh up to 3.3 ounces before the postage goes up vs. first class which goes from .37 at 1 oz., to .60 at 2 oz., and .83 at 3 oz. There are currently stamps available that give the appearance of a first-class piece, but are at non-profit rates, or business bulk rates. Call the Mail center for more information.
- When mailing non-profit or business standard mail, please allow at least 10 extra days. In the Green Bay and valley areas we know that it usually takes no longer than 2 days, but we cannot count on that being true once it gets to the larger metropolitan areas such as Milwaukee, Chicago or Minneapolis. Keep this in mind when doing time sensitive information. You may want to consider having the file broken into the geographical areas, still saving at least the money in the local areas. We can help you establish which zip codes that would be.
- As of June 30, 2002 there will be a non-machinable surcharge effective for both first-class (\$.12) and non-profit standard (\$.04 or \$.02) that usually will follow these main criteria (for total criteria call Mail Center):
 - If aspect ratio (length divided by height) is less than 1.3 or more than 2.5
 - If it has clasps, strings, buttons, or similar closure devices
 - If the mailpiece is more than 4.25 " high or 6" long and thickness is less than .009
 - If it is a folded self-mailer and the folded edge is perpendicular to the address and if the piece is not folded and secured according to DMM C810.7.2
- When doing a non-profit or business standard (bulk) mailing it is generally cheaper due to automation discounts to have the Mail Center direct impression print the addresses on the envelope/piece than it is to use labels and have us do a hand-sort. Automation will also get there faster because of the capability of the software we use to put the 62 digit barcode on the pieces. There are at least 3 steps less at the Post Office that needs to be done by preparing the mail this way. We charge .025 per piece, while outside mailing houses will charge up to .04 per piece.
- For first-class mail, we ask that you use a font that each letter takes up the same amount of space, Courier is recommended. Please address in either 10 or 12 point only. DO NOT TRY TO PUT A BARCODE ON YOUR FIRST-CLASS PIECES. The presort house that we use puts the proper barcodes on to insure we receive automation compatible discounts. You can use mixed case letters now, our presort house can read it, but the USPS is still recommending all caps.
- The Mail Center now has stuffing equipment that can put up to 4 different sized items into the same envelope in one pass. It will also fold and collate up to 6 pages of paper, as part of the process (you can save on folding costs at the printers). It can also seal envelopes as part of the process. This equipment can be used for first-class or standard mailings and works for mailings that need to match the name in the letter to the name on the envelope. This is a tremendous labor saver for your department. The charge for stuffing is .01 (any number of pieces up to 6), .01 for folding (any number up to 6), and .005 for sealing envelopes.

It is our goal in the Mail Center to match your needs to the service level and cost that will help you meet your expectations of service while saving your department money. From design to arrival let us help you accomplish your goal. Call Janice Hewitt x3274 or Phyllis Melotte x3951 with your mailing questions.