



# Intelligent Mail<sup>®</sup> Technical Integration Webinars – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

April 17, 2009 Session

## **ADDRESS CHANGE SERVICE (ACS)**

1. **QUESTION:** What goes to *PostalOne!* versus ACS department?
- ANSWER:** Any record with a Full-Service Service Type ID will be sent to Full-Service. Records that can be matched to documentation for a Full-Service mailpiece that is eligible for Full-Service ACS will be provided back to the customer based on the data distribution rules in their documentation and MID profile.
2. **QUESTION:** For data retrieval, how do we access through *PostalOne!* and RIBBS? By MID or account #? Do the publishers set this up or do we set it up?
- ANSWER:** Access to Traditional and OneCode ACS records does not change and is documented in the Publications 8A and 8B. The registered MID or PID contact makes changes.
3. **QUESTION:** Will both traditional and Full-Service ACS be allowed on one mail piece?
- ANSWER:** No. Traditional can be used with Full-Service IM barcodes with the requirement that the MID used is *not* registered with an ACS mailer profile with the ACS department at NCSC. Traditional records are not provided via Full-Service and are *not* free. They are provided and invoiced as they are today.
4. **QUESTION:** How do we handle ACS transactions in the pipeline when magazines convert to other fulfillment company? Do we just need new account numbers from USPS?
- ANSWER:** Records are generated by PARS and CFS and provided to NCSC daily. Records will be delivered to the registered Mailer ID or Traditional Participant ID in the record, or sent to Full-Service as appropriate. For Traditional and OneCode ACS MIDs and PIDs, fulfillment changes must be made by contacting the ACS department at [acs@usps.gov](mailto:acs@usps.gov), or by calling 877-640-0724.
5. **QUESTION:** How do we handle service type codes between May 11 and May 18? Will pieces with Full-Service OneCode ACS on May 11<sup>th</sup> be sent to *PostalOne!*?
- ANSWER:** Mailpieces with a Full-Service Service Type will be not be provided back to the customer by ACS between 5/11 and 5/18.

No Full-Service ACS will be provided until after mailers have submitted Full-Service electronic documentation (Mail.dat or Postal Wizard) in production.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

**6. QUESTION:** How do we insure that invoicing and transactions go to the correct parties for Full-Service, OneCode, and traditional ACS?

**ANSWER:** No changes will be made to invoicing or transaction for OneCode or traditional ACS.

Full-Service ACS data will be provided to the Mail Owner identified in the electronic documentation. The Mail Owner may choose redirect the ACS data to another party by using an MID profile or Cast of Characters message.

## CONFIRM

**7. QUESTION:** In the notes for the March 20th webinar, the answer to 83 states:

*In order to use OneCode Confirm, the Mailer ID on the mailpiece must be registered with Confirm services.*

It was my understanding that the entity receiving the Confirm data would require a Confirm ID, but the Mailer ID on the piece did not need to be registered with Confirm. All the relationships would be noted in the By/For in the eDoc, but any Mailer ID could be used on the piece. If I use a third-party vendor to handle tracking, and I do not have a Confirm ID, do I have to print my vendor's Mailer ID on all my pieces?

**ANSWER:** For Full Service Intelligent Mail, mailers can choose to use full service data provisioning to distribute Confirm data to other parties. In the scenario outlined in this question, the Mailer ID on the mailpiece (which belongs to a non-subscriber) will need to be registered in Confirm as a Non-Subscriber Delegate Mailer ID at the behest of the subscriber(s) setup to receive the Confirm data via the eDoc processes.

**8. QUESTION:** Where will the tracking information from the Full-Service IMb be located? What format will the tracking information be presented in? Excel? PDF?

**ANSWER:** Data that can be used for tracking is available through participation in Confirm service. Data files are provided in comma-delimited flat package files that can be uploaded into common spreadsheets or database formats.

**9. QUESTION:** When using the IMb without OneCode Confirm – is tracking for the origin mail available?

**ANSWER:** No. Letter and flat mailpiece tracking data is only available via a Confirm subscription.

## **CONTAINER BARCODES / LABELS**

**10. QUESTION:** If our mail provider is not set-up to create the pallet tags for Full-Service IMb, is there another way for us to obtain the tracking and the ACS information without the pallet tags?

**ANSWER:** One of the requirements for the Intelligent Mail Full-Service option is to provide Intelligent Mail container barcodes on container placards. Customers who do not provide Intelligent Mail Container placards will be ineligible for the Full-Service option.

Mailpiece tracking is only available to Confirm service users. The USPS will not provide tracking based solely on the Intelligent Mail barcode.

OneCode ACS is available to mailers who print properly prepared Intelligent Mail barcodes on their mailpieces, for either the Basic or Full-Service option. OneCode ACS is not to be confused with Full-Service ACS – automated address correction information at no additional charge.

More information on the Mailer Feedback available through the Intelligent Mail Full-Service option is available in *A Guide to Intelligent Mail for Letters and Flats* on RIBBS at [http://ribbs.usps.gov/intelligentmail\\_guides/documents/tech\\_guides/GuidetoIntelligentMailv5\\_10.pdf](http://ribbs.usps.gov/intelligentmail_guides/documents/tech_guides/GuidetoIntelligentMailv5_10.pdf).

## **FACILITY ACCESS & SHIPMENT TRACKING** **(FAST)**

## Tech Webinars Q&A for 04-17-09.doc

**11. QUESTION:** We provide mail drop ship transportation services for our customers. A couple of our mailers plan on-going full service next month. We would like to receive some type of "illumination" regarding the FAST scheduled postal appointments.

It has been my understanding that the appointments must be scheduled on line (which we do on behalf of all our customers) and therefore we are complying with all the requirements.

Our customers claim that they need the appointment information in order to close out a mailing on *PostalOne!*. One customer claims he needs the appointment number BEFORE the mail is actually verified (which would be very hard to comply with). This customer also plans on sending us Mail.dat files to us for us to input postal appointment numbers and send back to them.

MY PRIMARY QUESTION: Does the mailer need to have to input the actual postal appointment number in the *PostalOne!* system? If so, at what point does he need to input this information - before or at time of verification? Within 24 hours after verification? Before the pallets are scanned at destination? Within 6 months after verification?

SECOND QUESTION: Are there or will there be additional requirements in the content area in FAST such as an IMb number now or anytime in the future?

**ANSWER:** **Question 1, part 1: Creating an appointment online does not satisfy the requirements for Full-Service. The appointment itself may be created online, but the content information for the appointment must include the IM Container Barcode information, and this must be provided by updating content information via Mail.XML, or a combination of Mail.XML and Mail.dat. For recurring appointments, the customer can send a content update with a transportation ('T') update using Mail.dat. This is a valid content update method for Full-Service but does not apply to one-time appointments. One-time appointments created online or through Web Services must be updated via Mail.XML in order to provide the Intelligent Mail Container Barcode information.**

**Question 1, part 2: Currently, all content information for an appointment must be provided or updated at least one hour prior to the appointment. We are looking at allowing continuous First-Class mailers to supply updates to container barcode information 24 hours after the appointment.**

**Question 2: There will be no changes to the content section of the FAST online application to accommodate IM barcodes.**

## **FULL-SERVICE ACS™**

**12. QUESTION:** Does BPM receive Full-Service ACS on automated flats, non-DDU entry?

I find information on First-Class Mail, Periodicals, and Standard Mail, but cannot find anything on BPM.

**ANSWER:** Yes, Full-Service ACS will be available to mailers of Full-Service Bound Printed Matter flats at non-DDU entry prices.

Mailers of Standard Mail and Bound Printed Matter (BPM) full-service pieces will receive the first unique COA/Nixie notice at no additional charge. Subsequent notices for the same COA record or Nixie notice will continue to be provided at no additional charge for 30 calendar days after the initial notice is available. Beginning on the 31st day after the COA/Nixie notice is first made available to the mailer, the mailer will be charged for subsequent notices provided for the same COA record or Nixie notice. The price will be the current price in effect for additional automated notices for Standard Mail letters and for electronic notices for Standard Mail or Bound Printed Matter flats. Compliance with the Move Update standard for Standard Mail mailpieces remains required, and mailers must meet this requirement regardless of their receipt of address correction notices at no additional charge.

This information is available in *A Guide to Intelligent Mail for Letters and Flats* on RIBBS at [http://ribbs.usps.gov/intelligentmail\\_guides/documents/tech\\_guides/GuidetoIntelligentMailv5\\_10.pdf](http://ribbs.usps.gov/intelligentmail_guides/documents/tech_guides/GuidetoIntelligentMailv5_10.pdf).

**13. QUESTION:** Does the ACS service cost extra when using the Full-Service IMb? Do we need to do anything additional to receive this service?

**ANSWER:** Mailers will qualify for Full-Service ACS by both participating in the Full-Service option and using the address correction information to update their address records.

Mailers who do not update an address record after notification may be charged for subsequent change-of-address (COA) and undeliverable-as-addressed (nixie) notices for that address. A COA notice will be considered a duplicate if the name and address on the COA record matches the name and address of another COA record previously sent to the Mail Owner (or the designated recipient of the Mail Owner) of the mailpiece as identified in the

## Tech Webinars Q&A for 04-17-09.doc

electronic documentation (see section 3.14 for a description of how the Mail Owner is identified).

A nixie record will be considered a duplicate if the delivery point of the nixie record is the same as the delivery point of another nixie record previously sent to the Mail Owner (or the designated recipient of the Mail Owner) of the mailpiece as identified in the electronic documentation.

Mailers of First-Class Mail Full-Service pieces will receive all COA and nixie address correction records without additional charges for subsequent notices. There will be no limit on the number or the length of time that address correction notices will be provided. Compliance with the Move Update standard remains required, and mailers must meet this requirement regardless of their receipt of address correction notices at no additional charge.

Mailers of Standard Mail and Bound Printed Matter (BPM) Full-Service pieces will receive the first unique COA/nixie notice at no additional charge. Subsequent notices for the same COA record or nixie notice will continue to be provided at no additional charge for 30 calendar days after the initial notice. Beginning on the 31st day after the COA/nixie notice is first made available to the mailer, the mailer will be charged for subsequent notices provided for the same COA record or nixie notice. The price will be the current price in effect for additional automated notices for Standard Mail letters and for electronic notices for Standard Mail or Bound Printed Matter flats. Compliance with the Move Update standard for Standard Mail mailpieces remains required, and mailers must meet this requirement regardless of their receipt of address correction notices at no additional charge.

Periodicals Full-Service mailers will receive the first unique COA/nixie notice at no additional charge. Subsequent notices for the same COA record or nixie will be at no additional charge for 60 calendar days after the initial notice is first made available. Beginning on the sixty-first day after the COA/nixie notice is first made available to the mailer, the mailer will be charged for subsequent notices provided for the same COA record or nixie notice. The price will be the current price in effect for electronic notices.

Charges for additional address correction notices will be applied by mail class. Address correction notices provided for one class of mail will not be considered in determining charges for address correction notices within another class of mail.

ACS notifications belong to the mail owner. To receive COA information, the Mail Owner must have either a permit account or an ACS account with the *PostalOne!* system. Once the ACS record no longer qualifies for the free status, owners will be charged for those records and any subsequent records processed against that address. If the Mail Owner fails to establish an ACS account in the *PostalOne!* system, then the charges for the records will be assessed against the permit number that was used to pay for the postage on the mailing.

COA and nixie records generated as a function of Full-Service usage will be provided to the Full-Service System. The Full-Service System will be responsible for providing COA/Nixie records to mail owners (or designated recipients), tracking the number of notices over time, determining the additional charges due and transmitting the appropriate permit information and fees to the *PostalOne!* system. The system will also furnish the keyline information, if this is included in the electronic documentation, as part of the address correction information under the Full-Service option.

This information is available in *A Guide to Intelligent Mail for Letters and Flats* on RIBBS at [http://ribbs.usps.gov/intelligentmail\\_guides/documents/tech\\_guides/GuidetoIntelligentMailv5\\_10.pdf](http://ribbs.usps.gov/intelligentmail_guides/documents/tech_guides/GuidetoIntelligentMailv5_10.pdf).

**14. QUESTION:**

If a Service Provider is using their own MID for several of their customers who are requesting free OneCode ACS through Full Service, how are the ACS hits counted for the purposes of providing them for free or charging for them because they have already been provided previously?

Is it determined by each individual customer, across the whole MID or the CRID?

If it is at a CRID level, and a Service Provider has many MIDs, are the ACS records looked at in aggregate across all of those MIDs?

**ANSWER:**

**Full-Service ACS transactions will be tracked at the Mail Owner level as identified in the electronic documentation, not against the MID.**

**15. QUESTION:**

New Full-Service ACS file layouts - why do we need four versions?

**ANSWER:**

**Different options were provided to allow customers to choose how they wanted to get ACS files delivered. The same data is presented for COA and Nixie records whether the users**

chooses to download the file from the PostalOne! website or use the Mail.XML messages.

Change of Address (COA) and Nixie records have different file layouts because different information can be provided for the two types of ACS records.

**16. QUESTION:** Will *PostalOne!* be ready to retrieve and disseminate the information to the mailers/preparers? Should we not use Full-Service codes until May 18<sup>th</sup> because our data may be lost?

**ANSWER:** Full-Service ACS data will be made available to mailers once matching electronic documentation has been submitted to PostalOne!. Until Full-Service electronic documentation (Mail.dat 09-1 or Postal Wizard) is provided to the production PostalOne! system, no ACS data will be provided by PostalOne!

## **IMb™ (INTELLIGENT MAIL BARCODES FOR MAILPIECES)**

**17. QUESTION:** A customer said they needed a method to confirm the accuracy of their printed IMb prior to mailing. Is there such a device or method?

**ANSWER:** There are commercial verifiers that ensure the barcodes are in spec. An initial list of such verifiers can be found on RIBBS at <https://ribbs.usps.gov/index.cfm?page=intellmailmailpieces>.

## **START-THE-CLOCK**

**18. QUESTION:** In today's world, the scan of an ASN barcode controls Start-the-Clock at mail entry. These barcodes could be placed on form 8125 or form 3152A depending on the type of mail entry. The entry point scans then map to the unique shipment ids within mailer supplied EMD files. With the advent of Full-Service IMb, please elaborate how this changes with respect to the following situations:

- 1) Do IMb scans mapped to mailer supplied eDoc (e.g., Mail.dat) at the container level completely replace ASN shipment id scans for Start-the-Clock under Full-Service IMb?
- 2) If yes to #1, when? For example, what should a mailer who

## Tech Webinars Q&A for 04-17-09.doc

currently receives shipment level Start-the-Clock 8125 scans via USPS supplied FTP files expect? Is there a projected cut-off of that process? Is a period of time envisioned where a mailing may be receiving Start-the-Clock container scans under Full-Service and shipment scans under EMD?

3) What scan will define Start-the-Clock under Full-Service IMb for non-palletized mail entry? If not an ASN 8125 barcode, nor an IMb pallet barcode, then does one assume the IMb of each individual handling unit is scanned for Start-the-Clock? Does the first such scan then dictate the overall shipment's Start-the-Clock performance?

4) Similarly, what barcode is scanned in Priority Mail drop-ship situations? Is not the barcode associated with Priority Mail (open and distribute) containers outside the IMb eDoc (Mail.dat) spec? So, does each individual handling unit IMb within the Priority Mail container get scanned?

- ANSWER:**
- 1) There is no plan to sunset ASN shipment scans. Full-Service Start-the-Clock information will serve to supplement the ASN scan information and provide a Day-Zero calculation based on the entry facility processing and operations.
  - 2) ASN scans will continue to be provided
  - 3) For drop-ship mailings at a BMC, SCF, or ADC the Start-the-Clock event is not a scan, it is based on the FAST appointment.
  - 4) No Start-the-Clock will be provided in the May release of Full-Service for Priority Mail drop-ship (open and distribution) scenario.

## **VERIFICATION & ACCEPTANCE**

**19. QUESTION:** How will the IMb affect the "tap test" requirements?

**ANSWER:** No change. All automated mail with address block barcodes in a window will be subject to the Tap Test.

## **WEBINAR**

**20. QUESTION:** Where are the FAQs from the Intelligent Mail Technical Integration Webinars?

**ANSWER:** On our RIBBS website, Intelligent Mail Services, Latest News, Important Links. The URL is [http://ribbs.usps.gov/intelligentmail\\_latestnews/documents/tech\\_guides/webinars/webinars.htm](http://ribbs.usps.gov/intelligentmail_latestnews/documents/tech_guides/webinars/webinars.htm)

Mail.dat<sup>®</sup>, Mail.XML<sup>®</sup> and IDEAlliance<sup>®</sup> are trademarks owned by the International Digital Enterprise Alliance.

The following trademarks are among the many trademarks owned by the United States Postal Service:  
CASS<sup>™</sup>, Cass Certified<sup>™</sup>, Confirm<sup>®</sup>, DMM<sup>®</sup>, FAST<sup>®</sup>, First-Class<sup>™</sup>, First-Class Mail<sup>®</sup>, IM<sup>™</sup>, IMb<sup>™</sup>, IMbc<sup>™</sup>, IMcb<sup>™</sup>, IMcl<sup>™</sup>, IMtb<sup>™</sup>, IMti<sup>™</sup>, Intelligent Mail<sup>®</sup>, OneCode ACS<sup>®</sup>, OneCode Confirm<sup>®</sup>, OneCode Solution<sup>®</sup>, PLANET Code<sup>®</sup>, *PostalOne!*<sup>®</sup>, POSTNET<sup>™</sup>, Postal Service<sup>™</sup>, RIBBS<sup>®</sup>, Standard Mail<sup>®</sup>, The Postal Service<sup>®</sup>, United States Postal Service<sup>®</sup>, USPS<sup>®</sup>, ZIP<sup>®</sup>, ZIP Code<sup>™</sup>, ZIP + 4<sup>®</sup> and ZIP+4<sup>®</sup>.