



Intelligent Mail[®] Technical Integration Webinars – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

March 6, 2009 Session

v1

TECHNICAL QUESTIONS

QUESTION: For bundled flats mailing, where there is no handling unit (e.g., tray, sack) record in the Container Summary Record (CSM), what CSM ID is put into the Intelligent Mail Range (IMR) record?

ANSWER: The container ID from the logical or physical container for bundles (e.g. pallet) would be used in the IMR file. A detailed explanation can be found in section three of the *Guide to Intelligent Mail for Letters and Flats* posted at ribbs.usps.gov.

QUESTION: Regarding File Transfer: The document *Electronic Documentation and Intelligent Mail: Ready, Set, Go!* states on page 12 "Mailers will begin transmitting Mail.dat files into the TEM (Test Environment for Mailers) environment." What is the file transfer protocol? Is it FTP, SFTP, other?

This process must use a file transfer tool that can be automated. Please do not force mailers to manually login to the web site and send the file.

Please provide a method for commercial software to transfer the files. Large corporations do not allow 'shareware' or 'freeware' to be installed. The gnu software 'wget' required for automation of Origin Confirm and OneCode ACS file retrieval is not acceptable or requires exception approvals by the corporate security teams in many/most large corporations.

ANSWER: The new Mail.dat software will be available for download from the Business Customer Gateway on USPS.COM.

The new Mail.dat software allows users to upload their Mail.dat files in an automated fashion via a command line interface. The command line interface can be scheduled as a batch process via an automated scheduler to avoid any human interaction.

From a communication protocol perspective, the Mail.dat software uses the HTTPS protocol to submit Mail.dat files to the *PostalOne!* upload server.

Complete details for configuring and operating the Mail.dat software can be found within the *PostalOne! Mail.dat Technical Specification* document located on RIBBS at:
http://ribbs.usps.gov/intelligentmail_guides/documents/tech_guides

QUESTION: How will the May 11 'test' environment and the May 18 'production' environments work? How do you move from 'test' to 'production'? Is it something the USPS will do automatically or is the mailer required to do something?

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ANSWER: Details on how to test your full-service capabilities and criteria for migration to the production environment can be found in the *Electronic Documentation and Intelligent Mail® Ready, Set, Go!* guide which is posted on ribbs.usps.gov. Here you will find step-by-step instructions on how to become a Full-Service mailer.

On May 18, 2009, the Postal Service will make available a Test Environment for Mailers (TEM) to allow mailers to test their ability to send Full-Service electronic documentation. The TEM is designed to allow mailers to upload files to a “production-like” environment of the *PostalOne!* system. This will provide mailers a way to test their file layouts and corresponding file submission/creation software for creating electronic submission of documentation prior to participating in the production application. The TEM will process the submitted files for the same validations that will be found in the production environment. It will also capture, log, and display the error information in the same manner as the production environment for the mailers’ use in updating file layout and software processing.

Separate software installation packages will be available for the Mail.dat application for Mailer Testing vs. Production use. Both will be available for download from the Business Customer Gateway on USPS.COM.

Once the mailers have completed testing their Full-Service processes as outlined in the *Electronic Documentation and Intelligent Mail Ready, Set, Go!* guide, they will become active in the production environment.

QUESTION: For Full-Service, how long will the address correction information, nixie information, Start-the-Clock data, and container visibility data be retained by the USPS for the Mail.XML push and pull? Will the data be compiled in one message or will there be individual messages for each mailing and each class of mail?

ANSWER: This information is in the *PostalOne! Mail.XML Technical Specification* available on RIBBS.

The *PostalOne!* system will retain the data for up to 45 days.

If the mail owner or designee is identified (by Permit, MID, or CRID) in the electronic mailing data provided to the USPS, ACS Change-of-Address (COA) and ACS Nixie records will be available to the mail owner or designee in two ways. One way would be to login to the Business Customer Gateway through a browser and download CSV or Excel format ACS COA and ACS Nixie data files. The other way to get your data electronically is through Mail.XML 6.0C Web Services mechanism.

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For the browser based download of your ACS data, all you need is a user account created through Customer gateway in the *PostalOne!* system.

Electronic data exchange will be available through a Mail.XML web services model from the USPS. Customers may choose between the Pull (request) or Push (subscription) models. The Mail.XML Web services data exchange requires that the mail owner develop or buy a Mail.XML web services software. The Mail owner can request the ACS COA or Nixie by a job/mailing for a certain date range and the *PostalOne!* system in turn will respond back with the ACS COA or Nixie data for the job/mailing and the requested date-range.

If the mail owner or designee does not have the job/mailing id information, then the mail owner can choose the subscription model of Mail.XML web services.

In the subscription model, the mail owner can log into the *PostalOne!* system on May 11th and choose a delivery subscription (which means send me all of my detail data when it is ready) OR can choose a notification model (which means notify me when my data is ready and I will come and pull it from the USPS computer).

On May 11th, the mail owner or designee will be able to log-in to the Business Customer Gateway and provide the mail owner's or designee's computer address, a user name and a password that the USPS can use to talk to the mail owner's computer. In this subscription model, the USPS will send the data to the mail owner or designee per the schedule prescribed by the mail owner or designee on the *PostalOne!* subscription pages.

The mail owner can also choose a notification subscription model that allows the customer to receive a notification that the customer's data is ready for a certain job/mailing. In this case, the customer can send a Pull request for the job/mailing to the USPS computer and request the ACS COA or Nixie data for the job/mailing referred to in the USPS notification message.

ADDRESS CHANGE SERVICE (ACS)

QUESTION: On the HTTPS download of the ACS results (in compressed files), what is the format of those files? Where is that documented? Is it the same as the current OneCode ACS data?

ANSWER: ACS COA and Nixie data will be available through Web browser based downloads and through Mail.XML Web Services. The format for the Web browser based downloads is a comma delimited text file

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(CSV) or Microsoft Excel download. The format of this downloadable file will be presented in the *Guide to Full-Service User Access and Reports* which will be posted on ribbs.usps.gov on March 18. The format is different from the current OneCode ACS file format.

QUESTION: Regarding Mailer ID, if a corporation is producing their mail then sending the mail to a presort service for induction into the USPS, which Mailer ID is used on the mail?

If it is the presort service, the management of the serial number is a HUGE problem. If it is the presort service's Mailer ID, the value of the IMb has been significantly eliminated.

The scenario is important for OneCode ACS. The Corporation must generate the IMb with the serial number so that they can receive and map the ACS information to the correct mail piece and customer account.

ANSWER: Either the mail owner or mail preparer's Mailer ID may be used. The use of the Mailer ID is decided between the service providers and the mail owner. In all cases, the mail owner must be identified in the electronic documentation using one of the three options identified in the *Guide to Intelligent Mail for Letters and Flats* (Permit Number, Mailer ID, Customer Registration ID). Full-Service address correction information is sent to the mail owner or designee as identified in the electronic documentation.

QUESTION: What is the timing difference in getting ACS notices between traditional ACS and OneCode ACS?

ANSWER: There is no difference between traditional ACS record delivery and OneCode ACS record delivery per se. The bigger difference is between the shapes, because both OneCode ACS and traditional flats continue to be processed together for UAA handling, but PARS has the ability to intercept about 50% of the UAA letter mail, both OneCode ACS and traditional. Those intercepted records will be created sooner, thus provided sooner than the ones that must travel to the old address to be identified by the delivery unit and sent back to PARS (Postal Automated Redirection System) for processing.

QUESTION: Will OneCode ACS work exactly the same on Basic option / non-automation except it won't be free?

ANSWER: OneCode ACS for Basic option and non-automation pieces will continue to be processed and provided through the OneCode ACS program at the automated Address Correction Service prices for letters and the electronic Address Correction Service prices for flats.

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QUESTION: Why would anyone choose traditional ACS instead of OneCode ACS?
Is there any instance where traditional ACS would work better than OneCode ACS?
Is OneCode ACS able to be scanned at all USPS locations where ACS information is gathered?

ANSWER: Mailers have all kinds of reasons they make the choices they do. Perhaps they are not ready to convert to the IM barcode, or perhaps they choose to continue to use the traditional keyline because they cannot or choose not to change their “match-back” process.

Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands do not have PARS (Postal Automated Redirection System) to process their letter mail, so OneCode ACS letters sent to those ZIPs will not receive OneCode ACS processing. Flats to those areas are processed in the Puerto Rico CFS unit, which does have scanning capability for the IM barcode.

QUESTION: Besides printing the traditional ACS information – ACS Participant Code and optional ACS Keyline – how do you indicate you want to use traditional ACS instead of OneCode ACS in the IMb? The Service Type for traditional ACS and OneCode ACS are the same.
Is the Service Type the driving force to determine whether or not ACS service occurs and the Mailer Profile indicates the type of ACS service, either traditional if it exists or OneCode?

ANSWER: The Mailer ID used on a piece that requests traditional ACS should not be registered as an ACS MID to allow the software to know to capture the traditional data, otherwise it will be ignored. The Service Type ID must still indicate an ACS request for the software to know that since the Mailer ID is not identified as ACS, it should probe for the traditional text.

QUESTION: According to the Intelligent Mail University Feedback presentation, on nixie notices, the “Parsed Address on Piece” and “On Piece City-State-ZIP” will be returned. Can you confirm?
If available for Full-Service ACS, why is the information not available for Basic option OneCode ACS and even traditional ACS?
If scanning the address, why not also get and return the name information on the piece? (This relates to one of the enhancement requests from MTAC121.)

ANSWER: Full Service will not be providing the address from the mailpiece, but rather a reverse lookup of the 11-digit delivery point contained in the IM barcode, when it is unique.

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The mailpiece address is not considered in the creation of a OneCode ACS record.

The title of the field will be changed to more accurately reflect its contents.

QUESTION: Has the discounted ACS fee structure for Full-Service been fully approved? I noticed that these prices were not included in the new Price List, Notice 123.

ANSWER: Yes, the fee structure is posted at: http://pe.usps.gov/PriceChange_May2009/PDF/PriceList/PriceList.pdf and can be found on page 37.

ADDRESS MANAGEMENT / MOVE UPDATE

QUESTION: In terms of move update compliance how are we to deal with government addresses, e.g., APO, FPO, or DPO (Army Post Office, Fleet Post Office, Defense/Diplomatic Post Office, respectively) addresses? All of these, when 'CASSed', come up as errors and most likely will not find a match under National Change of Address (NCOA).

ANSWER: An address that cannot be delivery point coded to a specific 11-digit value is still required to meet an approved Move Update process to be eligible for mailing at discounted postage prices. If NCOA^{Link} is the Move Update process used, the attempt to match the non-coded address satisfies the Move Update requirement. This includes government addresses or APO, FPO, and DPO addresses that cannot be delivery point validated.

QUESTION: What do you recommend we do with National Change of Address (NCOA) records that do not match in the Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS)? Do not mail them? Mail them? What do we do with nixies? Is there a percentage allowed as 'non-CASSed' to be compliant with NCOA.

ANSWER: It is a mailer's decision whether or not to send a mailpiece to an address that cannot be validated as accurate through CASS processing. If a non-delivery point coded address is submitted for NCOA^{Link} processing, it is considered to have satisfied the Move Update requirement by the attempt made to match the address to NCOA^{Link} even though a match could not be made by NCOA^{Link}. There is no minimum percentage requirement of addresses that must be delivery point coded to be eligible for NCOA^{Link} processing.

ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTATION (eDoc)

QUESTION: Does the electronic filing for Full-Service IMb require that pieces which failed in the automation process be removed from the electronic reports?

ANSWER: Not necessarily. If the mailpiece remains part of the mailing but is removed from the automation portion of the mailing, it should be marked at the appropriate price category in the Mail.dat documentation. This mail must be prepared in accordance with the requirements in the Domestic Mail Manual (DMM).

A detailed explanation of this can be found in the *Guide to Intelligent Mail Letters and Flats* posted on ribbs.usps.gov.

FULL-SERVICE

QUESTION: Regarding mailpieces, can a single mailing include all of the following – POSTNET, IMb, non-automation, presort, single-piece, Basic Option, Full-Service Option?

ANSWER: Existing mail preparation rules as outlined in the DMM will govern the mixing of automation and non-automation mailpieces. For example, non-automation letters cannot be part of an automation mailing, but non-auto and auto flats may be part of the same mailing under standards in DMM 705. The USPS will allow full-service and basic option mailpieces with Intelligent Mail barcodes as well as pieces with POSTNET barcodes to be combined in a single mailing when appropriate documentation is provided. This is outlined in the *Guide to Intelligent Mail for Letters and Flats* posted on ribbs.usps.gov.

QUESTION: On page 6 of “OneCode ACS – Frequently Asked Questions” question #5 asks about the 45-day window whereby the Serial Number must remain unique. The answer states “The 45 day rule is not necessarily enforced for ACS participation.”

Does that mean something such as a customer account number (if it is not too long for the Serial Number field) could be used for multiple mailings during the 45-day window?

ANSWER: The 45-day uniqueness requirement is a Full-Service requirement. Basic Service pieces do not carry this requirement, so it is not a OneCode ACS requirement.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

QUESTION: Specific to Periodicals mailings, when will the Intelligent Mail Barcode be required rather than POSTNET for automation mailings?

ANSWER: May 2011

QUESTION: When will automation preparation be required for Periodicals Mail?

ANSWER: There is no pending requirement that all Periodicals be automated.

QUESTION: Will the IMb allow for point-to-point tracking, similar to overnight shipping services?

ANSWER: The suite of Intelligent Mail barcodes enables visibility for containers and mailpieces. Those mailings that comply with the requirements for the Full-Service option will receive Start-the-Clock and container visibility data at no additional charge. Mailpiece data is also available for mailers that have purchased a CONFIRM subscription.

QUESTION: Does the electronic filing for Full-Service IMb require that pieces which failed in the automation process have to be removed from the electronic reports?

ANSWER: If a mailpiece remains part of the mailing, but is removed from the automation portion of the mailing, it should be marked at the appropriate price category in the Mail.dat documentation. The mail must be prepared in accordance with the requirements in the Domestic Mail Manual (DMM).

Mailpieces that are no longer in the mailing can be marked for spoilage/shortage in the Piece Detail Record (PDR). Additionally, the number of mailpieces and postage amount can be removed via the Postage Adjustment Record (PAR). The Postage Statement Record (PSR) will not be supported for mailer identification of a specific postage statement to apply the adjustment from the (PAR) in the May release.

A detailed explanation of this can be found in the *Guide to Intelligent Mail Letters and Flats* posted on ribbs.usps.gov.

QUESTION: When will IMb be required for BRM and CRM pieces?

ANSWER: For Qualified Business Reply Mail (QBRM) letters and cards and Permit Reply Mail (PRM), May 2010. All other, May 2011, except that

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we will not require an IMb for Courtesy Reply Mail (CRM) pieces unless they are enclosed in outgoing automation mailpieces.

QUESTION: When will multiple CAPS be implemented in the Full-Service IMb? This is for the purpose of supporting postage payments from multiple permits (via CAPS) for a single combined/co-mingled mailing using Full Service IMb.

ANSWER: This capability already exists and is being used for Standard Mail and Periodicals. MLOCR mailers will have access in May 2009. In all cases, mailers must pass testing and be approved to use this system.

QUESTION: What effect will IMb Full-Service option have on manifest billing? Will it replace it?

ANSWER: Manifest Mailing System (MMS) requirements will remain unchanged for May 2009. For more information on how MMS mailers will participate in Full-Service, reference the *Guide to Intelligent Mail for Letters and Flats* which is posted on ribbs.usps.gov.

Full-service manifest mailers will submit electronic documentation per the requirements in the 'Guide' which includes piece, handling unit, and container Intelligent Mail barcodes. In addition, they will need to continue to provide the hard-copy documentation to support the manifest.

QUESTION: May Certified Mail data be incorporated into the IMb? If so, how will envelopes be prepared? Will green stickers still need to be affixed manually?

ANSWER: The Intelligent Mail barcode does not incorporate the Certified Mail service. If mailers choose to use an IMb on a certified mailpiece, they must adhere to the Certified Mail preparation requirements in the Domestic Mail Manual, including the green label, PS Form 3800.

QUESTION: What is the difference between the Basic option verses non-automation / presort / other?

ANSWER: As of May 11, the Basic option is for letter and flat-size mailpieces that qualify for automation or barcoded pricing using an IMb with a delivery point routing code as defined in the DMM. Non-automation is mail that does not qualify for automation or barcoded prices.

QUESTION: Is the IMb Basic option essentially a first-step replacement for POSTNET?

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ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: In the New Address Requirements which take effect March 29, 2009 it states "If the mailpiece bears a POSTNET or Intelligent Mail barcode with a delivery point routing code, mailers may use 6-point type in all capital letters." Does "delivery point routing code" indicate it must be an 11-digit ZIP to be able to use 6-point type?

In many mailings, some mailpieces will not have an 11-digit ZIP due to failing CASS Delivery Point Validation. Are those pieces still considered Full-Service or do they become Basic option / non-automation and therefore require a different Service Type and must they be printed in 8-point font size?

ANSWER: The delivery point routing code is required for all automation letters (currently) and flats (as of May 2009) mailings. The delivery point routing code must be 11 digits embedded in the barcode, but not all 11 digits must be printed in the address of the mailpiece. However, the delivery point routing code within a barcode, either POSTNET or IMb, is required as of March 29 for automation flats using the minimum 6-point font in all capital letters for their address. A mailpiece that does not carry a valid delivery point routing code in the Intelligent Mail barcode will not qualify for either the Full-Service or Basic options.

QUESTION: Is one of the criteria for using Full-Service that the mailpiece must qualify for automation rates? Or can Carrier Route and Firm packages qualify for Full-Service?

ANSWER: All mail that qualifies for Full-Service must have an Intelligent Mail barcode to include an 11-digit delivery point routing code. All Standard Mail carrier route letters are potentially eligible for Full-Service if they meet the eligibility requirements for Standard Mail Enhanced Carrier Route (ECR) prices. Standard Mail ECR basic and high-density are eligible and all carrier route Periodicals are eligible. While eligible for Full-Service, Standard Mail ECR basic and high-density flats and presorted Bound Printed Matter, DDU entry and carrier route flats will not receive free ACS.

QUESTION: On page 15 of *A Beginner's Overview to Intelligent Mail Services*, the service type descriptions mention "w/Traditional" but do not always have the abbreviation ACS after it. Does "w/Traditional" always mean traditional ACS and was it just accidentally dropped from some of the descriptions?

ANSWER: Yes, in *A Beginner's Overview to Intelligent Mail Services*, "w/Traditional" should read "w/Traditional ACS".

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QUESTION: Will we be able to continue to use a POSTNET barcode on our flats to receive automation discounts until May 2011?

ANSWER: Yes, but as of May 11, 2009, the POSTNET barcode or IMb must contain a delivery point routing code.

MAILER IDs & CUSTOMER REGISTRATION IDs (MIDs & CRIDs)

QUESTION: How can the registered name for an MID be changed? For example, if I registered the Mailer ID as John Doe and I want to change to John Smith.

ANSWER: Prior to May 11, 2009, the name and address associated with your Mailer ID may be changed by sending the information via email to postalone@usps.gov or fax on company letterhead to 901-681-4493.

Beginning May 11th, you may change the information associated with your MID by logging into the USPS Business Customer Gateway and selecting to update the company profile associated with your MID. Links to your company profile will be available on the Business Customer Gateway.

QUESTION: A 9-digit Mailer ID only leaves 6 digits for the Serial Number. If a mailer's volume exceeds 999,999 - either in a single mailing or their combined mailings within a 45-day period - the 6-digit Serial Number will be insufficient. To maintain uniqueness, should the mailer apply for a 6-digit Mailer ID to increase the Serial Number field to 9-digits?

ANSWER: Mailers with less than 10 million pieces per year that cannot maintain uniqueness within the 45-day period should obtain multiple 9-digit Mailer IDs.

WEBINAR ISSUES

QUESTION: May the public join the Friday IM Technical Integration Webinars?

ANSWER: Yes, the public is welcome but we do have a limitation on the number of Internet and telephone ports available through MeetingPlace.

QUESTION: Do I need to register to attend the IM Technical Integration Webinars?

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ANSWER: No registration is required.

QUESTION: Is there a cost to attend the IM Technical Integration Webinars?

ANSWER: There is no cost.

QUESTION: What application is used for the IM Technical Integration Webinars?

ANSWER: Cisco Unified MeetingPlace

QUESTION: What is the dial in number for the IM Technical Integration Webinars?

ANSWER: From a phone, dial:

Phone Number: 866-567-8049

Meeting ID: 0288185

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QUESTION: Is there a link to a website so that I can view the IM Technical Integration Webinars?

ANSWER: TO ATTEND THE WEB CONFERENCE AND JOIN WITH AUDIO
(No earlier than 15 minutes prior to the start):

1) Hold down your CTRL key and click on:

[Intelligent Mail Technical Integration Webinar](#)

2) Enter the Meeting ID number 0288185

3) After the MeetingPlace window is open, click the Phone icon (under the Participant List or in the upper right-hand corner).

4) Click 'Connect Me', validate or update your phone number and click 'Connect Me' again.

5) When the system calls you, press 1 to join.

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