



Resolution Statement: Workgroup# 143 – Seamless Acceptance

Start Date: 4/1/2011

Official Date of Completion: 06/18/2015

Purpose of the Workgroup #143

This work group will identify process changes, feedback and reports necessary to achieve a seamless entry and automated verification approach for letters, flats and parcels.

Participation and Discussion Format

The work group was held on a recurring bi-weekly basis, as well as during quarterly face-to-face meetings. Agenda topics were raised collaboratively by both USPS and the mailing industry.

The WG #143 chairs are listed below:

Current Member Name	Company	Representing
Hoyt, Garrett	USPS	Postal Leader
Rosser, Bob	IWCO	Industry Leader
Pinter, Susan	Arandell	Industry Leader
Salls, Murray	DST	Industry Leader

This statement highlights the accomplishments of WG #143.

Seamless Acceptance Program Overview

The Seamless Acceptance program uses an automated process for entry and verification of mail leveraging electronic documentation, Intelligent Mail barcodes, samples collected from handheld devices, and mail processing equipment scan intelligence. A mailer is initiated into the program in a “Seamless Parallel” process where both the mailer and the USPS can view the results of the automated verifications through the Mailer Scorecard report, while the mailer continues to be assessed using the traditional acceptance and verification processes. This gives the USPS and the mailer time to evaluate mail quality, review and revise business processes, and address any software issues. Mailings continue to be assessed at the mailing level and will not be assessed for additional postage due through the automated process.

After a mailer has demonstrated high quality mailings across an entire calendar month by remaining below Seamless Acceptance verification error thresholds, their mailings will be accepted and verified using the Seamless Acceptance process. In the Seamless Acceptance process, postage statements will be automatically finalized by system processing and verifications will be performed automatically throughout the calendar month, using data gathered from scans of the mailpieces. This allows mail to be processed through the mail stream without delays to the mailer and with less effort by USPS.

As of June 2015, several large volume mailers are participating in Seamless Acceptance and approximately 18% of the total commercial volume is on Seamless Acceptance.

Conclusion:

The workgroup fulfilled its objective to develop an approach for seamless mail entry and automated verification by designing a process that benefits both mailers and the United States Postal Service. Through a collaborative approach, the work group was able to raise and solve issues, improve the Seamless Acceptance processes, and define the information needed in reports and how to present that information. Each of the desired results was achieved and is explained in more detail below.

A guide to Seamless Acceptance was developed and is available on the RIBBS website. The complete details of the Seamless Acceptance program are available in this guide.

1) Desired Results

“Establish the process changes necessary to achieve a streamlined entry and automated verification approach leveraging the advances made through Intelligent Mail and Full Service.”

Achieved

The Seamless Acceptance process has been fully defined and is operational. The key components of the process are as follows:

1. Mailer prints Intelligent Mail Barcodes on all containers, handling units, and pieces
2. Mailer documents all containers, handling unit, and piece barcodes in electronic documentation (Mail.dat, Mail.XML, Postal Wizard, Intelligent Mail for Small Business Tool)
3. USPS systems will automatically finalize the postage statements if sufficient payment is available
4. USPS scans mailpiece barcodes as they are run through Mail Processing Equipment (MPE) and collects data from the scans
5. USPS samples pieces from randomly selected containers to collect additional information not available from the MPE
6. USPS compares the information collected from MPE and samples to the information provided in the mailer's electronic documentation to verify mail preparation

7. If Seamless Acceptance verification failures at the end of a calendar month have exceeded established thresholds, additional postage will be assessed to the mailer to account for postage due to USPS
8. The results of the verifications are available in a variety of reports, allowing mailers and USPS to identify issues in mail preparation

2) Desired Results

“Define the information and reports necessary to provide mailers and the Postal Service with actionable information.”

Achieved

An extensive set of reports were designed and built to meet the needs of the workgroup. Seamless acceptance feedback is provided in a variety of report formats, from a summary of a mailer’s seamless volume and verification results (Mailer Scorecard report) to details on a particular seamless mailing (Job Detail report), and even details on individual pieces within a mailing (Errors by Error Type report). These reports are available to eDoc Submitters, Mail Preparers, and Mail Owners.

A guide to the Mailer Scorecard was developed and is available on the RIBBS website. This guide provides details on how the Mailer Scorecard works and can be used to monitor trends in mail quality and take action to fix mail quality issues.

3) Desired Results

“Define value proposition and approach to promote the adoption of seamless acceptance.”

Achieved

By using the Seamless Acceptance process, a number of valuable benefits are possible. The benefits include:

- Longer mail production cycle
- Standardized acceptance and verification process
- Verifications performed electronically reducing complexity
- Auto-finalization allows eDoc submitters control over postage payment
- Allows for improved feedback and identification of trends
- Trend-based quality measurements means mail preparers will not be penalized for a problem with a single mailing
- Control Over Release Timing
- Mail Preparation Flexibility

In order to promote the adoption of Seamless Acceptance and provide these benefits to mailers and USPS, the following approaches will be used:

1. Industry members of the work group will explain the benefits of Seamless Acceptance to their respective industry organizations and encourage additional mailers to participate

2. USPS will develop communication strategies to inform customers of the benefits of Seamless Acceptance and encourage them to participate
3. USPS will proactively reach out to mailers with high quality mail, inform them of the benefits of Seamless Acceptance, and encourage them to participate

Further Action

While the workgroup has met the overall objectives there are remaining topics that are not fully resolved which will migrate to a new Mail Entry and Payment user group. These topics include but are not limited to: validation of undocumented pieces and sampling issues specific to weight and MLOCR mailers.