

MAILERS TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MTAC)

# Workgroup 145

## Promote Significant Usage of 24-Digit Tray Labels

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### Final Recommendations Report

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MTAC 145 Co-Chairs

~~November 21~~, 2011

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## 1 Executive Summary

As the US Postal Service strives to attain World Class Visibility to better meet the needs of the industry as well as improve operational efficiencies, unique identification of handling units is a vital piece of the puzzle. Unfortunately, the Postal Service's legacy 10-digit tray and sack barcode label does not uniquely identify the handling unit, a prerequisite for tracking. The 24-digit IM Tray Label (IMtl) provides unique identification of trays and sacks, in addition to identifying the originator of the mail. As such, the US Postal Service would like to increase the use of the IMtl on all commercial mail mailings, not just on mailings that are submitted under the Full-Service option. The MTAC Workgroup (WG) 145 was thus set up to investigate the possible impediments to the adoption of the IMtl and furnish recommendations for promoting its significant usage on all commercial mailings, from all customers.

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The workgroup's efforts included bi-weekly conference calls that spanned from August 2, 2011 to November 2011 in addition to two face-to-face meetings. The workgroup comprised 20+ members from the mailing industry and the US Postal Service. The industry was represented by mail owners, mail service providers, publishers, printers, software providers, and consultants. The US Postal Service was represented primarily by the Mailing Information Systems (MIS), Network Visibility Systems, and Mailing Standards groups.

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The recommendations developed by WG 145 will be entered into the MTAC Resolution Issue Tracking System (RITS) for follow up by the MTAC Executive Committee and the MTAC Leadership Foursome responsible for this workgroup's efforts.

In addition to the recommendations, the workgroup created and distributed an industry workgroup survey to better understand barriers to the adoption of the 24-Digit IM tray label. The IMtl Technical Fact Sheet available on RIBBS was also updated to reinforce the message that the IM 24-Digit Tray Label is not limited to Full Service mailings, as well as support the Postal Service's encouragement of the adoption of the 24-Digit IMtl by the industry. These efforts are expanded upon in this report.

## 2 Issue Statement

The USPS would like to expand the use of IMtI on all commercial mail beyond the mailings that are currently using the Full Service option. The extension of IMtI to all commercial mail mailings - all trays, flat tubs and sacks - will allow for increased visibility in the network. This will:

- a. Ensure unique identification of all trays, tubs, and sacks throughout the network
- b. Allow for the correlation of all tray, tub, and sack information back to the mailer's Mailer ID
- c. Enable commercial mailers visibility into the Postal Service's network
- d. Enhance commercial mail measurement
- e. Improve forecasting and processing efficiencies
- f. Enhance capability to reconcile mailings thereby ensuring revenue protection
- g. Support the Postal Services' broader mail processing and transportation networks optimization plans

## 3 Impact on Other Issues/Procedures

The IMtI provides unique identification of trays and sacks in addition to identifying the originator of the mail by the use of unique Mailer IDs (MIDs) assigned by the Postal Service. This additional functionality not only supports sortation and routing but also allows for in-transit visibility, manifest reconciliation, and automated mail acceptance.

Increasing the usage of the IMtI on all mailings will improve reconciliation of mailings to electronic documentation and enhance service performance measurement. As such, recommendations from this workgroup directly tie in to the efforts currently underway by MTAC WG 146 tasked with "Providing Container, Tray, and Piece Level Detail to Full Service Customers".

## 4 Desired Results

- Consensus on objective and modifications to mailing standards
- Agreement on a schedule for retiring legacy tray labels – 10-digit and 10/24-digit formats
- Develop an implementation plan/schedule
- Identify how and what will drive mailers to full adoption

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- Identify and document implementation issues
- Consensus on a communications plan including a promotional campaign

## 5 Scope of Input

The team began their efforts by discussing possible industry barriers to the adoption of the 24-Digit Tray Labels. This exercise led to the identification of six primary issues.

- Cost to Implement
- Handling of Reprints
- Available Space on the Labels
- Serial Number Management
- Mail Service Providers and owners who do not have “sophisticated” internal data or IT support staff
- Adequate Time for Adoption

These six issues drove the agenda for the following meetings and defined the additional input the workgroup would need to formulate their recommendations.

## 6 Input Organization

### 6.1 *US Postal Service Tray Label Overview*

After initial issue identification, it was determined that the Postal Service should provide an overview of the Tray Label as a level setting exercise for the team. This allowed the group to receive clarification on the existing tray label requirements and provided a historical summary of the evolution of the tray label. <??? Insert Presentation Here>

### 6.2 *Industry Survey*

The workgroup determined that broader input from the industry was needed in order to develop recommendations that truly reflected the various factions of industry and whether or not they were willing to support the change. A subgroup met to create the survey which was circulated through the DMM Advisory, industry associations and MTAC. It consisted of 5 questions. Approximately 180 responses were gathered. A summary of the survey responses is included below.

Question 1 – What kind of tray/sack label are you currently using in your mailing operation?

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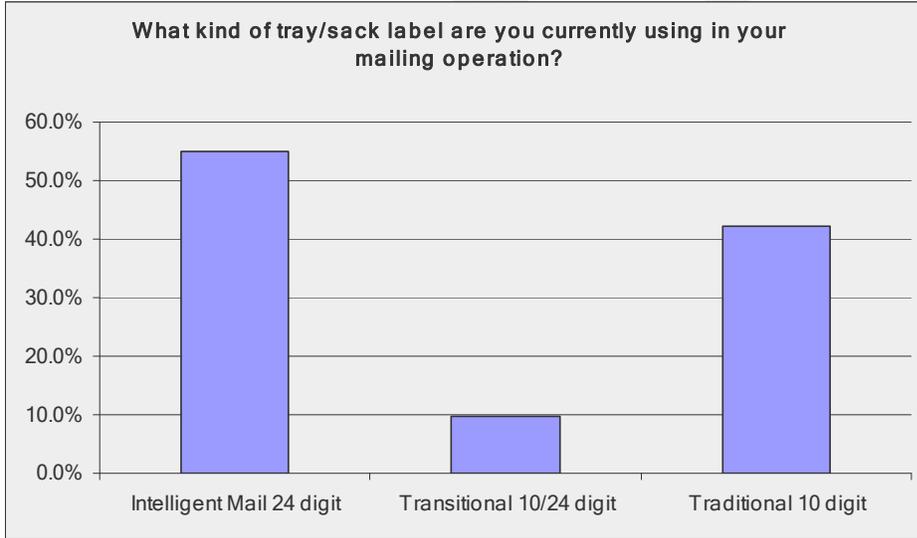
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**What kind of tray/sack label are you currently using in your mailing operation?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Intelligent Mail 24 digit	55.1%	184
Transitional 10/24 digit	9.6%	32
Traditional 10 digit	42.2%	141
<i>answered question</i>		<b>334</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>14</b>



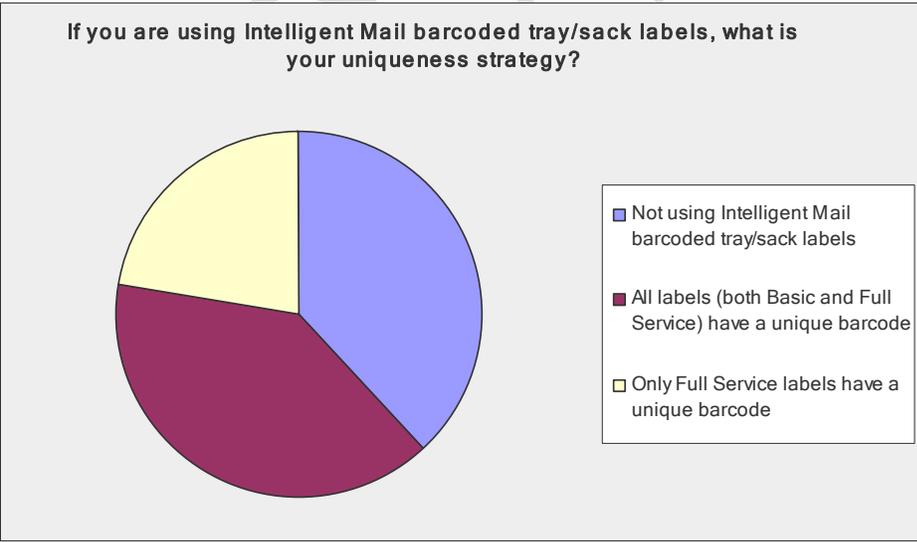
**Graphical view of survey responses to Q. 1**

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**Question 2 – If you are using Intelligent Mail barcoded tray/sack labels, what is your uniqueness strategy?**

**If you are using Intelligent Mail barcoded tray/sack labels, what is your uniqueness strategy?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Not using Intelligent Mail barcoded tray/sack labels	38.0%	123
All labels (both Basic and Full Service) have a unique barcode	39.5%	128
Only Full Service labels have a unique barcode	22.5%	73
<b>answered question</b>		<b>324</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>24</b>

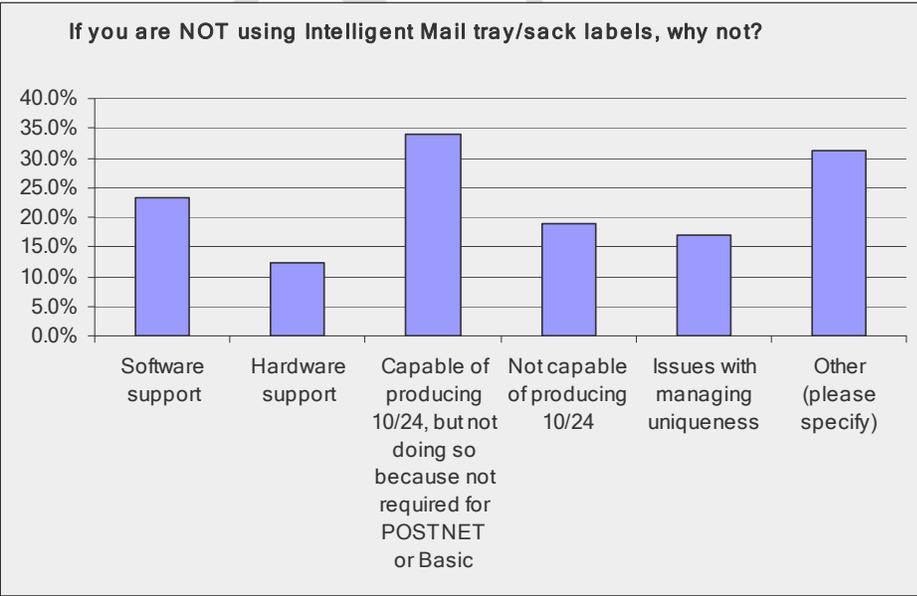


[Pie-chart view of survey responses to Q. 2](#)

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**Question 3 – If you are NOT using Intelligent Mail tray/sack labels, why not?**

If you are NOT using Intelligent Mail tray/sack labels, why not?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Software support	23.2%	38
Hardware support	12.2%	20
Capable of producing 10/24, but not doing so because not required for POSTNET or Basic	34.1%	56
Not capable of producing 10/24	18.9%	31
Issues with managing uniqueness	17.1%	28
Other (please specify)	31.1%	51
<b>answered question</b>		<b>164</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>184</b>

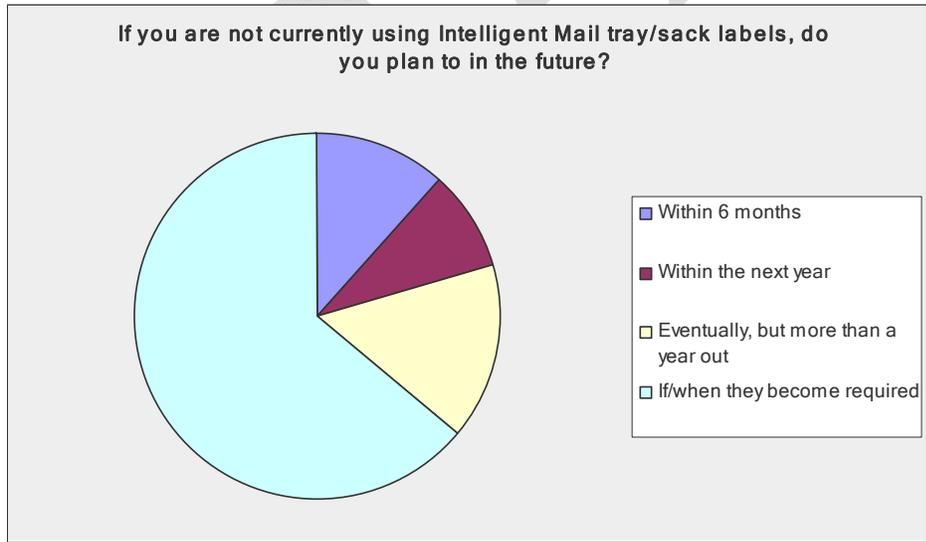


**Graphical view of survey responses to Q. 3**

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**Question 4 – If you are not currently using Intelligent Mail tray/sack labels, do you plan to in the future?**

If you are not currently using Intelligent Mail tray/sack labels, do you plan to in the future?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Within 6 months	11.6%	18
Within the next year	9.0%	14
Eventually, but more than a year out	15.5%	24
If/when they become required	63.9%	99
<i>answered question</i>		<b>155</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>193</b>



**Pie-chart view of survey responses to Q. 4**

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**Question 5 – Questions or comments regarding Intelligent Mail tray/sack label adoption?**

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Questions or comments regarding Intelligent Mail tray/sack label adoption?	
Answer Options	Response Count
	63
<i>answered question</i>	<b>63</b>
<i>skipped question</i>	<b>285</b>

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## 7 Workgroup Output

### 7.1 Recommendations

#### 7.1.1 Build Value

The Postal Service must develop the value story to justify the cost to the industry through the identification of the value of the 24-Digit over the 10-Digit.

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The focus should be on the value to the USPS in addition to the industry.

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In addition to the value statement, the USPS must build value to drive adoption, for example, provide container scan data to non-Full Service mailers when they uniquely identify the containers. The group again acknowledged that this was a definite tie-in to the efforts of MTAC WG 146.

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#### 7.1.2 Create Awareness for non-Full Service Mailers

Create awareness that the use of 24 digit barcodes for non-Full Service mailings does not require submittal of associated electronic documentation matching the “nesting” of the tendered mail. The Postal Service has to:

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- Embark on a promotional campaign to encourage migration
  - Campaign messaging will tie all the pieces together
  - Concise, clear messaging encouraging all users, basic as well as full-service, to adopt the 24-digit tray label format
- Tie-in messaging to MTAC WG 145 Survey responses
- Devise a communication plan with MTAC WG 146 as the “driver” of the campaign; MTAC WG 146 is where the value proposition is being developed.

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#### 7.1.3 Handling of Reprints

Reprints are a part of the production environment. It is a well-known fact in the industry that tray labels do fall out due to one reason or another. During production, there is always the possibility of something going wrong, and the question has to be answered

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as to whether a brand new tray tag is needed or the damaged tray tag can simply be reprinted. The Postal Service therefore has to allow for tolerances in mailings to accommodate reprints. These tolerances should be clearly articulated to avoid confusion. If possible, the tolerances associated with Full Service mailings should be maintained to ensure consistency in Postal policies and guidance.

Suggestions for handling reprints include:

1. Have labeling printing system available to reprint on production floor/pallet wrap station.
2. Have generic labels for Automated Area Distribution Center (AADC) breakouts available.
3. Allow for less than 100% IMB tray label (10-digit).
4. Allow for Mixed AADC to be used on tray missing label (as a last resort).

#### 7.1.4 Serial Number Management

Recommended taking an approach to drive adoption that does not require unique serial numbers or if uniqueness was required it would apply to that job and not for a period of time. However, as the discussion progressed, it was emphasized that the potential benefits associated with in-transit visibility may not be realized if the tray barcode was not sufficiently unique. A unique identifier is needed on all tray labels in order to be able to answer the question as to where a mailing is.

The workgroup recommended providing examples of serialization methodologies so the industry mailers could see that it was their decision as to what they implemented.

Examples include:

1. Month/year, MID, serial number. Reset counter each month
2. Job Number, MID, serial number. Reset each job.
3. Shift (tour) Number, MID, serial number. Reset each Shift (tour).
4. Julian Date, MID, serial number
5. MID, Serial number, record start and stop number per project. Reset at end of print range availability

#### 7.1.5 Adequate Time for Adoption

The US Postal Service should use a phased timing (if it becomes a requirement), approach:

- Encouragement and awareness, tied in to the recommended promotional campaign

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- Retire 10/24 in 12 months
- Retire 10-digit in XX months
- Tie the adoption (requirement) to a USPS major or minor release schedule with a minimum of 24-months (unless a compelling value add is tied to the requirement, for example, - access to tray scans)

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**7.2 IMTL Technical Fact Sheet**

Through discussions, it was determined that industry often confuses the phrase “Intelligent Mail” with “Full Service Intelligent Mail”. It was also noted that current USPS resources do not emphasize that non-Full Service Mailers can use Intelligent Mail tray labels.

The USPS therefore updated the IMTL Technical Fact Sheet currently available on RIBBS to clearly state that the use of Intelligent Mail tray labels was not specific to Full Service mailings. The updated version will be uploaded to RIBBS at the conclusion of this workgroup.



**8 Appendix 2: Workgroup Roster**

Name	Organization	Role
Steve Dearing	U S Postal Service	USPS Group Leader
Himesh Patel	U S Postal Service	Alt USPS Group Leader
Paula Stoskopf	GrayHair Software, Inc.	Industry Work Group Leader
Balu Forna	U S Postal Service	USPS
Angelo Anagnostopoulos	GrayHair Software, Inc	Member
Beth Bigelow	Accenture	Member
Christine A. Wacker	Verizon – VSO Print & Mail	Member
Christopher A. Andrews	Verizon – Richmond/Durham BP&D - VSO	Member
J. Meyers	World Marketing®	Member
J. Radgowski	World Marketing®	Member
Lisa Bowes	Intelisent	Member

Michelle Billmann	ALG Worldwide Logistics	Member
Monica Lundquist	Window Book Inc.	Member
Norine Butte	<a href="http://www.nasml.com">www.nasml.com</a>	Member
Randy Randall	AT&T Mailing Solutions	Member
Richard Casford	Whittier Mailing Service Inc	Member
Robert Dorre	Mailing & Logistics Support for World Marketing	Member
Sharon Harrison	AT&T Mailing Solutions	Member
T. Mayfield	World Marketing®	Member
Ty Inman	MidSouth Technologies, a Division of NPI	Member
Wallace Vingelis	Window Book, Inc.	Member

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 3. Shift (tour) Number, MID, serial number. Reset each Shift (tour) 4. Julian Date, MID, serial number 5. MID, Serial number, record start and stop number per project. Reset at end of print range availability¶  
 ¶  
 Reprint:¶  
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