

Minutes for Workgroup #174 – Informed Delivery APP

Session 3: 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. WebEx

Jody opened the meeting with the overview slide. A question was raised from Gary Reblin's presentation at PostCom: are there any statistics available to identify the number of postal employees versus the general public in the Northern Virginia pilot? In relation to the test results and surveys, a reasonable hypothesis might suggest that employees of the USPS and people engaged in the mailing industry have a greater interest in the mail than the average citizen and may therefore represent a larger sample of the 4,500 users than the general population of America. Anecdotally a program participant, Lee Garvey, shared that the program was open to anyone in the ZIP Code locations served in the Northern Virginia area. Carrie confirmed.

Action item: Carrie will see if there are any metrics from the December test period and/or to-date that indicate the number of Postal employees included in the NoVA test.

We continued with the discussion on 3.0, USPS and Industry Critical Success Factors and 3.1, Impact on Response Rates. Based on the USPS pilot in Northern Virginia and the two small tests, USPS expects response rates to be higher with the inclusion of the additional digital impression.

Sam Edelstein, from Board Room, shared his thoughts on measuring response rates in that it isn't just about the "Before or After" so much as head to head testing. For example, if there is a recession or the price of gas goes up, these factors impact response rates. He explained that by doing head to head testing, we look at response rates for ZIP Code locations in the program vs. those not in the program. Environmental factors impact both groups the same. Variability from the creative would also need to be taken into consideration. We should also consider response rates based on the type of mail. For example, it might be that bills see a 5% increase in responsiveness whereas Standard Mail is down 5%. The group expresses an interest in understanding how the pilot mailers plan to measure their own testing.

Phil Thompson raised awareness of the need to measure whole categories of mail not in the pilot, specifically saturation mail. Carrie will reach out to USPS Sales to see if we could develop a dialogue with saturation mailers with the goal of getting a couple of volunteers to collaborate in measuring the impact, or the lack of impact, on response rates (in & outside the pilot location) during the pilot period.

As several workgroup members have a strong interest in the testing and analytical process, including Sam Edelstein and Steve Belmonte from AccuZip. Carrie & Jody introduced the idea that we have a subgroup and invite experts in testing and analytics to have a more detailed discussion. Sam was going to provide something in writing on this subject. We invite MTAC WG members to volunteer for the subgroup. If you are not the analytics person in your company, perhaps you could volunteer the person with that skill set. We acknowledge that the current language in our working deck describing the response rate issue needs improvement and we delegate that task to the subgroup.

In response to a question asking for clarification on the interactivity tests during the Northern Virginia pilot, Carrie explained that there were two tests in December 2014. One was a private sector business mailpiece and the other was a USPS mailpiece. During those 2 tests, the daily email had a link associated

with the mailpiece. Response rates from registered users were higher than those that just received the hardcopy mailpiece. Day to day there are no links or tests going on in the Northern Virginia area.

Jody took the action item to reach out to DMA. First ask will be to inquire about volunteers perhaps from their data analytics community to join the subgroup, to ask about measuring the Do Not Mail requests in the pilot areas and, lastly, to consider the possibility of updating the DNM Database more frequently than the current monthly schedule.

A question was raised about if there is a disclosure in the email stating that it doesn't reflect the full complement of mail. Carrie indicated this was in the language that she submitted. A copy of the email content can be provided after it is finalized.

The ability of the mailer to opt out of the Informed Visibility App program was briefly discussed, however, this topic is already scheduled for a future meeting date. Steve Collela raised a hypothetical: if I am a charity and I see my response rate go down dramatically in the pilot area during the test period, I may request USPS suppress the image of my mailpiece.

In relation to general comments, one WG participant suggested the Mailer indicate Real Mail participation via the STID. One member said a client swore the IMB depressed response rates and wouldn't use it. Several members were in consensus about requiring suppression functionality in a national rollout scenario. As a consumer facing service related to overall Informed Delivery information, it is unclear if this is in the best interest of customer service.

As noted previously, this discussion is currently scheduled for early December. At that time, we will discuss and document the concerns around this issue and discuss a potential technical solution if it were to be implemented. It was noted that the order of discussion topics is based on the responses the WG participants provided at the beginning of the workgroup. The leadership is open to changes if the priorities of the workgroup participants as a whole have shifted.

Issue 4- Content / Timing Discrepancies

For those unfamiliar, the postal sorting equipment generates a scan when automated mail is processed for both the first and second pass. The 919 scan is specifically triggered as an "exit" scan (now exiting the USPS processing network, going out for delivery). While some mail may not get an exit scan, it may get the initial scan code of 918. The potential disconnect of the scanned image and the physical delivery of the mail speaks to the larger complex issue of quality. There may be opportunities to examine the occurrences and use the feedback loop to improve performance of the organization & learn how to prevent errors in delivery.

If mailers have a business model where they are already measuring customer feedback of mail receipt, they are welcome to submit additional examples of this issue. One Mailer reports seeing 919 scans on mail customers are calling and saying wasn't delivered. Example: An exit scan date of 9/15 and customer call on 9/23. That's a week later. Someone suggested that customers would adjust to getting the mail a day after the email image as one possible scenario, however, the absence of delivery altogether is a different issue. It was suggested that we help to ensure that this is measured more effectively. Ultimately, as a workgroup, we may want to recommend an error percentage that is within reason and generally considered acceptable. It was suggested that we attempt to measure the percentage of mail that is physically delayed in delivery or is never delivered. For example, when mail is mangled in processing, it is poly-wrapped at USPS before delivery. It was suggested that USPS add a

barcode to these items to help measure them. Carrie noted that this would require a manual scan at the point of delivery.

The group provided some good ideas for USPS call center management to take into consideration. Some call center reporting is geographic. Mailers may want to look at what their internal capabilities are, particularly if they wish to participate in the pilot. Carrie took an action item to follow up on the path of investigation that will help identify key issues and the number of instances at a more granular reporting level for this pilot. Note: if a customer has missing mail, they would use the normal process to report it. As a reminder, the USPS Call Center will not be providing active support during the pilot program. If the program is expanded nationally, the Call Center will be involved at that point.

The WG was reminded that our charter is to make recommendations that support the program if it expands nationally. The USPS may not be able to implement recommendations for the existing expanded pilot.

Carrie stated she expects the list of recommended Critical Success Factors to grow as we continue to have ongoing discussions. She already included additional line items based on the issues list that was identified prior to the first meeting.

There was interest in how carriers were made aware that this new test was coming. The USPS provided proper union notification previously and a service talk will be released the week of October 19th. The talk informs the carriers that the pilot is being launched in their area. Management will share some questions that they anticipate carriers might get from customers (along with possible answers).