

## Minutes for Workgroup #174 – Informed Delivery APP

Session 24: 12:00 noon – 1:00 p.m. EST WebEx

Carrie opened up the meeting by going through the normal review process. She acknowledged the topics discussed the prior week. She mentioned that Bob Dixon gave a presentation at NPF that included some insight to the Informed Delivery consumer survey responses. Carrie will get that information to share with the workgroup at a future meeting. Carrie shared that she met with several people at the Forum, several mailers interested in participating in the program. Carrie, Jody and Bob Schimek met with David Steinhardt & Leo Raymond from the IDEAlliance to discuss their concerns with the program & the role of updating Mail.dat.

Carrie acknowledged Steve Belmonte's concerns as to whether or not the USPS should be engaged in the Informed Delivery program. Slide 6 of our weekly deck acknowledges that we heard his concerns about the speculation that the program will kill the industry. Carrie provided the original issue statement for review, which states that the USPS is looking for suggestions and recommendations from the industry if the program is expanded. The issue statement includes providing input on the digital aspect of the program. The goal of the workgroup is not to provide USPS approval or permission. The USPS was, and still is, looking for industry input on the program as it is developed. Our workgroup has thoroughly discussed and documented over 13 issues/concerns expressed by workgroup members & we have been trying to review our final 3 issues that were fleshed out in the subgroup work product that started in early November. We recently just extended the workgroup to figure out the integration with PostalOne.

We paused for comments from others regarding their National Postal Forum experience. There was some discussion about exactly what PMG Megan Brennan announced. Did she say national rollout or did she say that USPS would have the capability to enable Informed Delivery™? Jody mentioned that there ought to be a press release that states the official announcement. The link & quotes below have been added to these notes for reference: ([https://about.usps.com/news/national-releases/2016/pr16\\_011.htm](https://about.usps.com/news/national-releases/2016/pr16_011.htm))

*"The Postal Service is investing in our digital strategy, because there are limitless opportunities when we combine the power of mail with the ubiquity of mobile," said Brennan. "We are committed to elevating the role of mail in American marketing and communications, and earning a bigger slice of the marketing pie."*

*In her address, the Postmaster General identified strategic initiatives and investments to provide the mailing industry with greater digital capabilities. "Our vision is not confined to what we can accomplish in the next year or two. We have to continue to build and focus on the long-term rewards," said Brennan.*

*Brennan also showcased the development of Informed Delivery (previously Real-Mail Notification) – a mail preview service on track to be available as a mobile app in every ZIP code across the country in early 2017. Results from a market test in New York City show 70 percent of subscribers opening daily notifications and more than 90 percent reading notifications more than four times a week.*

*"Informed Delivery engages customers where they want to be – in a mobile and digital environment," added Brennan. "It puts the power of mail onto digital channels."*

*“Informed Delivery creates an opportunity to bring your mail and packages onto the smartphones and devices of the American consumer,” said Brennan. “It gives every marketer the opportunity to attach a digital offer to mail pieces, and eventually packages. This is an incredibly powerful product for this industry.”*

Jerry Faust added that he thought USPS was deliberate in their position that a mailer had to start with a physical piece. Some expressed concern that USPS may initiate a new digital delivery service rather than the current program designed to digitize the physical mail delivery service.

Steve added that he is on record with this quote, “This is the beginning of the end. Trust me. Not a good thing.” He went on to explain that the postal service is making digital more important than the physical, rather than having the mailpiece drive digital.

Jody & Jerry Faust articulated their understanding that one can’t have Informed Delivery without physical mail. Steve stated that this program will disrupt our industry. There will be a market for USPS to have two programs; one on digital opt-in for mobile phones and then another price to reflect hard copy delivery. Steve went on to mention exigency, the labor/fuel savings associated with a version of Informed Delivery that disregards the physical piece, and he went on to talk about his predictions for the future. Jody and Carrie cut off that repeat discussion and directed us back to the new survey questions. A closing thought - one angle that perhaps the USPS hadn’t considered is what prevents a copycat business model? Or for someone to offer similar services?

The workgroup reviewed & talked through the new survey questions submitted for our second survey effort. One of the issues addressed, outside of the industry impact questions raised by Steve, was related to a prior discussion topic, security and privacy. For example, if an Informed Delivery subscriber doesn’t file a change of address or notify the Informed Delivery program of an address change, after a certain number of days, the carrier ought to take an action to mitigate this risk. This was discussed in detail when we discussed this particular issue.

Carrie elaborated on this example so to say if, as a whole, 90% of the workgroup rates COA as a significant danger, then we should go back to the issue log that we documented previously & discuss how to further mitigate the issue.

Another example was a concern with potential increased customer service calls (to Mailer & USPS) for late mail delivery; due in part, to Informed Delivery raising expectations about when customers should expect the piece.

Recognizing there is the potential for both good and bad in nearly every example, it was pointed out that the next set of questions accentuated the potential positive impacts, such as the potential for increased response rates or for enlarging the audience via user’s abilities to forward the email.

We will continue to review the survey questions next week as well as define the appropriate type of answer category for each one (Yes/No, rate on a scale of 1-5, strongly disagree-strongly agree, etc.)