

PRINT MATTERS

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Make your mailing list count

Did you know there are tons of undeliverable mail that go through the USPS every year, at a cost of more than \$1 billion?

Did you also know that if you mail your publication third class — as 70 percent of JPA's customers do — the odds are very high that your magazine will be thrown away if it has a bad address?

Sobering information indeed, but the good news is that you can do something about it, and without too much heartache.

“Our goal at JPA is to reduce our customers' costs and increase the quality of their mailing lists,” said Postal Advisor Sue Casner. “Our customers' readers are very passionate about their magazines, and therefore really want to receive them. And sometimes it's such silly little things that can keep a magazine from being delivered.”

Significant savings

Because of the variables involved in magazine postal rates, it's not possible to give exact figures on how much each publisher would save by producing a pristine mailing list.

However, Casner ran two examples to get a ballpark idea of the savings that can be achieved when certain addresses are revised (details below). In one case, corrected addresses would save a publisher 5 cents per piece; in the other, the savings were 21 cents per piece *for those revised addresses*.

“Given that many of these are monthly magazines, this can end up being a significant amount of money,” Casner says. “It can really make a difference, especially because everyone is into saving every penny these days.”

So how can mailing lists be improved? The first step is to be sure you're not guilty of either of the two most common errors that are made. Number one on this list is when publishers put the delivery address in the wrong

field on the mailing file. The delivery address must be in the first address field — not the first field on the file, but the first *address* field.



Exceeding our customers' expectations for more than 60 years...

12 quick tips

1. If the address is 35 44th St., do not use a hyphen between 35 and 44.
2. Ste., Apt. and Unit numbers have to be listed after the address.
3. The # symbol is only to be used with Ste., Apt., Unit and other secondary unit designators; do not use it for Highway numbers or street numbers.
4. Intersections are not delivery addresses; an address must have a number and a street.
5. Do not use wrapped text on your mail file.
6. Do not put multiple lines within one cell.
7. Do not abbreviate street names such as Martin Luther King as MLK.
8. Your foreign address file should be separate from your domestic file.
9. Always use a separate field for the country name.
10. Be consistent with the country names you use, i.e. use South Korea throughout the file vs. also using Korea and Republic of Korea.
11. Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands are domestic, not foreign, addresses.
12. If you need help with Canadian, Australian or UK addresses, please see the appropriate links at www.jpapontiac.com. They're under Additional Websites on the home page.

The second biggest mistake is when publishers use incorrect abbreviations on any part of the address. Expressway, Parkway and Highway are three big ones, and you might be surprised to learn that Saint Louis has to be spelled out. To help JPA customers maintain compliance, Casner has put together a handy list of abbreviations (see the Downloads tab at www.jpapontiac.com). She also maintains that the best policy is: "When in doubt, spell it out."



Three key files

Perhaps the best way to improve your mailing list is to review the three files JPA sends each time it processes your list. "Every time we process a list, we give specific feedback to our customers so that their lists can be corrected," Casner explains. "We want to keep the 'no zip+4' number as low as possible so they get the best delivery rate they can."

The first file is a list of bad addresses — addresses that can't be verified or cases where someone has moved and there is no forwarding address. These entries have to be deleted from the mailing list until they are corrected. The second file lists the addresses that have five digit zip codes but do not have the "zip+4" extension. (Incidentally, this is where the cost savings occur; zip+4 addresses go at automated rates, while pieces with just five digit zip codes mail at higher "non-automated" rates.)

It should also be noted that if the

USPS cannot verify an address as good, the piece will not go at the zip+4 rate even if you have the zip+4 listed on your file with the address. If the zip+4 isn't there, it probably means your record has an error, like incorrect spelling or spacing or an improper abbreviation.

You may or may not be aware of the fact that the USPS requires publishers who ship via first class and bulk to update their mailing lists 95 days prior to each mailing. Fortunately, JPA ensures that each of its customers is compliant with this ruling by running each list through the National Change of Address (NCOA) database link. NCOA corrects for changes of address. JPA exports the file that lists addresses that have been updated via NCOA to its customers. The NCOA file is a matching list, not a correction list, so if the address matches what the publisher submitted, it's good. If it doesn't, then the publisher can update his records so they'll be correct for the next issue.

Publishers have a couple of excellent resources at their disposal for finding correct addresses. Two good examples are www.usps.com and <http://usps2.whitepages.com>.

"Ultimately, publishers want their magazines to reach their subscribers, and if their mailing lists aren't correct, their readers are not going to receive it," Casner says. "This is a shame, as most publishers work so hard to produce a quality product."

Casner urges JPA customers to contact their CSRs if they have questions or need further assistance with their lists. "The bottom line is that JPA is very committed to helping its customers keep their mailing lists as current and correct as possible," she says. 

One on one

JPA profile: Curt Davis, offset pressman

Number of years with JPA: 37

Why he loves JPA: "I enjoy the fact that I get to do something that I have always enjoyed doing. In high school I took vocational graphic arts and printing because it was what I always preferred. I really like the different aspects of printing. Plus, running the press itself is pretty cool." Presses can sometimes be a challenge, but Davis says there are never any glitches the JPA crew can't figure out.

Family life: Davis has six children: Tammy, 39; Amy, 33; Kim, 32; Ryan, 27; Ashley, 23; Lindsey, 21. Most of his children live in the Pontiac area. Davis also has 10 grandchildren. The



◀ Curt, Ryan and Tracy

Curt and granddaughter Miley ▼



◀ Ryan, Oliver and Tracy

newest, Dexter, was born at the end of September. September was also significant for the family because Ryan married his fiancé Tracy.

Hobbies: Davis likes fishing, camping and boating. When asked if he had ever caught a big fish, he replied with a smile, "No, just little ones. Oh, and the one that got away." He likes to fish at Lake Bloomington and camp near Morris, Ill. He prefers camping when the weather is nice, i.e., it's not too hot and it's not too cold. He took his children camping frequently when they were young. The kids truly enjoyed it all, particularly waterskiing.

Another activity the kids enjoyed was newspaper delivery. Davis had a route with the *Pontiac Daily Leader*, and the kids helped with delivery when they were old enough.

One cool fact: Davis is really proud of the fact that his daughter, Ashley, served in Iraq for one year as part of the National Guard. Her unit is based in Streator, Ill. "It was scary, for sure, but pretty awesome that she served," Davis said. The family kept in touch via e-mail while she was gone. 📧



Johnson Press of America
800 N. Court St.
P.O. Box 592
Pontiac, IL 61764

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RECIPE

Judy's Chicken

- 4-6 chicken breasts
- Salt and pepper
- 1 can of cream of chicken soup
- 1 can of cream of mushroom soup
- 8 oz of beer
- Swiss cheese slices

Mix the soups and beer in a bowl and set aside. Sprinkle the chicken breasts with salt and pepper, and then place them in the baking pan. Pour the sauce on top of the chicken. Do not cover the dish, and bake at 325 degrees for one hour. Toward the end of the baking time, place Swiss cheese slices on top of the dish. It's delicious with pasta and peas.

Johnson Press of America For quotes, please contact:

Duane Carrell
217.585.6895
217-341-1305 (cell)
duanecarrell@jppontiac.com

Jill Rambo
815.844.5161, ext. 234
jrambo@jppontiac.com

Randy Pennington
815.844.5161, ext. 237
rpennington@jppontiac.com