

BANTA Mailbox

Banta Publications Group ■ 12 Salt Creek Lane, Suite 350, Hinsdale, IL 60521 ■ September 2003

Don't Forget Your ID Statement!

Missing ID statement will likely stop mail

We have had a number of publishers run into trouble recently because they have omitted the ID statements inside their Periodicals rate publications. It is extremely difficult to obtain an exception from the USPS when this occurs, so we thought it appropriate to remind all Periodicals rate publishers to review their internal quality control procedures to insure this information is included in each issue. Publishers who have applied for Periodicals rates and are in the Periodicals Pending status must also meet this requirement.

What is the ID statement and why do I need it?

The ID statement is required by postal regulation. The ID statement provides the USPS with the information that they need to make sure that the magazine is being mailed at the correct rates of postage, contact information should there be any problems with the mail, and information that directs the USPS where to send the address correction notices.

What information must be included in the ID statement? The ID statement must include the following information:

- Magazine title
- Publishing company name and address
- Stated frequency of publication (this needs to be specific, e.g. "monthly" rather than "12 times per year")
- Volume and issue number and issue date (if not printed on the magazine cover)
- ISSN or USPS number
- Address to which address changes should be sent
- Periodicals postage payment statement (e.g. Periodicals postage paid at New York NY and additional mailing offices.)

Where must the ID statement be located inside the magazine? The ID statement must appear in each issue of the magazine. This includes any special issues, such as directory or buyer's guide issues provided they are part of the stated frequency. The ID statement may be located in any one of the following locations:

- In the first five pages of the magazine (the covers count if they are included in your pagination)
- In the last three non-advertising pages
- On the table of contents page

What is the difference between the ID statement and the masthead? These are two totally different things and should not be confused. The masthead is a publishing term and usually includes information regarding the publication, including the magazine title, publishing company name and address, and usually a listing of departments, personnel, subscription rates, etc. It may also include legal information/disclaimers or information that is required for international distribution. The ID statement is strictly for postal use, although many publishers include the ID statement on the masthead page or include the ID statement within other text that is not necessarily required for postal use. For ease in finding the ID statement, it is recommended that this information be separated from any other text.

What happens if the ID statement is omitted or contains errors? If the omission is caught during mail verification, chances are good that the mail will be stopped at that point. The publisher then has a choice to either request an exception from the USPS or to take corrective action to add the ID statement information. Corrective actions can include such things as printing the ID statement verbiage on a label or sticker and affixing the label to the magazine, polybagging a carrier sheet that includes the ID statement information, etc. If an exception is requested, the mail will be held until a ruling is issued on the request, which may take a day or longer and may not necessarily be in the publisher's favor. As mentioned earlier, the USPS does not often grant exceptions to this particular regulation. If the omission is not caught during mail verification, then chances are just a warning letter will be issued.

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Banta Publications Group Distribution Contacts

As a customer, you are encouraged to direct all of your communications to your plant Customer Service Representative. However, there may be occasions when you may need to contact someone in the distribution areas directly. To facilitate this, the following is a list of contacts:

Entire Publications Group

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Greenfield, OH plant

Distribution Manager
Don Anglin
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It's Back!

Filing deadline for Statement of Ownership approaches

It is that time of year again; time to file your annual Statement of Ownership with the USPS. Publishers of Periodicals rate publications that are authorized as General or Requester are required to file Form 3526, Statement of Ownership with the USPS for each magazine title that mails at Periodicals rates. This form must be completed and submitted by October 1 each year. To obtain a copy of the form, log on to www.usps.com, click on Find a Form, then on Periodical Forms, then on PS Form 3526.

If your magazine mails at Standard rates, Package Services rates, is a Periodicals authorized under the Institutions and Societies, State Departments of Agriculture, Foreign Publications, or News Agent Registry, you are NOT required to file this form. If you have filed for Periodicals mailing privileges for any magazine titles and have not yet been authorized (Periodicals Pending status), you are also not required to file a form for these titles.

The form includes information on the ownership of the publication, as well as details regarding the circulation. The form requires that publishers supply information detailing the circulation of the issue published closest to the filing date of the form, as well as the average circulation information per issue for the preceding 12 months. This information may be obtained using your print orders, mailing statements, print invoices, and other records or receipts involving the distribution of your magazine.

You need to account for all printed copies regardless of the method of distribution, including those that are distributed from your offices, stored for future use or have been disposed of. You also need to account for copies that are distributed free (i.e. anything not a paid subscription or a documented request). Examples of these copies would be (but not limited to) comp copies, advertiser copies, copies distributed to prospective subscribers/requesters, promotional copies, and copies sent to recipients whose subscriptions/requests have expired (sometimes called grace copies).

Failure to file this form by October 1 can result in subsequent mailings being held until the form is filed. We strongly encourage our clients to keep track of this circulation information on a consistent basis over the course of the year, so that you are prepared to

complete this form on a timely basis when it is due.

It should be noted that subscriber/non-subscriber counts should be broken out on the mailing statements for each issue during the course of the year. When the USPS performs the audits, they will compare the information on the Statement of Ownership with the mailing statements supplied throughout the year to substantiate the number of free copies claimed on the Statement of Ownership. It is also important to note that reported paid/requested circulation of between 50% (minimum to qualify for Periodicals status) and 60% on the Statement of Ownership would generally trigger a postal audit. That does not mean, however, that your magazine will not be audited if the paid/requested circulation percentage is above this threshold. The USPS may perform Periodicals audits at its discretion and usually does so on at least an annual basis.

In addition to filing the form, publishers are also required to publish the information from the statement of ownership in the related magazine. This information should be published in the issue to which the statement relates, or the issue immediately following. Again, failure to publish this information on a timely basis may result in subsequent mailings being held. Below is a guideline for publishing this information:

| Issue Frequency | Publish in Issue |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| More than weekly | By Oct. 10 |
| Weekly or less, but more than monthly | By Oct. 31 |
| Monthly and all other frequencies | By first issue produced after Oct. 1 |

There are no postal requirements as to the placement, size or format for printing this information in the magazine, as long as the information is complete. Some publishers simply reproduce the completed form itself, while others incorporate the information in a text format.

If you have questions or need assistance in completing this form, please contact your local USPS Business Mail Entry office and ask for their Periodicals mail specialist. You may locate the BME office nearest you by logging on to <http://ribbs.usps.gov/index.html>

Click on Business Mail Entry under the heading USPS Locators & Lookups.

Mailing Show Guides, Directories & Buyer's Guides

Many publishers are searching for efficient, cost-effective options to mail items such as show guides, directory issues, and buyer's guides. There are a number of methods to mail these items, depending on the class of mail of the magazines with which these pieces are associated, and the marketing and delivery needs of the publisher.

If your magazine mails at Periodicals rates: These pieces can be mailed using one of the following options:

1) Bind or tip the piece into the magazine. As long as the piece does not contain any of the "killer characteristics" (such as reference to a catalog, separate ISSN/ISBN number, indicia, product or product sample, separate price or subscription information), the piece should qualify for Periodicals rates and would be included in the ad/edit calculation for the magazine. Care must be taken that you do not exceed the allowable advertising percentage (no more than 75% for any issue for Requester publications, no more than 75% for half the issues per year for General publications).

2) Make the show guide, directory or buyer's guide a separate, additional issue of the magazine. This requires that the publisher file a Form 3510 to change the stated frequency to include the special issue. For example, a monthly magazine would change their frequency to "monthly except twice monthly in December." This change in frequency must be reflected in the ID statement inside the magazine, and the volume/issue numbers must remain sequential including the special issue. The magazine title must remain the same for the special issue and be the most prominent type on the cover of the piece. For example, the title could show "ABC Magazine" in large bold type on the cover, with the description "Special Directory Issue" printed in smaller type above or below the title. Again, care must be taken that you do not exceed the allowable advertising percentage for the issue (see above). For example, show guides are often considered 100% advertising, so this option may not be viable for a Requester publication. Also watch for the "killer characteristics" that would disqualify it from Periodicals rates.

3) Make the show guide, directory or buyer's guide a supplement to the magazine and polybag it together with the magazine. The piece would need to

be endorsed "Supplement to XYZ Magazine" and contain at least 25% non-advertising. This would allow the piece to contain its own title and you may mail these supplements to all or part of your circulation. The supplement would be included in the ad/edit calculation for the magazine. Be aware of the advertising restrictions and "killer characteristics" mentioned above.

4) Make the show guide, directory, or buyer's guide a second part of the magazine and polybag it together with the magazine. This is referred to as Parts and Sections in the postal regulations. The regular issue of the magazine would be considered Part 1 and the guide or directory would be considered Part 2. These endorsements (Part 1 of 2, Part 2 of 2) would need to appear on the cover of all the parts and sections and could not appear on any parts that are mailed by themselves. The magazine title would need to remain uniform on all parts, similar to Option 2 above. This option often works better for guides or directories that do not contain the 25% non-advertising that is required for the supplement option. Both pieces would be included in the ad/edit ratio and the same cautions exist with regards to the advertising limitations and "killer characteristics."

5) Mail the guide or directory at the Ride-along rates. This can be done with either polybagging or binding/tipping into the magazine. This is much less expensive than full Standard rates, which would be paid if the item mailed by itself. The piece would need to meet the physical criteria for ride-alongs, which include not exceeding any dimensions of the host publication or exceeding a weight of 3.3 ounces. An endorsement on the piece is required, e.g. Periodicals Ride-along Enclosed. The guide or directory would not be included in the ad/edit calculation in this example.

6) Mail the guide or directory as a Standard rate enclosure. While this is the most expensive postage of the listed options, it does save some money in that the presort levels are those under the Periodicals regulations since the piece is riding along with a Periodical, and the associated discounts would be greater. This may also be an attractive option from a marketing standpoint or to get speedier delivery by riding

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Online Information

More information on Banta Corporation is available through the company's World Wide Web site at www.banta.com

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is a monthly publication produced by the BANTA Publications Group. Any comments or questions are welcome. Please contact Monica Lundquist of the BANTA Publications Group by phone at 816-792-6370, by e-mail at mlundquist@banta.com, or write to BANTA Publications Group, Mailing & Distribution Services, 3401 Heartland Drive, Liberty, MO 64068-3378.

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If the ID statement is included in the magazine but contains errors or is not in the correct location, it will usually just result in a warning letter unless the errors are substantial in nature or if there have been repeat “offenses.” The publisher may be required to write an exception letter to the USPS to get the mail released.

Since errors or omission of the ID statement is such a serious

postal offense, we strongly encourage our clients to implement internal training and quality control procedures to insure that the ID statement is included in the correct location and with the correct information. With computer-to-plate technology currently in place, it is extremely difficult for this type of error to be caught at the printing plant.

GUIDES & DIRECTORIES continued from page 3

along with a Periodical. Standard enclosures with Periodicals publications must weigh less than 16 ounces and cannot weigh more than 300% of the weight of the host publication. Similar to the Ride-along option, the guide or directory would not be included in the ad/edit calculation in this case.

You may include multiple supplements with a Periodicals rate publication, and you may also include both Parts and Sections and supplements in the same issue. Ride-alongs are limited to one ride-along per copy and may have higher cost implications for any copies distributed to foreign countries via the USPS.

There are implications to these options as far as distribution of any additional copies over and above what is mailed with the Periodicals rate publications, particularly if you are mailing the guides or directories (along with the magazine) to non-subscribers.

If your magazine mails at Standard or Package Services rates: You can mail these guides and directories using all of the options listed above, however the postal regulations for doing so are far more relaxed. You do not need to worry about the content of the guide or directory, any endorsements, or any advertising restrictions. Basically, you can mail these guides and directories along with the regular issue of the magazine either by binding/tipping it in or polybagging with the magazine without having to file any forms, include endorsements, or change the appearance of the piece. You do need to be careful to insure that only one indicia is out-

wardly showing; that which will be used to mail the combined piece. For example, if you have your regular indicia for the magazine but there is also an indicia printed on the guide or directory, you would need to obscure the indicia on the guide or directory so that it is not outwardly visible. You also need to closely monitor the combined weight of the magazine and guide/directory. A combined weight of less than one pound keeps the mailing at the Standard rates of postage. Once the combined weight hits a pound or more, then it becomes Package Services mail, which is subject to higher rates and has different regulations, different indicia wording, and different handling of undeliverable mail.

This summary does not cover all the pertinent postal regulations. Regardless of the class of mail, these options can get complicated. If you are interested in pursuing any of the options, please contact your plant client service representative or the plant distribution manager for more details. As always, we strongly encourage you to discuss these ideas in detail and provide samples or mock-ups prior to production to prevent any problems or surprises. Watch for a future article with more details on “killer characteristics” for Periodicals mail.

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