

BANTA Mailbox

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Periodicals HOW & WHEN

Application for Periodicals privileges

Publishers often have questions regarding how and when to apply for Periodicals mailing privileges. These questions may arise for new start-up publications or for existing publications that currently mail at Standard or Package Services rates.

Generally, Periodicals postage rates are less expensive than Standard or Package Services rates, so this class of mail is attractive to most publishers. However, the postal regulations and qualification criteria are also very complicated, and there are restrictions to the content allowed. This complexity, along with the record keeping required, may be too daunting for some publishers, and they may elect not to pursue Periodicals privileges as a result. In some cases, particularly for non-profit mailers, Periodicals postage can actually be more expensive than Standard rates. This is particularly true of publications that are lower in weight and

advertising content due to the way Periodicals rates are currently structured.

While the USPS published delivery standards for Periodicals mail show a faster delivery time than that for Standard or Package Services mail, in reality, the delivery time is essentially the same. Visit any postal processing facility and it is very common to see all this mail being processed together, so there is really very little difference in delivery times.

If you do decide to pursue Periodicals privileges for your publications, the first step is to set up a meeting with the Periodicals mail expert at your local [Business Mail Entry](#) office. This meeting is beneficial to establish a relationship with the BME office, whose personnel will be conducting the ultimate authorization audit. These experts can help you review the requirements for

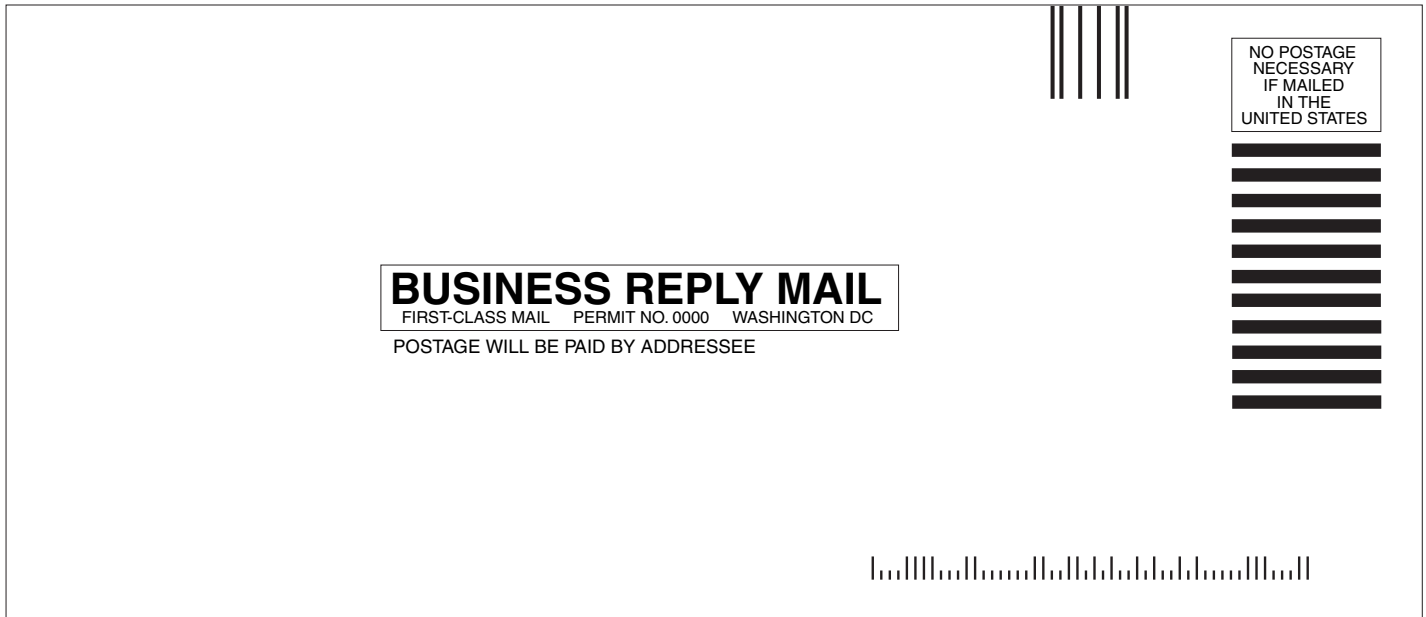
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Banta Mailbox is a monthly publication produced by the Banta Publications Group. Any comments or questions are welcome. Please contact Monica Lundquist of the Banta Publications Group by phone at 816-792-6370, by e-mail at mlundquist@banta.com, or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

Reply card design



Many publications include reply cards, whether they are advertiser reply cards or reply cards to be sent back to the publisher. These reply cards may be bound or tipped in. They may be blow-in cards, or may be part of a furnished insert, cover wrap or cover tip, or label carrier. They may also be part of a supplement, ride-along or Standard enclosure. There are complex regulations surrounding the design of these reply cards, and the design can impact not only the postage rate paid for the returned cards, but also can impact deliverability and response rates. As you can see, it is important that publishers are aware of and

understand these regulations, so they can assist their advertisers with the design of the cards and to insure their own cards meet postal requirements.

Fortunately, there are a number of postal sources available for assistance in designing these cards. One source is the online templates available on the USPS web site at:

For Business Reply Cards (publisher or advertiser pays the return postage): http://pe.usps.gov/mpdesign/mpdfbr_intro.asp

For Courtesy Reply Cards (sender pays the return postage): http://pe.usps.gov/mpdesign/mpdfcr_intro.asp

There is also a template [Notice 67](#)

available in hard copy from your local Business Mail Entry office.

The USPS also has Mailpiece Design Analysts (MDA's) that can assist with design of these pieces or review existing pieces. Publishers can locate the MDA nearest them by logging on to http://pe.usps.gov/mpdesign/mpdfbr_mda_lookup.asp. The best way for the MDA to assist is to provide a sample or mock-up of the proposed card in .pdf format via e-mail.

There is also a publication, Designing Letter and Reply Mail, available from the USPS on the web site at <http://pe.usps.gov/cpim/ftp/pubs/Pub25/pub25.pdf>.

As always, we recommend that any component including these cards be submitted to your plant client services manager to be evaluated, both for manufacturing specification compliance, and for postal compliance. ■

CAPS Reminder

We want to take this opportunity to once again remind you to make your application for the [CAPS](#) postage payment program. As we mentioned in the [January issue](#), CAPS will be required for participation in our upcoming co-mailing program. In addition, CAPS has numerous benefits to publishers even if your titles are not eligible for co-mailing. ■

Banta Publications Group Distribution Contacts

As a customer, you are encouraged to direct all of your communications to your plant Account Manager. 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:

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UPS expands delivery services



UPS has expanded their Saturday delivery service and also offers an earlier delivery time for its 2nd Day Air A.M.® service.

UPS now offers a 10:30 a.m. delivery guarantee on its 2nd Day Air service, rather than the noon guarantee previously in place. They have also expanded the second day service to an additional 9,300 ZIP codes, bringing the total available service area to 26,800 ZIP codes.

A Saturday delivery option has also been added to the 2nd Day Air service. Previously, Saturday delivery was available only on Next Day Air shipments. The new 2nd Day Air Saturday delivery service comes at a premium price of \$12.50 per shipment.

For more information regarding these new service options, log on to http://ups.com/pressroom/us/press_releases/press_release/0,1088,4646,00.html

Hurricane address updates

Although the USPS has restored delivery service to most of the areas devastated by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, there are still some ZIPcode areas for which the USPS is not accepting Standard or Periodicals mail. Some of your subscribers may report that they are able to receive mail, but that does not necessarily mean that you are able to send Standard or Periodicals mail to them. Until the USPS lifts these restrictions, we are unable to send your magazines or catalogs to these areas unless they are mailed First-class, Priority, or Express Mail. The USPS updates the listing of restricted areas daily, and you can access this information by logging on to <http://www.usps.com/communications/news/serviceupdates.htm>.

A significant number of people have moved from the hurricane affected areas, either permanently or temporarily. Many of these people have filed change of address notices with the USPS. Since you have not been able to

mail to some of these areas, you may not have this updated address information through the normal channels, such as correction notices from the USPS.

You may want to consider National Change of Address (NCOA) processing of your mailing list to obtain these address changes. This would allow you to mail to those people who have moved out of the delivery restricted areas and to get updated addresses for anyone who has filed a change of address notice with the USPS, regardless of whether they are in the hurricane affected areas or not. Depending on what your current methods are of updating your addresses, you may want to do NCOA processing for your entire mailing list or just a portion of the list.

For further information on processing your mailing list for NCOA, contact your Banta List Services account representative or your plant client services manager. ■

Application for Periodicals privileges

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Periodicals privileges and discuss your specific publication to help you plan for the necessary documentation and application steps. They can also assist you in the application process itself and to answer questions on content related issues.

The USPS also has a [guidebook](#) available that is very helpful to explain the application process. The guidebook includes the application forms and information regarding documenting subscribers and requesters. The USPS also offers a [Quick Service Guide](#) for a brief overview.

One of the qualification criteria is that at least 50% plus one copy of the total circulation must be distributed to people who have either paid for or requested the magazine, and the publisher must be able to document these payments and requests. Since the eligibility audit is usually scheduled shortly after the application is filed, it is best to wait to apply for Periodicals privileges until you are close to the 50% paid/requester level.

After the Periodicals application has been filed, the publication enters what is called "Periodicals Pending" status. During this time, the mailpiece is prepared as a Periodical, but Standard (for pieces less than one pound) or Package Services (for pieces one pound or more) rates must be paid on each issue until the authorization is granted. Once authorization is received, the USPS will issue a refund of the difference between the Periodicals and Standard or Package Services postage. Publishers are eligible for this refund only on the issues that meet all the qualification criteria, including the paid/requester criteria. For this reason, there is no benefit to making the Periodicals application too much in advance of when the publication meets the 50% paid/requested threshold.

The guidebook also contains information on the documentation criteria

for internet and telemarketing requests. This is important information, particularly for start-up publications. It is important that as you build your circulation, you are also planning for proper postal documentation of any requests coming in through internet or telemarketing campaigns. Again, this is where the initial meeting with the BME office can be invaluable.

If you are unsure as to whether your publication would benefit from Periodicals mailing privileges, it is best to have your mailing list analyzed. To arrange for this analysis, contact your Banta List Services account rep, your plant client services manager, or your Banta sales rep. Some basic Periodicals qualification criteria:

- Must be published at least four times per year or more frequently.
- Must be issued from a known office of publication.
- Must be formed of printed sheets.
- At least 50% plus one copy of the total circulation must be distributed to people who have paid for or requested the publication (newsstand sales count).
- Must be primarily informational in nature and not promotional, (i.e., the magazine can't be for the primary purpose of promoting products or services of the publisher). ■

Postal Reform Legislation Passes in Senate

[Postal reform legislation](#) passed on Thursday February 9, 2006 in the United States Senate by Unanimous Consent, which means the bill passed with no recorded vote.

The House version of the bill (HR.22) passed last summer. Since there are major differences in the two bills, it must now go to Conference Committee to work out the final details and language. The final bill will then go to the White House for approval.

In the past, President Bush has said he would veto this bill unless it is revenue neutral, and some negotiation efforts before the bill was passed may have included some new language in this regard. The extent of any changes to the proposed legislation will not be known until it comes out of Conference Committee.

Even with any shortcomings this bill may have, overall it should be good for mailers as it is expected to contain some relief of USPS financial obligations and includes rate caps for the future. We will keep you posted. ■

Forward to a friend!

Registrations for the digital Banta Mailbox can be accepted at <http://mailbox.bantapubnet.com>.

BANTA Mailbox