Cleaner Lists. Higher Response. More Savings.

Doing Business Smarter

Doing business smarter and more efficiently is always a goal for every company—but with budget cuts, downsizing, and shrinking profits, it's more important today than ever before. The companies that are overcoming the current economic challenges and are still seeing revenue growth are the same ones that continuously analyze their workflow processes, identify ways to optimize those processes, and implement the necessary changes for optimization. Let's focus on one specific process—mailing list cleansing and updating—and review the cost-saving capabilities of today's available solutions.

Opportunity is Knocking on the Mailroom Door

Every year more than 40 million Americans change their addresses. If your mailing lists aren't regularly updated to reflect these ongoing changes, you waste a lot of your marketing budget producing and sending out mail that never reaches its intended target. This type of mail is called Undeliverable-as-Addressed (UAA) by the United States Postal Service (USPS) and, according to the USPS Move Update requirements, all mailing lists must be updated, with undeliverable addresses removed at least every 95 days.

The easiest way to be sure that the addresses on your mailing lists are current and accurate is by applying industry best practices for list cleansing and updating. Fortunately, there are some simple, affordable solutions designed for scrubbing and updating your lists, reducing undeliverable mail pieces before they enter the mailstream, and staying compliant with USPS regulations.

Quality list hygiene solutions can benefit your business in many ways:

- Improve in-home delivery rates with more correct addresses
- Minimize the wasted expense of undeliverable mail
- Comply with USPS list update requirements
- Improve marketing campaign response rates
- Qualify for postal pre-sort discounts

More Data—Better Addresses

Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS), offered by the United States Postal Service (USPS), evaluates and enhances the accuracy of the software that businesses use to match, standardize and correct street addresses. If the software meets the USPS requirements it is deemed CASS Certified.

Many businesses use basic types of CASS-Certified™ address correction software, while others use raw customer input data for address updates. These basic level services do help to maintain the quality of your lists, but there are also innovative and powerful new solutions that take list hygiene to a whole new level, resulting in even higher deliverability rates.

Closing the List Loop

Many undeliverable addresses are simply the result of a typo or data entry error. The more advanced list correction solutions go beyond simply flagging and deleting invalid addresses, to include recognizing typos and keying errors, analyzing and cross referencing data, and automatically fixing errors when possible so your mail still gets to its intended target on the scheduled in-home date.

When developing your cleansing strategy, be sure you create a closed-loop address hygiene process. This will ensure that address updates are automatically sent back to original data sources to eliminate paying to correct the same addresses over and over again, and improve your overall data quality.

Qualify for USPS Pre-Sort Discounts

A solid list updating strategy can save you money in others ways too. For example, many scrubbing tools also offer pre-sorting capabilities and generate the USPS documentation required for automation rate discounts. If you meet volume requirements, pre-sort services will also pick up your mail, saving you on both time and costs.

Poor Address Quality is Costly

Failing to properly update addresses on your mailing list leads to:
• Increased operational costs and wasted marketing dollars
• Higher per piece costs and per customer acquisition costs
• Lower marketing response rates
• Missed pre-sort discounts from the USPS
• Delayed or lost payments
• Unsatisfied customers
• Reduced revenues and profits

Check to confirm that the solution you choose is certified by the USPS for all major pre-sort categories, including:

Standard Mail

Automation Flats
Automation Letters
Cosacked Flats
ECR Flats
ECR Letters
Machinable Letters
Merged Bundles in Sacks
Non-Automation Flats
Nonmachinable Letters

First Class

Automation Flats – Bundle Based
Automation Flats – Tray Based

Leverage Today's Technology

Choosing to leverage today's technology to keep your mailing list addresses as accurate and current as possible is smart business at its best. Be sure to do the necessary research to identify the companies that offer the best list correction and update solutions. Also, look for providers with a reputation for offering a high level of customer support. A close relationship with an expert can ensure you're getting the most productivity out of your solutions.

Sources:
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3. "Online White Paper: Best Practices to Ensure Address Quality." Pitney Bowes. 20 June 2011. http://www.slideshare.net/JMULLAN/bestpracticesensureaddressquality.