

White paper



Shipping & Mailing
Parcel & Mail Sorting

Rethink how you mail.

Third-party presort sparks efficiency and savings



Change creates opportunity.

Think you have mail figured out?
Think again.

Volume shifts, stricter regulations and new technologies have opened the door for innovation. The latest advances offer efficiencies, cost savings and better ways to engage your prospects and customers.

This is especially true for third-party presort services. Service providers have made the investments necessary to maximize discounts, expedite delivery and increase satisfaction, and this presents new opportunities.

Even if you think you've achieved all the efficiencies you can, presort services may be well worth another look.



Get the most out of mail.

- Connect for less
- Prioritize logistics
- Upgrade the customer experience
- Increase visibility
- Strike the right balance

Five trends and innovations that can impact the way you mail

The rise in presort services

Professional mailers understand that market dynamics are constantly in flux. If you don't adapt, you'll miss out, pay more and fall behind. Third-party presort services are popular because they let you innovate without investing a lot in technology or staff.

So what's new?

Less First-Class Mail®

More statements and notices are sent electronically, so mail volumes are down. With smaller job runs, you may not have the volume you need to consistently achieve 5-digit presort discounts on your own. Presort services can commingle your mail with others' to achieve the volume necessary to deliver greater discounts.

More Standard Mail®

Marketers are breaking through the clutter of emails, tweets and posts with highly personalized mailings. To add savings and provide more predictable in-home dates, presort service providers induct mail closer to its final destination.

New USPS programs

Full-Service Intelligent Mail®, eInduction, and Seamless Acceptance are just a few of the new USPS programs designed to streamline mail processing. For each, compliance requires new technologies and workflows. You'll save time and effort by working with a service provider who specializes in mail preparation and knows the ins and outs of new requirements.

Ongoing financial pressure

Over the past five years, organizations have done much to cut costs and eliminate waste. And each year, you're asked to do it again. A relationship with the right provider can help optimize processes, squeezing out every penny without sacrificing service.

01. Maintain a physical connection for less.

Digital engagements have skyrocketed. Facebook boasts over 1.3 billion users. YouTube users watch more than six billion hours of video each month. There are more mobile phone accounts than people in the world.

In this increasingly multichannel world, mail takes on a critical role.

Your customers and prospects will probably notice only a few dozen messages in a day, and will remember as few as four.¹ While physical mail may cost more than digital alternatives, it remains one of the most effective ways to engage customers. Nielsen reports that mail offers the strongest ROI for both retention and acquisition. Consumers open, read and trust mail; and 60 percent of consumers prefer direct mail for marketing messages².

The challenge: When mail accounts for a smaller piece of the overall marketing mix, how do you realize economies of scale?

Consider third-party presort services. Organizations that outsource postal presort have improved ROI and streamlined postal efficiencies.

02. Prioritize logistics.

Mail is a physical communication that consumers can touch and experience. Getting the right message to the right person in a timely fashion requires effective logistics management.

Some presort services providers excel in this area. They provide 24/7 access to service and support, as well as incident tracking and geo-location tracking.

Large national service providers use software to track weather patterns, traffic accidents and road construction. Trucks can be quickly re-routed to avoid possible delays. For example, if the truck carrying your mail has a flat tire in Sheboygan, the presort supplier can locate a nearby vehicle. Your mail will be transferred to the new vehicle and delivered on time.

¹USPS Study, David Mastervich, Print Delivers Conference, 2013

²Epsilon, Consumer Survey, 2012

03. Upgrade your Standard Mail® experience.

While First-Class Mail® volume has declined in recent years, Standard Mail volume is up.

The reason? New technologies and innovative workflows provide more consistent delivery and lower pricing. Now you can engage customers, generate leads and sell products in more cost-effective ways.

More precise delivery windows

Presort networks that span the entire United States can route and induct Standard Mail closer to its final destination. This provides more reliable in-home dates, so you can coordinate multichannel efforts, follow-up effectively and know when mail should arrive.

Just-in-time mail drops

You don't have to wait until you have enough volume to qualify for lower postage rates. Mailers who utilize presort services enjoy the same postal savings on small print runs, and they can get their mail out sooner.

Fixed-rate pricing

Some presort service bureaus offer fixed-rate pricing. This makes it easy to manage costs. Avoid the fluctuations that arise when geographic densities vary from campaign to campaign. Budget more effectively and manage marketing ROI without worrying about volume.



04. Increase your visibility.

Digital marketers track every visit, click and lead. Now mailers can get the same level of visibility if they have the right tools, barcodes and systems in place.

Presort service providers use the Intelligent Mail® barcode and let you monitor the flow of your mail without added hardware or software expense.

- Validate that each piece was mailed on time
- Generate audit trails required for industry regulators
- Mitigate fraud due to misdirected checks and cards
- Avoid cancelling accounts when payment is in the mail
- Coordinate multichannel campaigns
- Answer customer inquiries regarding mail status
- Forecast cash receivables

The same software also improves expense management. High-level reports consolidate data from multiple locations and campaigns. Detailed reports make it easy to allocate postage costs across projects and business units.

05. Strike the right balance.

If you've already invested in presort software and hardware, you may be wondering whether to continue presorting in house or outsource to a third-party provider. It's likely that you can save the most with a hybrid approach.

Presort mail onsite using your own hardware and software. Take mail that qualifies for the lowest 5-digit presort rates directly to the Post Office. Get your presort service provider to pick up the rest. They'll process it with mail from other organizations to achieve the best discounts.

This hybrid approach combines the control of in-house operation with the added savings of commingled mail. Either way, you can track your mail at every step. For many, it's the best of both worlds.

Choosing the right presort service provider

Not all third-party presort providers are the same. Several factors separate the best from the rest:

- **National networks:** A robust national presence adds flexibility and maximizes savings. In many cases, mail can be moved across the network to achieve destination-point discounts.
- **Sheer volume:** You need volume to achieve the best postal discounts. High-volume operations can ensure the maximum density for every ZIP code™.
- **Quality controls:** Savings are important, but only when combined with speed and integrity. You should inquire about total quality management, Six Sigma processes and overall information security.
- **Secure workflows:** Work sites should feature security cameras, limited card access and security fences. Sensitive mail, such as checks and credit cards, should be commingled with other mail so it does not stand out (and is less likely to be stolen or misdirected).
- **Increased visibility:** Information drives results. Top service providers track individual mailpieces through the entire postal system, and offer advance notice of “global hot spots” and other potential disruptions. Such insights, combined with proper spend-management tools, simplify mail management.

Seek new opportunities.

Organizations who once thought they had achieved all they could in mail are starting to re-evaluate their approach. To learn more about your options, please visit pitneybowes.com/mailservices or call 1 888 540 3813.

The top presort service providers invest in mail and continue to innovate. Today, they deliver an experience that is more secure, more controlled and more cost effective than most in-house operations.

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