

Mail consolidation for smaller volumes

There are broadly three types of mail that businesses generate to send to their customers and prospects:

1. System generated documents, such as ERP/Business & CRM systems
2. Direct marketing mail
3. Enterprise Office mail

This article will concentrate on the smaller volumes of system generated mail, direct marketing mail and enterprise office mail.

What is Enterprise Office Mail?

Office mail is traditionally produced as a result of either a customer communication created separately from the ERP/business system or customer communication from an ERP/business system produced locally that requires local business process intervention and/or requires non-automatable fulfilment.

Call centres, customer service or front office teams, of various sizes and structure depending upon the profile of company business, are areas that tend to be the creators of the majority of office mail and other departments such as compliance, finance and contract management tend to generate fewer office mail items.

Postage costs for smaller volumes

Generally this office mail is either taken to a post office with stamps, uses online smart stamps or uses Postage meter (a.k.a. franking machine). In all cases the postage rates attract very little discount and therefore businesses are paying a premium for each mail piece.

System generated mail along with direct mail typically form the larger volumes for most organisations and these cases postal cost is a key factor in managing the cost of producing and sending the customer communication. If the volumes are in excess of 4,000 items per mailing then the postal costs can attract a volume based tariff discount such as Royal Mail's Mailsort 120 product.

For smaller businesses, where the volumes do not meet these types of discount tariff breaks, the postage costs paid will always be at a premium rate.

Postage savings for SOHO / SME mail volumes

There are a number of ways for organisations to leverage better postage rates and thereby a reduction in their overall postal costs by consolidating the various types of office mail and/or smaller volumes of system & direct marketing mail.

There are now at least ten on-line web based services in the UK that now offer a form of mail consolidation service whereby companies are able to download a print & mail "driver" that removes the need to print, fold, insert, frank/stamp and then post an item locally instead produced in a centralised print & mail production facility. These mail consolidation services can improve staff productivity, reduce the unit cost of each mail piece, increase mail quality, customer communications get to market quicker and an audit trail that tracks what was sent, when, where and to whom.

Typically these online services are intended for the SOHO and SME markets but the corporate market is probably the largest source of office mail and these types of web based service platforms can be applied on a corporate intranet to achieve significant mail consolidation and postage savings.

Postage savings for Corporate smaller mail volumes

There are a number of ways that a corporate can stage the implementation of these intranet web based services depending upon the overall volumes, the ability to fully automate the mail fulfilment, the need to handle non-automatable fulfilment and the operational impact of delivering such a mail consolidation service in-house. In the larger corporate we would envisage two types of implementation of such a system or a combination thereof:

1. Internal mail consolidation platform with one or more internal operational mail “hubs” to perform the print and fulfilment.
2. Internal mail consolidation platform with external operational print and fulfilment (out source provider).

Internal Operational Mail Hub

To achieve an effective internal mail hub requires investment in a mail creation process that is managed tightly by a web based mail consolidation service. This requires the ability to be able to print reasonable volumes (work group printers) that are ready for automated fulfilment, then the ability to fold and insert the mail into an envelope. The benefit to an internal mail hub is that for the customer communications that require very specific business process interaction within the local corporate business areas.

External Operational Mail Hub

For customer communications that do not require specific business process interaction, other than the ability review and approve the communication prior to being committed to an external mail hub.

PostStream have great experience of helping organisations reduce the overall cost of their postal budgets, why not give us a call to see what we can do to assist your organisation.

Further information:

Further information can be gained from accessing our website at www.poststream.co.uk

About:

PostStream Limited was formed in 2011 and was established as the exclusive UK Distributor for the unique 21 Grams iSORT postal software platform, providing a number of products and services to the transactional mailing and direct marketing mailing industry throughout the UK.

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