

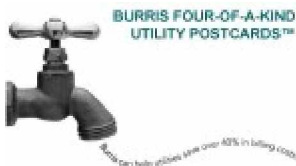
May 2007

## In This Issue...

USPS Rate Increase May 14, 2007

5 Advantages of Postcards Marketing

6 Ways to Pick, Pack, and Ship...Faster



## USPS Rate Increase May 14, 2007

- increase in the price of a first-class stamp to 41 cents and postcard to 26 cents
- issuance of the Forever Stamp (purchase at 41 cents now and will always be good on a one ounce letter in the future)
- implementation of shape based pricing

[Click here to read the USPS Press Release](#)

[Click here for a quick overview and tips on how to minimize the impact](#)

## 5 Advantages of Postcards Marketing

1. **Postcards are the lowest cost item to print and to mail.** Postcards can cost as little as 1 to 5 cents each to print\* and are 15 cents cheaper to mail than letters. You don't need expensive equipment to print your postcards. An ordinary laser or inkjet printer will serve your needs. Postcards don't require an envelope, or additional folding, stuffing, or sealing. Just print, stamp and mail!
2. **Postcards can serve as a coupon or a marketing tracking device.** Track your campaign by requiring customers to bring in the postcard coupon or enter an online coupon code. Postcards can extend your advertising budget by being both a mailer and a coupon, allowing you to measure the effectiveness of each marketing campaign.
3. **Postcards are the smallest piece of mail, often placed on the top of the mail stack.** At a standard size of just 4.25 in. x 5.5 in., the postal carrier will most likely place postcards at the top of the stack to avoid it being lost. Using colored postcards will allow your message to stand out even more. Put information on both sides of the postcard to maximize exposure.
4. **Postcards are more likely to be read than other types of mail or advertising media.** Postcards are quick reads. The average person will read a postcard even when they'll throw other types of direct mail advertising away. Printed photos or colored postcards really grab attention.
5. **Blank Postcards can be printed in any quantity desired (no waste!).** Order in bulk to take advantage of quantity discounts, but only print as many as you need. Save the rest for your next mailing. If you need more, then print more. If you need to make a change to your ad copy, then you won't have any unused printed postcards lying around. If your sheet yields four postcards, then there is no wasted paper.

Four-of-a-Kind   
Postcards

\*Black ink - \$0.02 per side x 2 sides = \$0.04 per sheet/ 4 postcards per sheet = \$0.01 per postcard. Color ink - \$0.10 per side x 2 sides = \$0.20 per sheet/ 4 postcards per sheet = \$0.05 per postcard.



## 6 Ways to Pick, Pack, and Ship...Faster!

If you sell products, order fulfillment is one of the most important functions that your company performs. Done correctly, it can lead to repeat business because your customers know that they can rely on you. The more efficient your company becomes at order fulfillment, the more orders you can handle. Below are the components of a successful order fulfillment department:

1. **Well-Trained Staff** – Train your employees properly on equipment and systems to handle the inflow of orders. Make sure your manager is an experienced communicator who can direct and delegate. Attention to detail is a must at this level.
2. **Sufficient Product Supply** – Maintain an adequate supply of inventory that is organized, available, and ready-to-ship. Group like items together, clearly labeled with item numbers. Analyze customers' buying trends to ensure stock on the most popular items.
3. **High Quality Shipping Supplies** – Equip your warehouse with high quality, compatible supplies such as boxes, packing material, tape and labels. Make sure your boxes are "crush resistant" so that they will survive in transit. Use a laser printer for printing of shipping labels, as inkjet can cause problems with your carrier's scanning equipment.
4. **Flexible Carrier Pickup** – Choose a carrier that will work with your operating hours. Arranging an automated pickup can be convenient and cost-effective. Arrange with carrier to have driver pick-up occur at same time each day. Obviously, the later in the day, the more orders you can get out the door.
5. **Systematic Procedures** – Define policies and procedures. Systematize and streamline. Consider such activities as batch picking, where the same item is picked in large quantities for use in multiple orders. An excellent method of streamlining your shipping process is to have the shipping label and packing list on the same page. This cuts down on errors and saves time.
6. **Smart Technology** – Utilize whatever technology is available to you, including electronic packing lists, automated label/packing list printing and automated order entry. Combining your ecommerce web site and your accounting systems with your order fulfillment streamlines your use of manpower.

Once all of these elements are in place, challenges such as matching packing slip with actual item to be shipped and the shipping label, as well as picking the correct items becomes routine. Efficient order fulfillment systems enable your shipping department to fill orders faster with less error. This will result in lower costs and improved customer service which, in turn, will allow your company to increase sales and improve your bottom line.

## Check Out These Websites...

(In each issue, we'll point you to some websites we think might be of use.)

Business:

[Business Plan Software and Free Sample Business Plans](http://www.bplans.com)

<http://www.bplans.com>



Lifestyle, Entertainment, and Fun:

[Epicurious](http://www.epicurious.com)

<http://www.epicurious.com>

News and Information:

[CNN](http://www.cnn.com)

<http://www.cnn.com>

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