Mail Survey Confirms Importance Of Communication with the USPS

According to a new report just released by Idealliance, results of its Second Annual Mail Industry Survey have underscored the importance participants throughout the mail supply chain place on effective communication with the U.S. Postal Service. The report is available now for free downloading.

"The vast and complex supply chain stretching from paper production to the moment the mailpiece is delivered represents a graphic communications industry that translates into $1.4 trillion annual GDP, 7.5 million jobs, and contributes annual revenues of $154 billion to the U.S. Postal Service," says Idealliance President and Chief Executive Officer David Steinhardt.

The survey, which Idealliance created with valuable input from the U.S. Postal Service, was conducted in February and March of this year in cooperation with the Alliance of Non-profit Mailers, the American Catalog Mailers Association (ACMA), the Association for Mail Electronic Enhancement (AMEE), the Association for Postal Commerce (PostCom), the Envelope Manufacturers Association (EMA), and the National Association of Presort Mailers (NAPM). Each association distributed the survey to its membership.

"Like all interdependent industries, the postal supply chain works best when each component recognizes the importance of collaborating and cooperating with others in the chain to achieve the greatest mutual benefit," says Phil Thompson, Co-Chair of the Idealliance Postal Operations & Technologies Council and Director of Postal Affairs at Quad/Graphics. "We hope the 2017 Mail Industry Survey will prove valuable and constructive to improve the relationship and partnership among all mail supply chain partners, including the U.S. Postal Service."

Get Your Copy of the Report Now

Download the 2017 Annual Mail Industry Survey Report *free at* *https://www.idealliance.org/mailsurvey/*.

"The 2017 survey focused on the relationship between the U.S. Postal Service—as the source of mailing products' processing and delivery—and the links in the mail supply chain, including mail owners, printers, transportation and logistics providers, software companies, and mailing service providers," says Rose Flanagan, Co-Chair of the Idealliance Postal Operations & Technologies Council and Manager of Postal Strategies and Logistics at Data-Mail. "Survey results have confirmed how important collaboration across the supply chain is to all these operations. We've already begun outreach and dialogue with the U.S. Postal Service on the survey responses and the next steps we can take to constructively convert intelligence into action."

Results Segmented

More than 200 individuals from across the mail supply chain participated in this year's survey, with two-fifths (43.3%) identifying their company's primary function as mailing service providers, including lettershops and presort houses. Other respondents included print providers (13.4%), mail owners (11.0%), software providers (9.1%), marketing services/creative and design services (6.1%), and logistics (4.9%). In addition, 7.9% defined their companies as some combination of print, mail service, and marketing service provider.

The survey report includes data on utilization, performance, functionality, accuracy, and ease of use for 22 different postal systems and programs, satisfaction with the USPS on seven functions in mail and shipment processing, and satisfaction with critical U.S. Postal Service systems and business areas. Where possible, and to provide more context, results were

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segmented by the perspective of the responders' business function, e.g., mail owner, software provider, etc.

When asked how the USPS can become an even better business partner, the top six choices by respondents were:

1. Keep postal rates predictable (48.5%)

2. Communicate more effectively on changes to processes and regulations (39.4%)

3. Increase knowledge of USPS personnel to improve accuracy and consistency (39.4%)

4. Improve mail delivery predictability and reliability (34.8%)

5. Apply rules and regulations consistently (34.8%)

6. Collaborate early with the industry on system and software design (34.1%)

Work More Closely

Among numerous open-ended responses from participants that emphasized the desire to enhance communication between the USPS and industry and work more closely with the Postal Service in developing programs and policies were the following:

• *"USPS management and decision-makers would benefit from spending time in mailing industry supply chain shoes to truly understand our businesses and the role the USPS plays as part of our value stream in order to better strengthen the partnership opportunities between the supply chain and USPS for growth and greater efficiencies."*

• *"Talk with and listen to competent mail service providers and mail owners before implementing new rules and regulations."*

• *"Talk to us. Get to know the issues we are having and help support us."*

The survey report was compiled by Idealliance Chief Economist Andrew Paparozzi. For information on Idealliance industry research, call (703) 837-1062 or email apaparozzi@idealliance.org.

FREE full access to download the report is available at *https://www.idealliance.org/mailsurvey/* .

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