



POSTAL NEWS

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MAIL (THE REAL KIND) PUSHES THE ENVELOPE

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Pizza-shaped mail? How about donuts ... or motorcycles? These are just some of the items that will soon make their way to mailboxes near you. Well, replicas of them, that is. On August 10, the United States Postal Service will launch Customized MarketMail™ (CMM), an advertising mail product recognizable from others by their eye-catching, novel shapes.

These distinctly different, literally-outside-the-box-shaped pieces will set their senders apart by visually communicating those mailers' products and services. The local ice cream parlor may appear all the more inviting to a potential customer who holds a model of the real treat that awaits.

"In the battle for audience attention, Customized MarketMail will allow business mailers to differentiate their products in the mailstream," said Nick Barranca, Vice President of Product Development for the Postal Service. "Within certain size, weight, and thickness limitations, Customized MarketMail can be virtually any shape and design the mailer desires. CMM will let advertisers put their creativity to work, designing their mail pieces to deliver high impact, demand attention, and generate greater response rates."

As its name implies, Customized MarketMail must be prepared and mailed in special ways. Business mailers must have or obtain a Standard Mail permit, send a minimum of 200 pieces per mailing, but not necessarily per destinating delivery unit, and dropship or deliver them to the ultimate destination facilities for handling. The postage rates for these distinctive mail pieces will be 57.4 cents for Regular Standard Mail, and 46 cents for Nonprofit Standard Mail. Sending individual pieces or depositing them in mail or collection boxes is not permitted. Mail pieces may be up to 12 inches high by 15 inches long by ¾ of an inch thick and weigh up to 3.3 ounces.

"Customized MarketMail is an exciting new development in an industry that welcomes innovation," said H. Robert Wientzen, President and CEO of the Direct Marketing Association.

“Business mailers are always interested in new creative applications of mail, so the industry is going to welcome this new technique. There is no doubt that CMM is the shape of things to come.”

Mailers' ability to use Customized MarketMail became a reality earlier this month when the U.S. Postal Service Board of Governors approved the proposal for this advertising mail product.

To learn more about the technical requirements for sending Customized MarketMail, log on to www.usps.com, keywords Postal Bulletin, July 10, 2003, issue.

Since 1775, the U.S. Postal Service has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. It is an independent federal agency that makes deliveries to about 140 million addresses every day and is the only service provider to deliver to every address in the nation. The Postal Service receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations, but derives its operating revenues solely from the sale of postage, products and services. With annual revenues of more than \$66 billion, it is the world's leading provider of mail and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world.

The U.S. Postal Service delivers more than 43 percent of the world's mail volume - some 203 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year - and serves seven million customers each day at its 38,000 retail locations nationwide.