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Contact: Media Relations
(202) 268-2155
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DO NOT FEAR FRIDAY

Postal Service offers gift options online to avoid crowds on “Black Friday”

Washington, DC – “Black Friday,” the busiest shopping day of the year, means crowds, lines, traffic jams and headaches. This year, stay home on Nov. 25! Pour a cup of coffee and click your way through all your holiday shopping needs in quiet comfort.

The U.S. Postal Service is looking out for its customers. Greeting cards, postcards, gift cards from more than 20 national retailers, even year-end letters to family and friends. All available at ***usps.com/cardstore***.

“Avoid the crowds and the noise. Log on to *usps.com* and step into a Post Office, shopping center and retail store without having to leave the warm comfort of your home,” said Nick Barranca, Vice President, Product Development.

Buy gift cards and create and send greeting cards at NetPost CardStore. Ask for a package to be picked up and delivered. Buy insurance and print labels – all at a time that’s convenient for customers. One of the most popular federal websites, *usps.com* receives more than 23.5 million visits each month.

NetPost is a suite of three, online products:

- Mailing Online provides the perfect solution for those end-of-year holiday letters and can be sent by First-Class Mail or Standard Mail rates.
- “Premium Postcards” can be created in black and white or glossy, full color to announce new products, send a personal greeting, or announce a move to a new business or residential address.
- CardStore allows customers to send customized greetings cards for any occasion, and add a gift card from more than 20 national retailers.

Customers also may create a more personalized card by uploading a photo and selecting either a folded card with an envelope or a postcard. Once the card is selected, customers easily click through to the page that instructs the Postal Service to mail the card.

Add a gift card in values ranging from \$5 to \$200 from retailers to complete the holiday gift package, including: Toys R Us, AMC Theatres, Blockbuster, Foot Locker, Marriott Hotels, Old Navy, SpaWish, The Sharper Image, Lowe’s, Circuit City, Bed Bath & Beyond, Chili’s Bar & Grill, Macaroni Grill, Barnes & Noble and Bass Pro Shops.

Gift cards must be purchased online no later than Dec. 19 to insure delivery by Dec. 24.

“Hassle-free holidays, courtesy of the US Postal Service. That’s our goal,” Barranca said. “Whether it’s online or in person, we are here to help answer the toughest holiday questions and challenges.”

Since 1775, the Postal Service and its predecessor, the Post Office Department, has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. It is an independent federal agency that visits 142 million homes and businesses every day, six days a week and is the only service provider delivering 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 \$69 billion, it is the world’s leading provider of mailing and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. The Postal Service delivers more than 46 percent of the world’s mail volume—some 206 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year—and serves seven and a half million customers each day at its 37,000 retail locations nationwide.

Its website, usps.com, attracts more than 21 million visitors each month.