



December 8, 2010

## USPS Proposes 10 Categories for Folded Self-Mailers

### Tab Industry Lobby Scores Another Victory!

**ProList, Inc. is an Industry Innovator** in data management and direct mail services solutions.

Unencumbered by the menial task of actually delivering mail, Postal executives have set their sights on creating rules forbidding the few pieces of mail that remain cluttering their otherwise spotless equipment. At a presentation to MTAC (the Mailers' Technical Advisory Committee – we follow it so you don't have to) USPS proposed ten categories of folded self-mailers, presumably to optimize workflow through their sorting equipment. It would, in all fairness, be difficult to fold a piece of paper in a manner that could not be described by one of these categories.

Proposed changes are expected to be published in the Federal Register in the spring, and to take effect in late 2011.

Categories run from the basic (Category 1: Horizontal Fold, Up to One Layer Attachment) to the esoteric (Category 4: Vertical Fold / Oblong, Multi-Layer Attachment) to the ridiculous (Category 10: Double Gate Style / Lunchbag).

All descriptions include detailed specifications including paper weight and tabbing/gluing requirements. The day of the single-tab self-mailer will soon have passed. There are also **no** options for self-mailers with a folded edge on the top.

These changes are currently just a proposal, but we expect they will be adopted largely as presented. Most self-mailers we currently process for our clients will continue to be acceptable, but do not assume that to be the case – please let us evaluate your designs beforehand (always a good idea, anyway). New tabbing rules created for booklet-style selfmailers last year created considerable confusion in the industry. These proposed rules for folded selfmailers don't look to be much simpler. Fortunately, you don't need to guess. We've got a corral full of postal experts over here at ProList. Send us a sample, or just a design idea, and we'll let you know if it works, postal-wise.

[Click here](#) to see all 10 proposed categories.

## Intelligent Mail Saves Client More than Money

### Instead of Digging Through Hampers Full of Returned Mail, Just Push a Button

Well, it wasn't entirely a happy story, but it could have been a lot worse. A ProList client was mailing a two million piece time sensitive campaign to constituents across the country. The lists were assembled from a variety of sources, mostly allied organizations. Of course all lists were sent through NCOA processing both to be compliant with postal regulations and to improve deliverability.

Unfortunately, one of the lists had a lot of old data in it – very old data. A significant number of the people on the list had moved more than 48 months earlier, and the NCOA database only keeps data for 48 months. After 48 months, a move is not recognized as a change. It is important to remember that NCOA processing identifies filed changes, it does not actually confirm the validity of addresses without a current change on file.

In the end, about 200,000 pieces went out with old addresses – too old for NCOA. The mailing went First-Class, so returns started coming back immediately. It was literally being returned by the hamper-load. In a few days the client's mailroom was overwhelmed by more than a dozen hampers of returned mail and they had more campaigns planned using the same lists. How could they possibly identify the bad addresses in time to do another mailing that was coming up in a few days?

Fortunately they had opted to track their mail using the Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb). With IMb tracking, if a piece of mail changes destinations – is either forwarded or returned – The destination zip changes but the mailpiece ID number stays the same. We know from experience how to recognize this, and working with Trackmymail we are able to identify every piece of mail that is forwarded or returned. Since Intelligent Mail provides for piece level tracking, we were able to produce electronic files of all of the returned mail. There was no need to manually go through the returned mail – they could simply dispose of it and use the Trackmymail data to remove those addresses from future mailings. The organization from whom they had obtained the list got the fringe benefit of being able to clean up their list as well.

Over the course of the entire direct mail campaign, our client saved tens of thousands of dollars – maybe hundreds of thousands – simply by using Intelligent Mail and Trackmymail. Are you tracking your mail?

Most of the reasons not to track your mail are gone

No additional barcode is required with the IMb  
Complexity is not an issue, because ProList does the work for you  
Cost is not an issue – our pricing for mail tracking is minimal – in fact we'll provide basic outbound tracking for FREE!

Again, why are you NOT tracking your mail?

Call us for details on our mail tracking services and how you may be able to get your tracking for free.

To learn more about ProList on our website visit: <http://www.prolist.com>  
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