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DIRECT MARKETING SERVICES

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What the Postal Service did for their Summer Vacation ...and you think your summer is boring...

The USPS has a busy summer planned. You may fritter away the warm days of summer going to the beach, or maybe the mountains – the Postal Service will be spending theirs mostly in court. Well, at least it's air-conditioned.

In one recent court decision, the [Postal Service was suing the Postal Regulatory Commission](#) to assert that the discounts they give for presorted mail are fair and justified. The court begged to differ, and decided that presort discounts currently being provided to commercial mailers are too generous, and do not reflect the money saved by the USPS for having this work done by their customers. This is kind of an esoteric case – no one got rich, no one hugged after the verdict was handed down, to the best of our knowledge. This does not bode well, however, for the next rate case. Expect smaller discounts to be approved by the PRC, which may make your postage a little higher. A lot of details remain to be sorted out.

Since they were on a legal roll, and they had their go-to-court clothes all cleaned and pressed, the USPS decided to see if they could bring up their exigent rate case again. Exigency followers will remember that back in 2010 the Postal Service tried to tack on an extra 5% or so to the rate case to cover the exigent circumstances surrounding the financial crisis. The PRC said no, the courts said maybe and the industry had a hissy fit. The USPS decided not to push it at that point. The exigent rate case is a toddler now, three years old, and the Postal Service is testing it in the courts again to see if they can maybe trot it out in the next rate case. Mailing industry organizations have already created coalitions, task forces, and MySpace pages in [opposition to the increase](#). Many graphs have been drawn. It's anyone's guess how all of this may turn out.

With the Postal Service running out of cash in a couple of months, [congress will get involved](#), too, and some kind of postal legislation seems inevitable. Expect it to be the least it can be.

Expect Postal legislative action (apologies to the word "action") this fall and a new rate case early 2014 that may encompass some of these court actions. Whee! It's going to be a turbulent few months.

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