



October 6, 2011

**The Postal Service is in the News!!**

...this can't be good...

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



Working in the mailing business is usually a pretty quiet life. We mail stuff, the Postal Service delivers it, our customers get responses, do good with their money, and hire us to mail more stuff. It's the circle of life. Generally no one much fusses about it.

Now you can hardly turn on the TV without seeing Pat Donohoe (pronounced Dah-no-hoooo for reasons only he understands). He is almost certainly the most famous Postmaster General since Wilford Brimley.

Of course all of the most recent hoopla surrounds the precarious [financial position](#) of the USPS. As postal experts, we feel it is essential to keep our customers informed on the latest developments, expectations, and actions that they can take.

For better or worse, the fate of the Postal Service is in the hands of Congress, and, shockingly, has become yet another pawn of partisan politics. There are currently [three postal bills](#) floating around, all of them going pretty much nowhere. Other than stopgap measures to prevent a Postal Service shutdown in the near term, no dramatic movement is expected anytime soon. PMG [Donohoe has suggested](#) some fairly radical measures including extensive layoffs, eliminating Saturday delivery, and relaxed service standards for First-Class Mail, most of which require congressional approval. Don't hold your breath on a conclusion to this "crisis" anytime soon.

Quality Service Guaranteed!



Still, even with so much up in the air there are a few things mailers can and should bring into their planning now:

- The Postal Service has reduced some nonunion positions and modified some of their distribution network already. Postal employees are generally not a real happy crowd at the moment. Possibly as a result, [we have seen very slow delivery times](#). Make no assumptions about when your mail is being delivered – track it. And, if your mail is time sensitive, allow extra time for delivery.
- Because the USPS distribution network is being reconfigured, do what you can to bypass it. Drop shipped and commingled mailings are seeing much better delivery than mail transported by USPS. You'll save some postage and get more consistent delivery. If you are not commingling your mail today you should give it serious consideration.
- Postage rates are almost certain to rise, possibly as soon as January, and look for the "exigent" rate case to raise its ugly head again, allowing rates to rise in excess of the CPI. The Postal Service was trained in how to say "mother may I?" in their last attempt. Expect them to prevail this time. You can likely count on an overall rate increase of probably at least 5% with some subclasses (nonprofit; flats) likely to get hit harder. This may be a particularly good time to get your lists cleaned up to get rid of duplicates and old addresses to help mitigate some of the increased costs.

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Of course none of this is certain. The action congress takes or fails to take could greatly impact the outcome. Still, it's always a good idea to track your mail (we provide that for free at ProList...I'm just saying'), clean up your lists, and look into ways to reduce postage.

Need some help or guidance? Give us a call. That's what we do!

To learn more about ProList on our website visit:  
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