



# National Postal Forum

## Mail Prep & Entry Using USPS Data Files

*May 4, 2026*

# Industry use of USPS Data Files for Efficient Mail Prep and Entry.

*Successful In-Home Results for Marketing Strategies and Compliance Mailings.*

**Moderator:** Deborah Damore, GrayHair Software

## **Panelists:**

- Adam Koester – BCC Software
- Rose Flanagan – Data-Mail
- Michelle Zalewski – ALG Worldwide Logistics
- Dana Fields - Bank of America

# The Mail Supply Chain: A Collaborative Ecosystem

Behind every successful mail campaign is a multi-disciplinary supply chain supporting the Business Mail Owner.



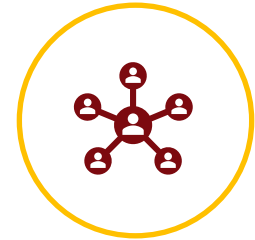
**Strategy & Creation:**  
Marketing, Advertising, and promotional technology



**Data & Intelligence:**  
Address quality, list services, and mail tracking.



**Physical Production:**  
Paper, envelopes, ink, and manufacturing



**Distribution and Logistics:**  
The United States Postal Services and logistics Providers.

## Our Focus:

We will explore three functional areas of data, mail preparation and entry through the lens of our expert panel.

# Agenda: How we bridge the Gap – Three Pillars of Data-Driven Mail

## Software

- Data Integrity & File Generation
- USPS Drop Ship Product files

## Print Production

- Compliance with USPS DMM regulations
- Execution of mailer vision
- Postage Validation

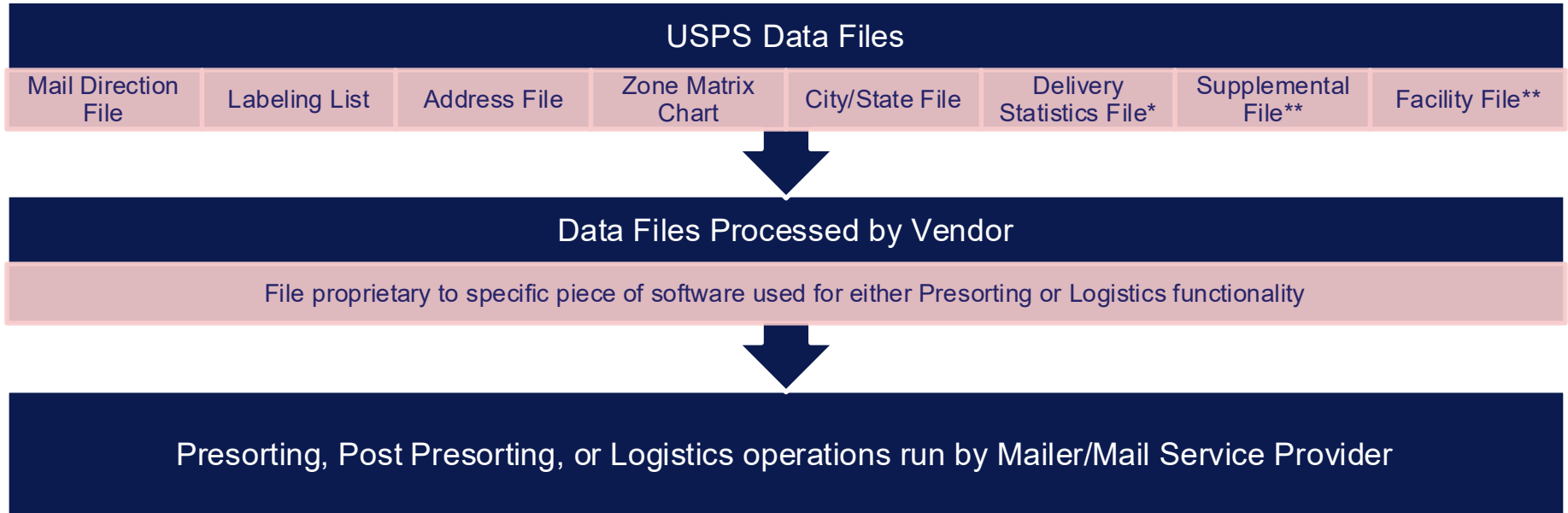
## Mail Logistics

- Strategic Entry orchestrating the “handoff” between the Mail Service Provider (MSP) and logistics vendors for optimized drop-shipping
- USPS final mile delivery

# Software Developer Use of USPS Data Files

- While there are multitudes of USPS files needed in addressing and presort, we are going to focus on the Labeling List and Drop Ship Product Files
- Software vendor upstream role
- Software Ingest, Test, Implementation
- Software Customers

# The Family & Life Cycle of Drop Ship Product Files



## 2026 Labeling List and Mail Direction File Schedule

	AIS City/State and Delivery Stats Publish Date** (Date available on EPF)	Labeling Lists, Drop Ship Product, and Zone Matrix Publish Date**	City/State, Delivery Stats, Labeling Lists, Drop Ship Product, and Zone Matrix Begin Usage Date	City/State, Delivery Stats, Labeling Lists, Drop Ship Product, and Zone Matrix Mandatory Usage Date	City/State, Delivery Stats, Labeling Lists, Drop Ship Product, and Zone Matrix Expiration Date***	Last Permissible Mailing Date / Accept 8125 of Old Address (Exp Date + 30 days)	Release Cycle Types*
	(Preliminary Publish Date)	(Publish Date)	(Effective Date)	(End Grace Period)	(Expiration Date)	(Exp Date + 30 days)	
1	11/12/2025	12/1/2025	1/1/2026	2/1/2026	2/28/2026	3/30/2026	Major
2	12/17/2025	1/1/2026	2/1/2026	3/1/2026	3/31/2026	4/30/2026	Minor
3	1/14/2026	→ 2/1/2026	→ 3/1/2026	4/1/2026	4/30/2026	5/30/2026	Minor
4	2/18/2026	3/1/2026	4/1/2026	5/1/2026	5/31/2026	6/30/2026	Major
5	3/18/2026	4/1/2026	5/1/2026	6/1/2026	6/30/2026	7/30/2026	Minor
6	4/15/2026	5/1/2026	6/1/2026	7/1/2026	7/31/2026	8/30/2026	Minor
7	5/13/2026	6/1/2026	7/1/2026	8/1/2026	8/31/2026	9/30/2026	Major
8	6/17/2026	7/1/2026	8/1/2026	9/1/2026	9/30/2026	10/30/2026	Minor
9	7/15/2026	8/1/2026	9/1/2026	10/1/2026	10/31/2026	11/30/2026	Minor
10	8/12/2026	9/1/2026	10/1/2026	11/1/2026	11/30/2026	12/30/2026	Major
11	9/16/2026	10/1/2026	11/1/2026	12/1/2026	12/31/2026	1/30/2027	Minor
12	10/14/2026	11/1/2026	12/1/2026	1/1/2027	1/31/2027	3/2/2027	Minor

\* Major = major changes to the labeling lists (3-digits, 5-digits (schemes)), Minor = tweaks to existing 5-digits (schemes)

\*\* Intended usage to align with pre-sort directories

\*\*\* Expiration date is based on mail induction date

All Release Types now may be Major with changes to 3D and 5D Monthly.

Updated: September 22, 2025

# USPS Monthly Data Effective Dates

Mail Postage Date of 3/27/26, Mail Entry Date of 4/1/26 – 4/6/26

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
January Effective	Month 1	Month 2										
February Effective	Published	Month 1	Month 2									
March Effective	→	Published	Month 1	Month 2	←							
April Effective		→	Published	Month 1	Month 2	←						
May Effective				Published	Month 1	Month 2						
June Effective					Published	Month 1	Month 2					
July Effective						Published	Month 1	Month 2				
August Effective							Published	Month 1	Month 2			
September Effective								Published	Month 1	Month 2		
October Effective									Published	Month 1	Month 2	
November Effective										Published	Month 1	Month 2
December Effective											Published	Month 1

# Normal Schedule of events to release Monthly Data (Vendor)

Data is fully published by USPS for consumption by Industry and Vendors. Vendors download data and begin internal processes.

First effective date of data. Following month's data is published by USPS. (Build/test cycle begins again.)

End of effective period for data. (Expiration date.)

Data is built by Vendors. Internal testing begins.

Data testing is complete. Posted to customers for download. Customers are notified of new files.

Following month's data has completed testing and is released to customers. Current month's data removed from download locations.

Following Month's Data becomes effective.

Publish Month

1<sup>st</sup> Effective Month

2<sup>nd</sup> Effective Month

0 days    1 day    5-8 days    ~30 days    ~35-38 days    ~60 days    ~90 days

Days since initial data publication

<https://postalpro.usps.com/LabelingListandMDFSchedule>

# Major Changes to Labeling Lists recently

## ➤ SCF Shape Based Lists

- Letters: L005
- Flats: L016 NEW Jan 2026
- Parcels: L051

## ➤ Cleanup of unused lists & MDF

- Deprecated Lists
- L601 (NDC) will be repurposed for RPDC
- All A=ADC, B=NDC discount nomenclatures will be removed from MDF in the July publish effective Aug.
- The last grace period for entering ADC pallets will be January 1, 2027.

## What's next for July 2026?

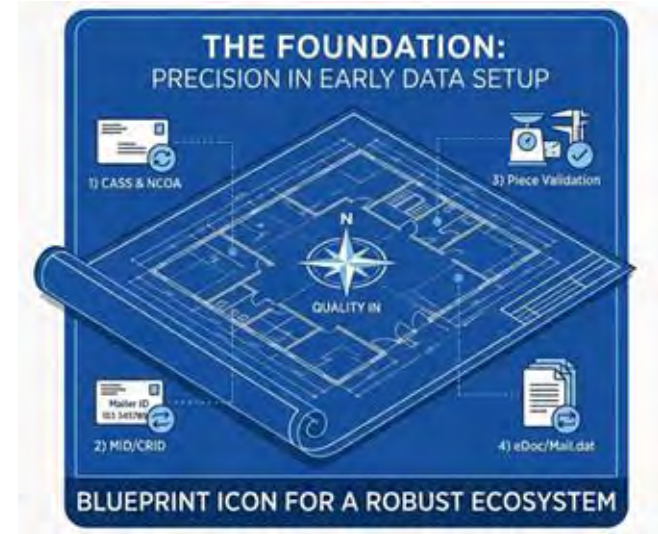
- Seven label lists will be eliminated
  - L004, L009, L010, L015, L201, L602, L605
- Timeline for Labeling List Deletions
  - DMM Changes will be published July 12, 2026
  - The last publication for these lists will be the November Postal Bulletin.
  - Last effective date for these lists will be November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026.
  - The last grace period date to use these lists will be December 31, 2026, and they will no longer be seen or available.

# Print & Mail Production Vendor

- Not inclusive of all mail campaign functions/suppliers
  - Focus on Presort, Production, Labeling
- Print Vendor customer agreements
- Print Vendor scheduling
- Printer/Mailer Vendor turnover

# The Foundation — Precision in Early Data Setup

- **Data is the blueprint for production.**
- **The Principle:** Successful mail starts with the data file. If the electronic documentation (eDoc) doesn't perfectly mirror the physical pieces, trays/sacks and pallets, the ecosystem breaks at the entry gate.
- **The Collaborative Benefit:** The mailing provider must ensure the Mailing Software data aligns with the Mailing Production data to eliminate "stop-and-fix" labor costs.



## 20-Day Schedule

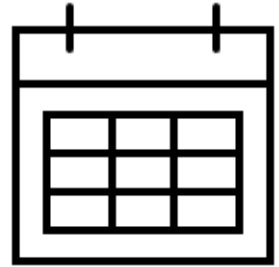
In-Home Date of 4/6/26 – 4/09/26

Job is scheduled into Mail Service Provider portal

- Mail Files are due 3/16 - Day 0
- Presort 3/17
  - Determine Labeling list [March File effective 3/01]
- Data counts, reports, samples sent to customer for Approval 3/19

Live production begins 3/23

- Data and postal documentation sent to production machines



# 28-Day Schedule

- **Logistics data sent to freight/mail consolidator**
  - Mail.dat / XML message sent with job details 3/25/2026

- **Postage is Paid 3/26/2026**



- **USPS Postal Facility Appointments (FAST®)**

- Dates agreed with logistics vendor, Appointments set by logistics

- **Scan mail to outbound Logistics Supplier – begin tracking**

- **Event Planned 4/10/2026 – 4/12/2026**

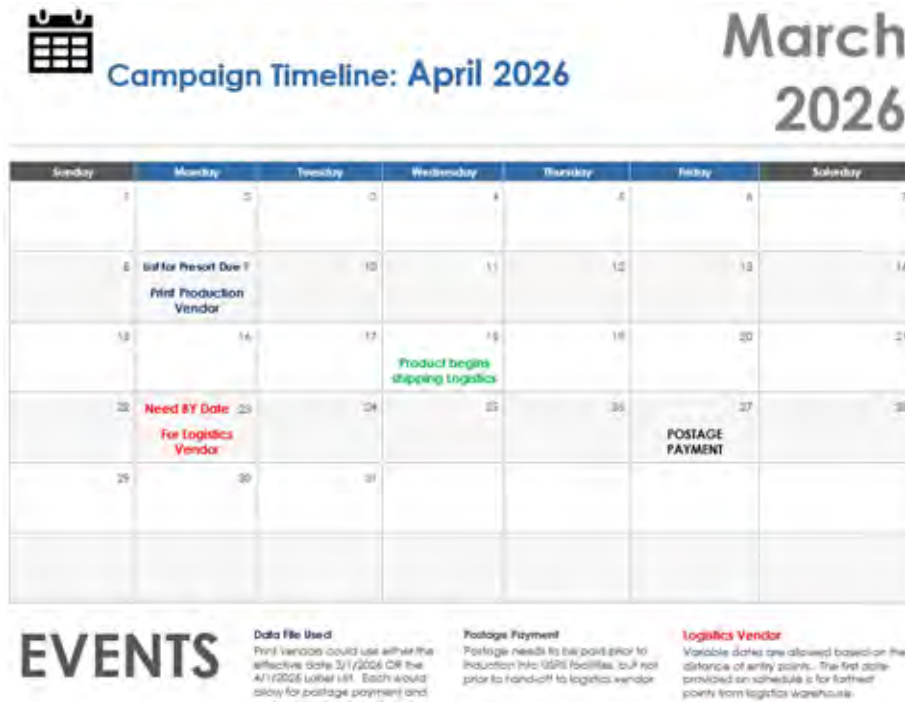


# Logistics Vendor

- **Logistics Vendor / Printer agreements**
- **Acceptance, Warehousing,**
- **Logistics Vendor scheduling**
- **Labeling and Delivery**

# Freight Consolidation Process (Date Calculation)

The Mail Service Provider (MSP) works with the Freight/Consolidation Vendor to determine **entry** dates and **need by** dates to target their customer “sale” and “In-Home Dates”.



Scheduling begins in March and continues into April for a sale window of 4/13 - 4/17.



Continued to April

# Freight Consolidation Process (Date Calculation)



Campaign Timeline: April 2026

April  
2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	SCF Drop Dates 3	SCF Drop Dates 4
SCF Drop Dates 5	SCF Drop Dates 6 In-Home Window	In-Home Window 7	In-Home Window 8	In-Home Window Call Center Plans 9	Call Center Plans 10	11
12	Sale Date Call Center Plans 13	Sale Date Call Center Plans 14	Sale Date Call Center Plans 15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

## Key Dates:

Need BY Date: 3/23

SCF Drop: 4/3 – 4/6

In-Home Window:

4/6 – 4/9

Sale Dates:

4/13 – 4/17

## EVENTS

### In SCF Dates

Logistics Vendor creates In-USPS dates based on USPS published service dates from SCF entry, aligning some entries with actual service

### In-Home Date

In-Home Dates agreed to with mail owner/customer, provided either directly by mail owner or print production vendor.

### Sale Date / Call Center

Sale Date/Call Center – objective date for consumer action provided to Print production vendor or directly to logistics vendor.

# The Engine — The Value of IV-MTR

**What is IV-MTR?** Informed Visibility® Mail Tracking & Reporting provides near real-time data on every mailpiece, bundle, and container.

## Operational Visibility:

- **Predictive Delivery:** Moving from "it should be there soon" to "it will be in-home on Tuesday."
- **Agility:** The ability to pivot downstream operations (like call center staffing) based on actual mail flow rather than estimates.
- **The Collaborative Benefit:** It gives the Mail Owner, MSP, and Logistics provider a "Single Source of Truth."



# Freight Consolidation Process (Date Calculation)

When a Mail Service Provider (MSP) provides mailing data to a freight consolidator the MSP will “upload” a mail.dat or something similar that contains the mailing details:

- Container ID
- Entry Point Details (Name, Type, Locale Key)
- Pallet IMB
- Pieces
- Weight



Display Id	Id	IMCBarcode	Location	Gross Wt	Pieces	Trays	Grouping	Pallet As Marked	Delv Entry Point	Disc Type
P00007	000335	99M200787600000060417	Mailer Inventory	382.4 lbs	8,396	36		SCF TACOMA WA 983	SCF-SEATTLE PRIORITY MAIL ANNEX-980324894-(008251)	SCF
P00008	000372	99M200787600000060416	Mailer Inventory	279.4 lbs	6,002	26		SCF SEATTLE WA 980	SCF-SEATTLE-981681899-(Z17427)	SCF
P00009	000399	99M200787600000060414	Mailer Inventory	697.3 lbs	16,110	60		SCF BAKERSFIELD CA 932	SCF-BAKERSFIELD-933809000-(Z20171)	SCF

# Freight Consolidation Process (Date Calculation)



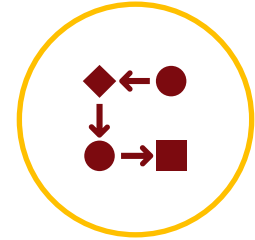
**Truck arrives at the freight consolidator**



**Because the data is in our system our team unloads and can scan the pallet IMB (99M)**



**We utilize this data to confirm Postage Payment and build outbound loads**



**It is during the load planning where we can catch any incorrect entry points assigned by the customer.**

# Freight Consolidation Process (Validation)

Example of incorrect data:

IMCBarcode	Location	Gross Wt	Pieces	Trays	Grouping	Pallet As Marked	Delv Entry Point
99M902566229000155940							
99M902566229000155940	Delivered	436.0 lbs	53				SCF-MOBILE ANNEX-366029700-(009166)

IM Barcode	Discount Type	Facility Name	City	St	Zip	Pallets	Gross Wt	Pieces
99M902566229000155940								
99M902566229000155940	SCF	PHILADELPHIA	PHILADELP...	PA	191769...	1	436.00	53

# Freight Consolidation Process (Validation)

Display Id	Id	IMCBarcode	Location	Gross Wt	Pieces	Trays	Grouping	Pallet As Marked	Delv Entry Point	Disc Type
000008	001286	99M107812178021287167	Mailer Inventory	238.6 lbs	6,702	23		GREENWOOD SC 29646	SCF-GREENVILLE-296073731-(004291)	SCF
000009	001287	99M107812178021287168	Mailer Inventory	251.1 lbs	7,074	24		GREENWOOD SC 29649	SCF-GREENVILLE-296073731-(004291)	SCF
000033	001288	99M107812178021287169	Mailer Inventory	214.1 lbs	5,789	25		GREENVILLE SC 287	SCF-GREENVILLE-296073731-(004291)	SCF
000022	001289	99M107812178021287170	Mailer Inventory	470.0 lbs	13,520	52		GREENVILLE SC 296	SCF-GREENVILLE-296073731-(004291)	SCF
000034	001290	99M107812178021287171	Mailer Inventory	262.3 lbs	7,355	26		GREENVILLE SC 296	SCF-GREENVILLE-296073731-(004291)	SCF

When our operations team assigns a pallet to an outbound load we can determine if the entry point on the pallet is good or if that mail goes to a different facility.

Mailing Key: 469438 Job ID: 37030000 Job Name: Vyve August 25 Total ProNo Count: 34  
 IB Load Key: [dropdown] [X] [refresh] IB Arrived: [input] Staging Loc: [input] Pallet Count: 34

ProNo: 17496000  
 GrossWt: 238.58 Pieces: 6702  
 Pallets: 1 Trays: 23  
 eInduction

Entry Points  
 Entry Point: GREENVILLE [dropdown]  
 Discount Type: SCF [dropdown] [X]  
 Entry Dates: 7/25/2025 [dropdown] - 7/28/2025 [dropdown]

Mail Class: STANDARD MAIL [dropdown]  
 Category: LETTER [dropdown]  
 Version: [input]  
 Exception: [input]

# USPS FAST and eInduction Views

Post mailing logistics vendors use of USPS tools and data files.

Container Barcode	Postage Statement Mailing Date	Release Status	Scan Date/Time	Facility Name	Locale Key
99M895385000000557549	03/13/2026	Cleared		CHICAGO	W12399
99M895385000000557550	03/13/2026	Cleared		CHICAGO	W12399
99M895385000000557551	03/13/2026	Cleared		CHICAGO	W12399
99M895385000000557552	03/13/2026	Cleared		CHICAGO	W12399

## Mail Direction Search - Default and Redirections View

[< Back](#)

Select all applicable search criteria:

\* Modified:

Any

\* Effective Date Range:

Any Current or Future

Content ZIP Code:

606

\* If left blank, all applicable ZIP Codes will be retrieved  
\* Use an asterisk (\*) for wild card searches at the end of 3-Digits

\* Discount Type:

ALL  
BMC  
SCF  
ADC

Show Default Address

Show Redirect Address

Show Facility ZIP/CRID Ranges

[< Cancel](#)

\* Mail Class:

ALL  
Periodicals  
Periodicals (News)  
USPS Marketing Mail

\* Mail Shape:

Flats  
Nonstandard Parcels  
Letters  
Machinable Parcels

\* Palletized:

Both

\* Show Results For:

Default and Redirections

Show Truck Length  
Redirections Only

[Search >](#)

Content Information				Default Facility						Redirection Facility						Effective Dates			Truck Length	Modified Date	
ZIP/CRIDs	Discount	CIN Group	Pallet	Facility	NASS	Address	City	State	ZIP	Facility	NASS	Address	City	State	ZIP	Effective Start Date	Default Grace Period End Date	Effective End Date			Grace Period End Date
606-608	SCF	<a href="#">Default</a>	B	<a href="#">CHICAGO</a>	606	433 W HARRISON ST	CHICAGO	IL	606993916							07/01/2021		12/31/2999		N/A	05/28/2021

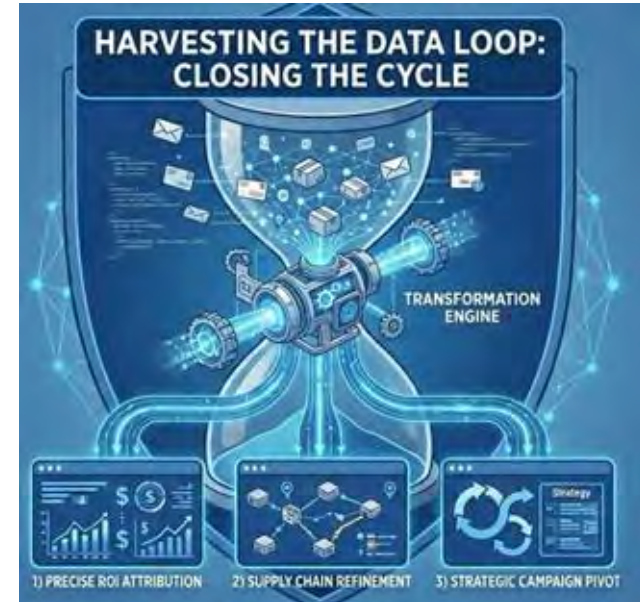
Export options: [Download into Excel](#) | [View Printable Version](#)

Content Information				Default Facility						Redirection Facility						Effective Dates			Truck Length	Modified Date	
ZIP/CRIDs	Discount	CIN Group	Pallet	Facility	NASS	Address	City	State	ZIP	Facility	NASS	Address	City	State	ZIP	Effective Start Date	Default Grace Period End Date	Effective End Date			Grace Period End Date
300, 305-306	SCF	<a href="#">Default</a>	B	<a href="#">DULUTH GALPC</a>	300	1605 BOGGS RD	DULUTH	GA	300961876							07/01/2021		12/31/2999		N/A	05/28/2021
300, 305-306	SCF	<a href="#">USPS Marketing Mail/Machinable Parcels</a>	N	<a href="#">DULUTH GALPC</a>	300	1605 BOGGS RD	DULUTH	GA	300961876	<a href="#">ATLANTA GA RPOC</a>	302RP	600 PALMETTO LOGISTICS PKWY	PALMETTO	GA	302689991	08/01/2024	08/30/2024	12/31/2999		N/A	07/31/2024
300, 305-306	SCF	<a href="#">USPS Marketing Mail/Machinable Parcels</a>	Y	<a href="#">DULUTH GALPC</a>	300	1605 BOGGS RD	DULUTH	GA	300961876	<a href="#">ATLANTA GA RPOC</a>	302RP	600 PALMETTO LOGISTICS PKWY	PALMETTO	GA	302689991	08/01/2024	08/30/2024	12/31/2999		N/A	07/31/2024

Total (3 results)

# Closing the Loop: From Delivery to Strategy

- **Attribution & Response:** Mapping IV-MTR scan data against website hits or call volume to prove the precise ROI of the mail channel.
- **Refining the Supply Chain:**
  - **Identifying Bottlenecks:** Using historical data to see which facilities or routes are consistently slower and adjusting logistics partners accordingly.
  - **The Strategic Pivot:** Using data from this campaign to dictate the **Strategy & Creation** of the *next one*.



# Harmonizing the Ecosystem

## The Key Takeaways

- **Data is the Thread:** Quality data isn't just for the start of a campaign; it dictates the success of physical production and efficiency of entry.
- **Visibility = Control:** Utilizing USPS data files, like IV-MTR transforms the “black box” of delivery into a transparent, actionable process.
- **Integration over Isolation:** Hiccups occur in the gaps between vendors. Success is found when Software, MSP, and Logistics providers operate as a single unit.
- **The Mail Owner's Edge:** A collaborative supply chain doesn't just move mail – it protects the brand's ROI and enhances the recipients' experience.

## Final Thought

In a collaborative ecosystem, the strength of the campaign is not found in any single link, but in the seamless handoff between them.

# Thank you, Moderators & Panelists:



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