

GOING GLOBAL

with **Tom Stanton**



Mail Consolidators and Freight Payment Options

In last month's article on international exporting, we covered options for small package shipping offered by the USPS. In this month's article, we will dig a bit deeper into ways you might use the USPS small package export services.

TO RECAP

Key points that were covered last month were:

- ▶ Tracking is available for all three USPS export services that are offered
- ▶ Express Mail International and Priority Mail International have no dimensional factors for weight, fuel surcharges or extended area surcharges
- ▶ Parcels can weigh up to 70 lbs
- ▶ Discounts are available to high-volume shippers end box here

Freight payment options

When sending packages via USPS, you must pay the shipment costs in advance. Stamps may be used in every circumstance, but for larger shipping volumes, they may not be the best option because of the labor to affix them. There are, however, other options.

Postage Meter To use a meter, you prepay a balance (by phone or online), which is reduced each time you use the meter.

Click and Ship Print online labels on the Internet USPS site and pay via credit card.

USPS Shipping Assistant Software — Global Shipping This software is free but is not as fast or flexible as some offerings. For lower volume it works and can work with an IBI (Information Based Indicia) postage meter. You can visit www.usps.com/shippingassistant/ibimeter.htm for more info.

Mailing Systems These systems, such as Pitney Bowes, offer reduced mailing rates.

Online Mailing Solutions These companies have some volume rates that they can pass along, but they have a minimum charge per month (\$10 for Endicia and \$20 for Stamps.com) for small-time users. Higher volume users can obtain discounts. Each company has some software features that are unique. Endicia is owned by a larger company that owns DYMO so they have a lot of labeling alternatives and related services

to offer. Companies associated with eBay can also take advantage of their integrated shipping solution.

Postal Qualified Wholesalers

- ▶ In air freight and ocean freight shipping, there are freight forwarders or freight consolidators that assist with export and import documentation, pick-up of the cargo and also arrange shipment with the ocean or air carriers. There are similar companies that assist in mail shipping. These companies are called PQWs or Postal Qualified Wholesalers. They bundle shipments with others to get a larger volume discount and pass some of that savings on to their customers.
- ▶ Many PQWs have a Global Expedited Package Service (GEPS) agreement that is based on volume incentives with deeper discounts. Brokers Worldwide is an example of this type of company. They offer a variety of international mail services in conjunction with the postal service that simplify the export process for shippers including customs paperwork and export reporting.

Priority International Parcel Service

- ▶ This service is available for parcels less than 70 pounds each and with maximum dimensions of 59 x 27 x 45 or 118 inches circumference. Delivery is in three to nine days with no dimensional factor, fuel surcharge or extended area surcharges.

International Priority Airmail (IPA)

- ▶ These services are also available for shipments weighing less than four pounds and less than 24 inches in length. Delivery is in three to seven days.

International Surface Airlift (ISAL)

- ▶ These services are also available for shipments weighing less than four pounds and less than 24 inches in length. Delivery is in seven to 14 days.

If you would like to learn more about exporting and lesser known freight cost alternatives, be sure to attend the PARCEL Forum October 4-6 in Chicago! Check out the export seminar on October 4! ■

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