

GUIDE



3 Tips to **Get to the Mailbox Faster**

Meeting your direct mail delivery times involves multiple varied steps and more moving parts — some that literally move — that have to be a part of your planning. For solo and integrated marketing campaigns, speed-to-market is a key part of being competitive and successful.

With smart planning, your direct mail will be printed, processed, and delivered on-time to your customers and prospects. **Here's how you can be in control and ensure that your direct mail gets delivered on time by the U.S. Postal Service.**



1. Get Your Data Right

One of your earliest (and easiest) steps is to nail down your data. We can't say it often enough: using the most [current data](#) is absolutely critical to the deliverability of your campaign. If your mailing lists are old, incomplete, or contain duplicates, you will waste time (and money) preparing and mailing them.

Fortunately, USPS has several preprocessing address file tools to supplement commercial list hygiene solutions.

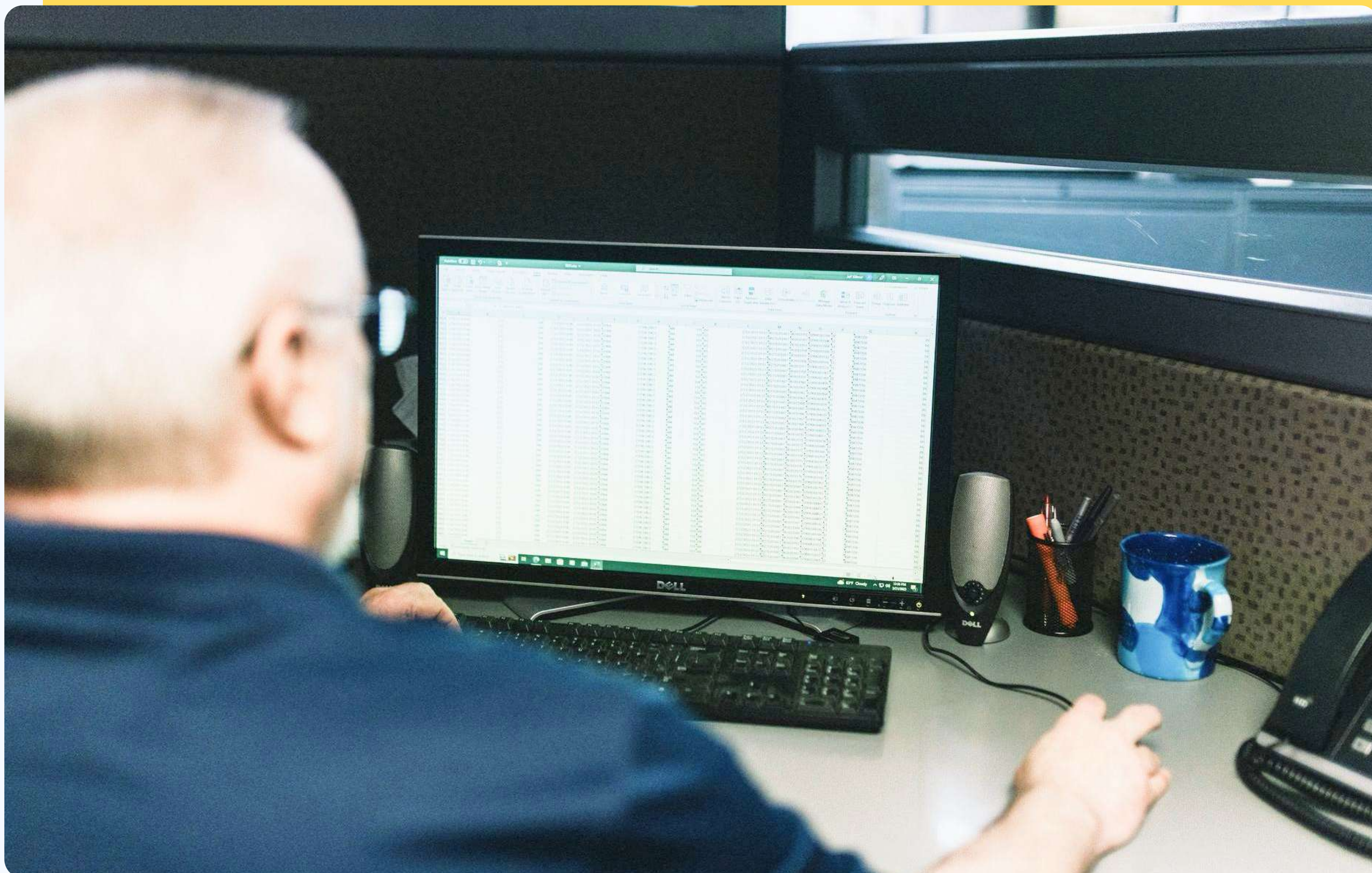
Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS)

Certification to verify and standardize your addresses

National Change of Address (NCOA)

Use every 95 days to update any new movers

Great news!
Using these solutions
also makes you
eligible for USPS
automation
discounts.



2. Set Up the Right Timetable

Everybody wants to save money but can you afford delays to your mail delivery times? At a minimum, you should put together a realistic mailing timeline that accounts for client and vendor approvals (and expected turnarounds), production schedules, holidays, weather, supply chain challenges, and other issues.

Here's an example: When a Monday deadline for client or vendor approvals is missed by two days, it pushes back the production process. This, in turn, affects in-home dates for your campaign.

Make sure every stakeholder knows the schedule and communicates when there are any potential delays to approvals or other steps.

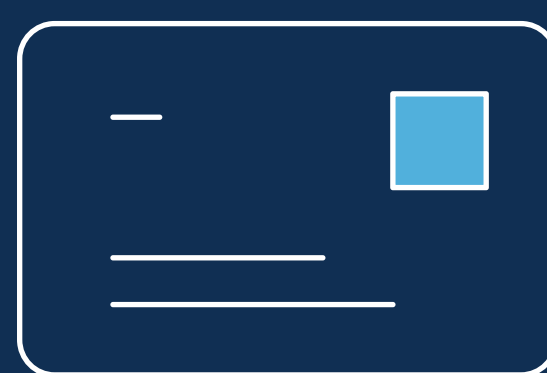
Mail Class Type and Delivery Times

How your mail is handled throughout the full mail cycle — mail processing, transportation, and delivery — depends on its USPS mail class. Because of the factors that can affect Marketing Mail processing, **be aware of potential slowdowns in your area (or mail entry point) to build additional days into your schedule.**



First Class Mail

- **Delivery Window:** From 1-5 days, depending on the distance the mail piece needs to travel; within 2 days if in the same region as the mail entry point
- **Campaign Size:** Minimum of 500 pieces for presort rates
- **Weight:** 13 ounces or less



USPS Marketing Mail (Standard Mail)

- **Delivery Window:** From 5-20 days
- **Campaign Size:** Minimum of 200 pieces or 50 pounds
- **Weight:** 16 ounces or less

Workshare Methods

A workshare program like commingling or co-palletization saves you money but may also mean waiting a while before the mail goes out for delivery. **Presorting your campaign into the USPS-required sequence helps speed the campaign's mail entry into the postal system.**



Drop-Shipping

Another time-saver is drop-shipping mail directly into the postal system at a Network Distribution Center (NDC) or Sectional Center Facility (SCF). **Drop-shipped Marketing Mail will typically arrive 3-5 days earlier than when it's entered at a local post office.**

Here's an example: If the Acme Company has a 300,000-piece time-critical holiday campaign to mail but has experienced delays with its usual post office, it can drop-ship at an SCF closer to the delivery addresses and get a USPS postage discount of \$42 per thousand, as well as ensure a faster in-home date.

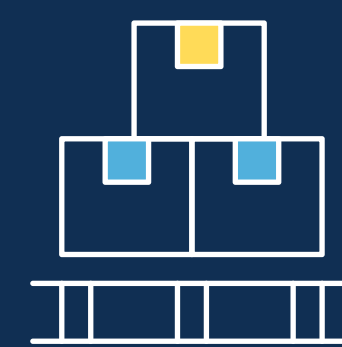
Drop-shipping improves performance and makes your delivery dates more predictable and reliable.

Depending on your per-piece cost, the transportation costs involved may be competitive with First Class, and without sacrificing your delivery timeline.

Transparency is a key value at mailing.com. We work with clients on establishing a time frame for their campaign, and include delivery options that balance their in-home dates and budget.



300,000-piece time-sensitive holiday campaign.



Drop-ship the campaign to an SCF closer to the delivery addresses.



Get a USPS postage discount of \$42 per thousand.



Mail arrives on time and under budget.

3. Track Your Mail Right

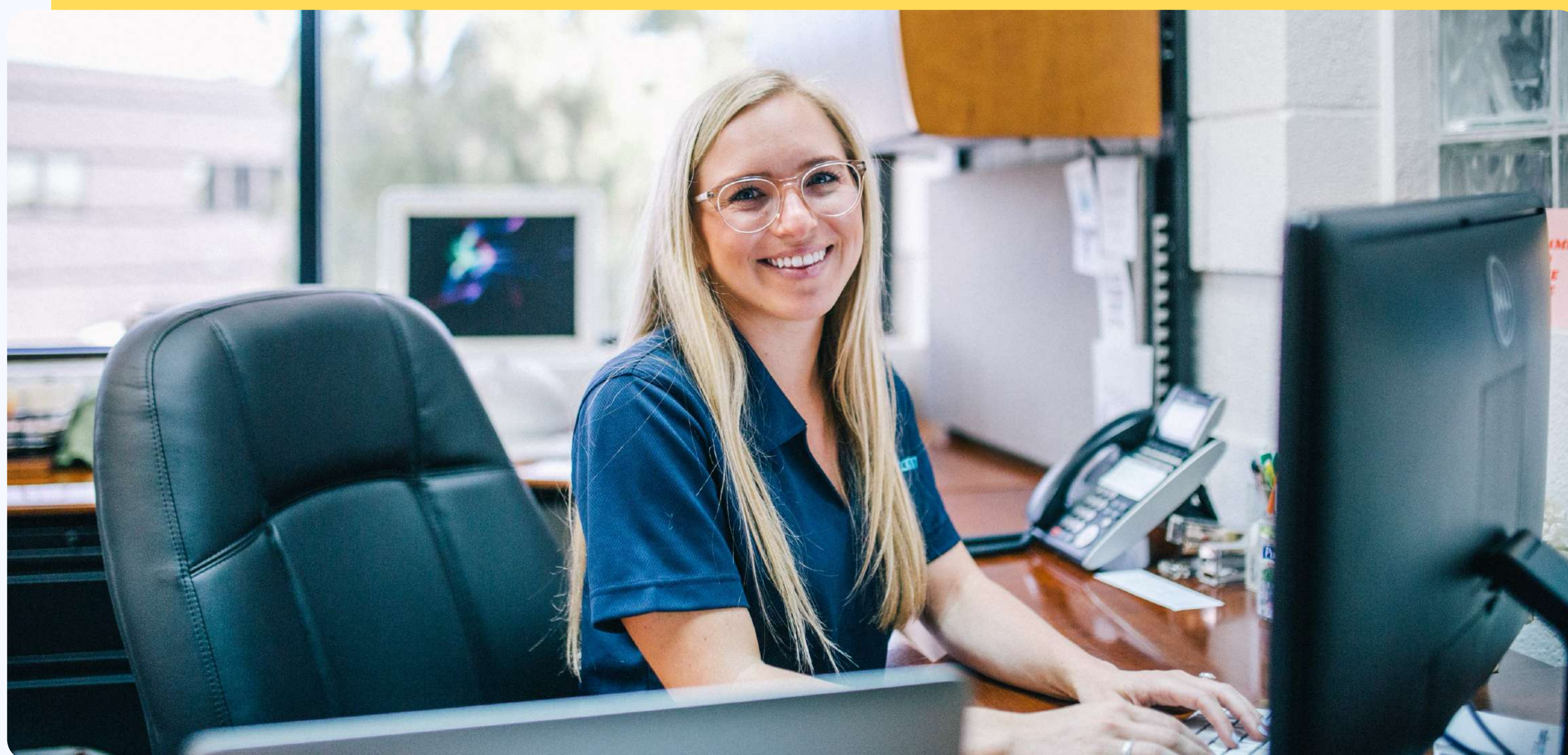
Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb) scan data is the best way to know how mail is performing in the USPS system. It gives you a view of how quickly each postal facility handles your mail. With this information, you can confirm in-house delivery, manage customer expectations, and adjust future delivery dates based on historical data.

Your mail service provider can use a campaign tracking tool incorporating IMb data to provide you with real-time tracking of your campaigns on a dashboard or through other tools. With this data in hand, you can raise any issues that come up with local USPS officials.

Keep in mind, however, that delays at the SCF or NDC level may not always be due to problems at the facility. In-home mail delivery times may be affected by seasonal changes in volume. From October through December, mail and package volume typically rises well above the average due to holiday campaigns as well as election-related mail. **Regardless of whether you're mailing First Class or Marketing Mail, your delivery dates may miss the service standards window by several days.**

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How We Can Help

At mailing.com, we understand the many factors that go into ensuring reliable and scheduled delivery of mail campaigns. Our status as a USPS Full-Service MSP, and a strong, direct relationship with USPS through **in-house verification**, means that we're committed to ensuring that your mail will speed through the postal system.

Constant, open communication with our clients ensures that we will meet your highest delivery expectations while finding options that save you money and achieving the best ROI. Through every step of the process — from planning to printing to delivery to response tracking — our award-winning customer service is dedicated to your satisfaction, the successful, timely delivery of your campaigns, and the tools and expertise needed to handle any challenge.

Please contact us to set up a consultation. We'd love to hear from you!

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