

Notes and Tips

- 1) As we suspected, USPS confirms that it would propose a rule prohibiting all “merchandise and goods” in marketing mail, regardless of the item’s physical composition. In other words, the fact that an item (e.g., calendars, greeting cards, address labels) might be “paper-based/printed” has no bearing. The only issue is whether the item could be considered “merchandise” or “goods”. If it is sold by anyone commercially, as are the made-from-paper items above, it would surely be considered merchandise and would be prohibited.
- 2) Please be specific about your reasons for choosing premium fundraising mailings. For instance, they raise response rates for acquisition/donor mailings; they increase average gift for acquisition/donor mailings; branded items help create/maintain donor loyalty; they directly support our mission, such as devotional items; and so forth. A sampling of your uses is sufficient – no need to inventory everything. The goal is to educate USPS about both the frequency and rationales of premium use in fundraising.
- 3) Actual cost numbers, or good faith estimates, are very persuasive and helpful. Some organizations may shy from publicizing these. It may help to dispel customary caution to know that, as a practical matter, your letter will only be seen by those to whom you send it. While comments are technically public, they are not posted online and are available only for in-person, hard-copy inspection.
Please feel free to choose whatever data set is convenient for you to use, whether a single mailing of a given premium package, a quarter or year’s worth of the same, all your premium mailings for a year, or quarter, etc. Simply identify it.
A spreadsheet displaying cost differences between Marketing Mail and First Class for four different mail volumes is attached. You may use that cost information as a means to fairly estimate the cost differential for the data set you choose.