

2011 Mobile Barcode Promotion – FAQs



GENERAL INFORMATION, ELIGIBILITY, AND REQUIREMENTS

1. What is the 2011 Mobile Barcode Promotion?

A: The Mobile Barcode Promotion is intended to build awareness of mobile technology and demonstrate to mailers how mobile barcodes can increase the value of mail. The promotion provides business mailers with an upfront 3% discount on Standard Mail® and First-Class Mail® letters, flats, and cards that include a two-dimensional (2-D) barcode that can be read or scanned by a smartphone.

2. Why is the Postal Service™ offering this promotion?

A: The Mobile Barcode Promotion was designed to increase the value of Direct Mail and build awareness around integrating mobile technology into Direct Mail communications.

3. When does the Mobile Barcode Promotion begin?

A: The promotion runs from July 1 through August 31, 2011.

4. Who is eligible to participate?

A: All companies, including Mail Service Providers (MSPs), who mail using a permit imprint and submit their mailing documentation electronically are eligible to participate.

5. Do I have to apply/register to participate in the Mobile Barcode Promotion?

A: The Mobile Barcode Promotion does not require an application or advance registration.

6. How do I participate?

A: Submit qualifying Standard Mail or First-Class Mail letters, flats, or cards electronically using a permit imprint payment method to the Business Mail Entry Unit (BMEU) for acceptance within the specified promotion period, and meet all other promotion requirements.

7. What are the promotion requirements?

A: All of the following must apply:

- All mailpieces in the mailing postage statement must include a mobile 2-D barcode on the outside of the mailpiece or within the mailpiece.
- The mobile barcode must be used for marketing purposes and must be relevant to the contents of the mailpiece. The objective of the 2-D mobile barcode on eligible mail pieces must be to initiate interaction with consumers via mobile smartphones to market, promote, or educate.
- Standard Mail and First-Class Mail letters, flats, and cards must be sent with postage paid entirely using a permit imprint and submitted electronically using Postal Wizard, Mail.dat, or Mail.XML to qualify for the discount. (Mailings submitted via Postal Wizard claiming Intelligent Mail® barcode [IMb™] postage rates cannot exceed 9,999 pieces.)
- The Mobile Barcode Promotion must be affirmatively claimed on the "Incentive Claimed" line in the certification section of the postage statement.
- Mail must be tendered for acceptance during the promotion period, July 1, 2011, through August 31, 2011.

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8. If I'm a Mail Service Provider (MSP), can I place a barcode on a mailpiece directing the recipient to my website?

A: The marketing information relayed in the mobile barcode must be relevant to the contents of the mailpiece. Barcodes directing customers to marketing information for products and services unrelated to the mailpiece content do not qualify for the discount.

9. What if there are multiple advertisers in the same mailpiece, but only one advertiser uses a mobile barcode?

A: If there are multiple companies placing advertising within one mailpiece and only one of the companies uses a barcode in its advertisement, the entire mailpiece will qualify for the discount. It is prohibited, however, to place a barcode on a mailpiece leading to information that has no relevance to any companies that have placed customer communications or advertised in the mailpiece.

10. If my mail is commingled, combined, or part of a co-mailing, can I participate?

A: The scope of this promotion includes only mobile barcode mailings supported by a single postage statement. First-Class Mail® and Standard Mail® commingled, combined, and co-mail mailings (including MLOCR mailings) may only qualify for the Mobile Barcode Promotion if all of the pieces commingled in the mailing have mobile barcodes, or if the mailings include multiple clients (or versions) but have separate postage statements generated by client (or version) that contain mobile barcodes. Commingled, combined, and co-mail mailings that do not separate mobile barcode mailings in separate postage statements from non-mobile barcode mailings are not eligible for the discount.

Individually presented and accepted mailings that are later co-palletized are eligible for the Mobile Barcode Promotion. This includes Standard Mail co-palletized trays when the mailings are individually presented for acceptance and then co-palletized.

11. Can I receive multiple incentives on the same mailing?

A: Each mailing is eligible for only one incentive per mailpiece, per postage statement. "Workshare discounts," such as destination entry prices or Intelligent Mail® barcode (IMb™) full-service discounts, are part of the published price schedule and are not considered incentive discounts. If all other program requirements are met, these mailings can qualify for the Mobile Barcode Promotion discount.

12. If I participate in the Reply Rides Free incentive, can I still participate in the Mobile Barcode Promotion?

A: If a mailer is participating in the Reply Rides Free incentive, all First-Class Mail Presort and Automation Letter volumes count toward the threshold. If the mailer is declaring mail in a mailing and on a mailing statement as qualifying for the Reply Rides Free rebate, it cannot receive the discount for the Mobile Barcode Promotion. Mailings that have no declared Reply Rides Free volume can qualify for the Mobile Barcode Promotion assuming all other program requirements are met.

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13. If I participate in the 2011 Saturation & High Density Standard Mail® Incentive Program, can I still participate in the Mobile Barcode Promotion?

A: If a mailer is participating in the 2011 Saturation & High Density Standard Mail Incentive Program, the mailer may qualify for the Mobile Barcode Promotion. Any mailings that receive the mobile barcode discount, however, are excluded entirely from the Saturation & High Density incentive.

If a mailer elects and receives the Mobile Barcode Promotion on any High Density or Saturation mailings, those volumes and revenue will be deducted from its participation-eligible volumes at the end of the program. Those volumes will not be counted toward meeting the mailer thresholds nor will they be rebate-eligible.

14. Is Every Door Direct Mail™ (EDDM) service eligible to participate in the Mobile Barcode Promotion?

A: Yes, assuming all Mobile Barcode Promotion requirements are met and mail is entered at a Business Mail Entry Unit (BMEU).

However, EDDM Retail mailings that are taken to the local Post Office™ retail unit for processing are ineligible to participate (these mailings do not meet the permit imprint payment requirement).

15. Is there a minimum mail volume required to participate?

A: There are no minimum volumes required to participate. However, the mailer must still meet the minimum applicable volumes required for the category and class of mail as outlined in the Domestic Mail Manual (DMM®).

16. Is non-profit mail eligible for the promotion?

A: Yes. Non-profit mail is eligible for this promotion discount, as long as all other program requirements are met.

17. Do mixed-class mailings (periodicals with a Standard Mail enclosure) qualify for the promotion?

A: No. Periodicals are not included in the promotion. Only mailpieces that pay First-Class Mail® and Standard Mail postage can qualify for the discount.

18. How is the discount calculated and applied?

A: Normal postage prices as listed in the published price schedule apply to the mailing, and the mobile barcode discount is applied to those prices. The mobile barcode discount is calculated in PostalOne!® and applied to the mailing statement at the time of mailing. The 3% mobile barcode discount is deducted from the total postage amount that is paid at the time of mailing.

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BARCODE REQUIREMENTS

19. I have barcodes on my mailpieces that are used for internal purposes. Do these qualify for the discount?

A: No. The mobile barcode must contain information or a link that is intended for and usable by the mail recipient.

20. My mail qualifies for the Intelligent Mail® barcode (IMb™) discount. Does it also qualify for the Mobile Barcode Promotion discount?

A: Not necessarily. The IMb does not meet the two-dimensional (2-D) barcode requirements, and it is not used for marketing purposes. However, if all the mailpieces in the mailing contain a 2-D mobile barcode that is used for marketing purposes (in addition to the IMb), then that mailing may qualify for both discounts.

21. What is the difference between a one-dimensional (1-D) and 2-D barcode

A: A 1-D barcode only encodes data along the width of the barcode, while 2-D barcodes encode data along both the width and height. 2-D barcodes are therefore much denser than 1-D barcodes and encode much more data in the same space. 2-D barcodes are also much better at detecting and correcting errors in damaged barcodes.

22. What types of two-dimensional (2-D) barcodes can be used?

A: Any 2-D barcode can be used as long as it can be scanned and/or read by a smartphone and is used for marketing purposes.

23. Are there any restrictions on where the mobile barcode can be placed?

A: The mobile barcode can be placed within the mailpiece or on the outside of the mailpiece, but it cannot be placed in either the "indicia zone" or the "barcode clear zone." The "indicia zone" is two inches from the top edge by four inches from the right edge of the mailpiece, and the barcode clear zone is defined in the Domestic Mail Manual (DMM®) section below.

Domestic Mail Manual mail design requirements (DMM Sections 302.5.1 and 202.5.1) must be met:

For Flats

DMM 302.5.1 General Barcode Placement for Flats

On any flat-size piece claimed at automation prices, the piece may bear one POSTNET barcode or Intelligent Mail® barcode under 5.2 or it may bear two POSTNET barcodes under 5.3. Other non-USPS® barcodes may appear on the address side of the piece if the barcode format is not discernable to automated postal equipment.

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For Letters

DMM® 202.5.1 Barcode Clear Zone

Each letter-size piece in an automation price or an Enhanced Carrier Route price mailing must have a barcode clear zone unless the piece bears a POSTNET or an Intelligent Mail barcode with a delivery point routing code (see 708.4.3) in the address block. The barcode clear zone and all printing and material in the clear zone must meet the reflectance standards in 708.4.4. The barcode clear zone is a rectangular area in the lower right corner of the address side of cards and letter-size pieces defined by these boundaries:

- a. Left: 4-3/4 inches from the right edge of the piece.
- b. Right: right edge of the piece.
- c. Top: 5/8 inch from the bottom edge of the piece.
- d. Bottom: bottom edge of the piece.

24. Can a mobile barcode be placed on a Detached Address Label (DAL)?

A: Mobile barcodes on the detached address label do not qualify for the discount. However, if the mobile barcode is placed on the host piece and all other program requirements are met, the entire postage amount (postage for host piece and DAL) qualifies for the 3% discount.

25. How does the Postal Service™ verify that I have placed the barcodes on my mailpieces?

A: The Postal Service is verifying the presence of mobile barcodes on mailings qualifying for the discount in two ways:

At the time of mail acceptance, the mailer must provide a sample of the mailpiece showing the placement of the mobile barcode to the acceptance clerk. If a mailing contains mobile barcode mail from multiple mailers, a sample of each mailer's mailpiece must be retained. All mailings are subject to standard acceptance and verification procedures and may be inspected for use of the mobile barcode.

During the promotion period and after the promotion period has ended, the Postal Service will conduct a random sample of mailpieces that qualified for the discount. All customers who receive the discount must retain an electronic or hard copy sample of the mailpiece until October 31, 2011, and if requested by the Postal Service must forward such sample to the Mobile Barcode Promotion program office. One sample must be retained for each individual mailing that qualifies for the discount. If a mailing contains mobile barcode mail from multiple mailers, a sample of each mailer's mailpiece must be retained.

MAIL SUBMISSION AND ACCEPTANCE

26. Where do I find the information I need to program eDoc claiming the Mobile Barcode Promotion?

A: For further technical information, please refer to RIBBS at <https://ribbs.usps.gov/index.cfm?page=intellmailguides> for:

1. Release notes for Release 27
2. The Postal Service Mail.dat Technical Specification
3. The Postal Service Mail.XML Technical Specification

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27. When I submit my mail, it is co-palletized with other mailings. Can I still receive the discount?

A: Individually presented and accepted mailings that are later co-palletized are eligible for the Mobile Barcode Promotion, provided all other program requirements are met. This includes Standard Mail® co-palletized trays when the mailings are individually presented for acceptance and then co-palletized.

28. If I do not receive the discount at the time of mailing, is there a process to receive the discount later as a credit or rebate?

A: No. All discounts must be claimed at the time of acceptance and payment. There is no process to claim the rebate after the mailpieces have been accepted by the Postal Service.™

29. When must I submit the mail in order to receive the discount?

A: Qualifying mail must be accepted at the local Business Mail Entry Unit (BMEU) within the promotion period, July 1–August 31, 2011. Mail qualifying for the discount cannot be submitted for acceptance at the local acceptance unit prior to July 1, 2011. Mail accepted at the local BMEU after the local critical acceptance time on August 31, 2011, will not qualify for the discount.

30. How do I claim the discount on a Plant Verified Drop Shipment (PVDS) mailing, and when can I deposit this mail?

A: PVDS mailings that qualify for the Mobile Barcode Promotion may be verified and paid for beginning June 26, 2011, provided the shipments are not deposited at destination entry postal facilities until July 1, 2011, or later, when presented with appropriate verification and payment documentation (PS Form 8125). PVDS mailings that are verified and paid for on July 1, 2011, and no later than August 31, 2011, that qualify for the Mobile Barcode Promotion will be accepted at destination entry postal facilities through September 15, 2011, when presented with appropriate verification and payment documentation (PS Form 8125).

31. Is there a limit on the number of times a mailer can receive a discount?

A: No. There are no limits as long as all other promotion requirements are met.

32. Is there a limit on the number of mailings that can be submitted (for each permit) for the discount?

A: No. There are no limits as long as all other promotion requirements are met.

FURTHER INFORMATION

33. Where can I learn more about the Mobile Barcode Promotion?

A: For additional information about the promotion, you may contact the program office at mobilebarcode@usps.gov