

# **CONNECTING AT THE CROSSROADS**



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## **Boot Camp for Mail Center Managers - Part 2**

*Patrick Ring, Boston University*

*Mark Fallon, The Berkshire Company*

# Overview

- Part I
  - USPS Organization
  - USPS Regulations
  - Networking & Industry Organizations
  - Mail Center Management
- Part II
  - Mail Center Management (Trends & Technology)
  - Management 101
  - Professional Development

# Boot Camp: Trends & Technology

- Inbound Mail
- Smart Lockers: A New Customer Service Model
- Digital Mail: Not Just a Delivery Method
- Color – Color – Color: What's Almost as Cheap as Black & White?
- E3 – E-Mail, E-Pay, E-Presentment
- Comprehensive Communication Plans: Holistic Approach or Holy Grail?
- Sourcing
- Operations Management

# Inbound Mail

- How do you get your mail?
- What do you do with it?
- How do you deliver it?

## How do you get your mail?

- Addresses
  - PO Boxes / Caller boxes / BRM
  - Street addresses
- Pick up or receive?
- Couriers or staff

# What do you do with your mail?

- Physical sort
- Scan
- Packages and accountable mail
- Chain of custody / proof of delivery

## How do you deliver mail?

- Mail runs – how often?
- E-delivery
- Folders (student mail)
- Hybrid environment
  - E-delivery
  - Physical forward
  - Lockers

# Smart Lockers: A New Customer Service Model

- Growth in parcels won't stop
- Tracking remains a requirement
- Restraints – time, people, space



# Smart Lockers: A New Customer Service Model



# Smart Lockers: A New Customer Service Model

- Smart lockers = system integration
- Smart lockers = accountability
- Smart lockers = dynamic assignment
- Smart lockers = fewer deliveries

# Digital Mail: What Is It?

- Scan & Deliver
  - Mail Center
  - Centralized Scanning
  - Business Unit
- Internet/Intranet document delivery

# Digital Mail: Why Implement?

- Faster delivery
- Access for remote staff
- Less expensive storage/retrieval
- Improve business processes

# Digital Mail: Challenges

- Imaging equipment – selecting, installing and training
- Legal constraints
- Non-scannable mail – pamphlets, brochures, magazines
- Multiple electronic document systems
- Integrating with BPM

## Digital Mail: One Tool of Many

- Hard copy will always exist
- Consider gradual adoption
- If you only have a hammer, everything looks like a nail

# Color and Documents

- Pre-printed color on forms
- Highlight color
- Full color
  - Offset Color
  - Digital Color

# Color and Documents: What's Changed

- PowerPoint presentations in color
- Web pages use color
- Printing technology, especially inkjet
- Renewed focus on branding
- Speeds increasing, costs decreasing
- USPS Mailing Promotions



## Color and Documents: What's Happening Now

- Color forms replaced with color printing
- ~~B&W for low-value documents~~  
Mid-volume, low-cost color inkjet
- Added color for messaging on transactional documents
- Fully digital processing for on-demand printing (offset and digital presses)

# Color and Documents: Challenges

- ROI isn't always easy to prove
- Consistency (PMS, screen vs. print)
- Space & facilities requirements
- Post-print applications (inserters)

## Trends: E3 (a)

- E-mail
  - B2B - Documents
  - B2C - Marketing
  - C2C - Correspondence
- E-Pay
  - B2B – EFT (not new)
  - C2B – growing, but doesn't directly correlate to e-presentment
  - Direct pay vs. bank pay

## Trends: E3 (b)

- E-Presentment
  - B2B – Statements, billing
  - B2C – Statements, billing
- Multiple formats
  - PDF
  - HTML page
  - Downloadable data
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Party consolidators - ???

# Comprehensive Communication Plans: What is it?

- Multiple media – print, digital, video
- Multiple delivery methods – mail, email, television, internet, intranet, mobile
- **One Message**

# Comprehensive Communication Plans: Challenges

- Different owners, different priorities
- Confusing cost with value
- Content and design conflicts
- Difficult to calculate ROI
- Silver bullets only work against werewolves

# Comprehensive Communication Plans: Role of the Document Manager

- Your voice won't be heard unless you're in the meeting
- Understand the tools available
- Educate the other players, especially Sales & Marketing

# Trends: Sourcing

- Mergers and acquisitions
  - Equipment, software and service providers
  - Opens door to new technologies, services
  - Disruptive to industry (good and bad)
- Service Providers
  - Model changing with decline in mail volumes
  - Aggressive pricing and new services
  - Hybrid outsourcing models



# Trends: Operations Management

- Quality control at center stage
  - Moving beyond inserter controls
  - Complete system integrity – cameras, scanners and QC teams
- Complete workflow management
  - Controls, monitoring of entire system (file creation to USPS acceptance)
  - Mix of in-house, vendor and 3<sup>rd</sup> party systems

# Boot Camp: Management and Leadership

# Boot Camp: Management & Leadership

- Budgeting
- Requests for Proposals (RFP)
- Records Management
- Leadership

# Boot Camp: Budgeting Overview

- Budget Cycle
- Production Report
- Evaluating Staffing
- Monthly Reports
- Opportunities for Savings
- Promoting Your Successes
- Glossary

# Budget Cycle

First Step - What are your actual volumes & costs?

- inbound and outbound mail by type
- print/copy by type

Second Step - What are your projected volumes?

- changes in size of business
- changes in type of business

Third Step - Budget your expenses

- What will this cost you? (Rates, with any increases, by category)
- What equipment and software do you need? (Capital purchases)
- What labor force do you need? (How many people at what skill level?)

# Production Report

- Determine what information to track.
- How will data be gathered and assembled?
- How often will report(s) be generated?
- Who should receive production reports?
- How will reports be used?

# Evaluate Staffing

- The most critical component of a successful operation.
- Review current staffing for performance levels, skill sets and flexibility.
- Cross-train whenever possible.
- Replace poor/marginal performers.
- Recruit skilled, experienced employees who make customer service a priority.
- Consider part-time and temporary help for peak periods.
- Eliminate redundancies.

# Monthly Reports

- Actual vs. Budget
- Percentage differences more important than numbers.
- Why weren't you 100% accurate?
- What are you doing right / wrong?
- Are you on track with projects?



# Opportunities for Savings

- Use automation whenever possible.
- Maximize postal discounts.
- Renegotiate contracts with vendors.
- Reorganize/reengineer print and mail centers.
- Provide staff with regular training on postal regulations.
- Employ temporary help.
- Promote quality initiatives that improve productivity.
- Use part-time staff.
- Educate your customers.
- Reward your employees.

# Promote Your Successes!

- Modesty has its place - not in financial reporting.
- **Highlight** savings - don't make people look for them.
- What didn't cost anything, but improved service?
- Quality initiatives will impact your organization, and your image within the organization.
- External - publish, get recognized by industry.

# Budgeting: A Glossary

## Budget

The financial plan of a company for a period (usually one year) predicting the financial results of its actions.

## Budget Theory

**Zero based budgeting** – Each year, build the budget anew, justifying staff, equipment, training, etc.

**Incremental budgeting** – Use previous year as a starting point, and increase the budget by percentages based on expected growth.

**Capital budgeting** – The prediction of fixed asset investments (buildings, equipment, etc.) with considerable expense that can be depreciated over time.

## Budget elements

**Projected** – The projected budget is what you expect to spend in each area (salary, benefits, office expenses, telephone, training, etc.)

**Actual** – The amount you actually spent on those items.

**Variance** – The amount by which an actual financial statement differs from its budget value (the difference between projected and actual). You will need to explain why you spent more (or less) than the projected budget.

## Budget Cycles

**Annual** – This may be a calendar year (Jan 1 – Dec 31), or a fiscal year. The Federal Government's fiscal year is Oct 1 – Sep 30.

**Quarterly** – A three-month period. Very important to publicly traded companies.

**Monthly** – Probably the cycle with greatest impact. Allows ongoing review of performance.

## Important Budgeting Concepts

**Amortization** – prorating the cost of an asset, liability or expenditure over a specific period of time.

**Depreciation** – The gradual decline in value of an asset because of use or age; the expense arising therefrom.

**Financial Statement** – an accounting document showing the financial status of a business, or the results of business activity.

**Profit and Loss Statement** – the financial statement that presents all revenue and expense and resulting profit or loss, by categories, of a company for a specific time period.

**Return on Investment (ROI)** – for a given capital investment, the ratio of the profit (savings) that will result to the amount of the investment. Also known as Cost Justification; the method of rationalizing a purchase by showing that it saves more money than the expense over a short period of time.

**Cost per piece** – This is calculated by taking all of the expenses associated with processing mail divided by the number of pieces processed. This includes ALL expenses, including salaries, training, managers, etc.

# Boot Camp: Request for Proposals (RFP)

- Outdated equipment
- Changes in technology
- Better service
- Pricing/savings
- New responsibilities
- New requirements from customers

# RFPs: Steps to Success

1. Research
2. Meetings inside/outside the company
3. Assemble a crew
4. Draft/publish the RFP
5. Vendor review
6. Call references
7. Compare bids
8. Award bid
9. Receive/accept equipment or service

# Research

- Vendor literature
- Periodicals
- Fellow professionals
- Trade shows
- Capacity planning

# Meetings

## Inside the Company:

- Purchasing/procurement
- Legal
- Customers
- Product users

## Outside the Company:

- Vendors
- Financial advisors
- Fellow professionals



# Assemble a Crew

- Customers/affected departments
- Procurement
- Legal
- Lead operators
- Information Technology (MIS)
- Facilities Management

# Draft/Publish the RFP

- State the type of product or service and specify what the vendor **MUST** provide
- State desirable capabilities of product
- Specify what the proposal **MUST** include:
  - Format of response
  - Description of product
  - Cost of product (lease/buy compare)
  - Delivery times
  - Acceptance testing
  - Warranty/cost of maintenance
  - Service standards
  - References
  - Vendor profiles
  - Limitations/exclusions
- Specify **DEADLINE** for submitting response

# Vendor Review

- Factory visits
- Site visits
- Written responses to questions
- Vendor conference
- Financial performance

## Call References

- What specific product do they use?
- How long have they used product?
- General feelings about product?
- Operator requirements?
- Service response time?
- Have they used competitor products?
- Why didn't they choose another vendor?
- What would you have done differently?
- Is a site visit possible?
- Thank you for your time!

# Compare Bids

- Scoring chart
- Financial comparison
- Service comparison
- Follow-up presentations
- References

# Award Bid

- Notify selected vendor and competitors.
- Review the purchase and maintenance contracts with legal and purchasing.
- Ensure that testing and delivery dates are included in contract.
- Establish factory acceptance and site acceptance standards.
- Establish operator training schedule and location.

## Receive/Accept

- Proper delivery notification?
- Installation in accordance with contract?
- Training completed?
- Does product perform to your standards?

# Boot Camp: Records Management

- Types of records
- What is a record?
- How long do you have to retain records?
- How do you store?
- Resources / Tips



# Types of records

- What is a record?
- Paper records – mail related
- Paper records – non-mail related
- Electronic records

# What is a Record?

- According to the Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA) a record is “recorded information regardless of medium or characteristic, made or received that is useful in the operation of an organization.”
- According to the USPS a record is “recorded information, regardless of media, format, or physical characteristics, including electronic data, developed or received by USPS in connection with the transaction of its business and retained in its custody; for machine-readable records, a collection of logically related data treated as a unit.”

# Paper Records: Mail Related

- Postal statements (prior to 2023)
- Manifests
- Firm books
- Overnight shipping forms
- Certified cards
- Inbound receiving records

# Paper Records: Mail Related

- Postal statements
  - **First Class** PS 3600
  - **Periodicals** PS 3500/3510/3526/3541/3542/3548
  - **Marketing Mail** PS 3602/3623/3624
  - **Package Services** PS 3605/3608
  - **Special Services** PS 3540
  - **PVDS** PS 8125

# Paper Records: Non-Mail Related

- Policies
- Standard operating procedures
- Internal documents
- Forms
- Vendor contracts
- HR records
  - Job descriptions
  - Written warnings / Reviews

# Electronic Records

- E-mails
- Electronic manifests
- Electronic signatures (for receiving)
- Scanned copies of documents

## E-mails

- An “In-Box” is an “In-Box”
- Use folders properly
- Learn how to archive
- Take out the “Trash”

# How long do you have to store records?

- Government regulations (federal and state)
- Postal regulations
- Company policy



# How long do you have to store records?

- Postal Regulations--Customer Retention
  - First, Marketing Mail, Package Service
    - Postage Statements    None\*\*\*
    - CASS Documentation    1 Year for Auto
  - Periodicals
    - Mailing/Distribution       3 Years
    - Statement of Ownership    5 Years
  - Matters in Dispute - Until Resolved
  - Don't Forget IRS!

# Important Names in Records Management

- HIPAA - Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996
- Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act of 1999
- Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002

# Resources

- [www.aiim.org](http://www.aiim.org) – Association for Information and Image Management
- [www.arma.org](http://www.arma.org) – Association of Records Managers and Administrators
- [www.nara.gov](http://www.nara.gov) – National Archives and Records Agency
- <http://pe.usps.gov> – USPS Postal Explorer

# Leadership: “The Good Old Days”

- Consistent work (type, volumes, SLAs, etc.)
- Staff – long-term, stable workforce
- Training – National Postal Forum, PCCs

# Leadership: The New Reality

- Changing corporate/economic environment
- Fluctuating volumes, new types of communication
- Staff in flux – layoffs, retirements, wages
- Struggle to keep informed

# Leadership: The New Manager

- Flexible – anticipate & adapt
- Innovative – manage and lead
- Knowledgeable – individual and team
- Still learning – external/internal; traditional/non-traditional

# Boot Camp: Professional Development

# Boot Camp: Professional Development

- What are we talking about
- Assessment options
- Action plans
- Resumes and cover letters
- Resources



# Career Development: What is It?

- Organizational development (OD)
  - Individual management of their career
  - Organizational support/structure
- Personal development
  - Experience
  - Success
  - Education

# Career Development: Self Assessment

- Personality tests
  - Professional administration
  - On-line testing
- Reviewing results
  - Does this sound like me?
  - Multiple tests with same results
  - Professional feedback

## Career Development: Skills Assessment

- Summary of identified skills and work activities
- List of occupations matched either to skills or work activities
- Link to occupation profiles
- "Compare to another occupation" feature

# Career Development: Set Your Objectives

- Research the industry
- Research the occupation
- Job satisfaction vs. pay

# Career Development: Defined Goal

- Projected state of affairs
- Not a “wish” or “dream”
- 3 characteristics
  - Measurable results
  - Achievable within a defined time
  - Leads to future goals

# Career Development: Sample Plan

- Goal
- Current education and experience
- Current Skills
- Objective 1 (with target date)
- Objective 2 (with target date)
- Objective 3 (with target date)

# Career Development: Implement Plans

- Prioritize your goals
- Take purposeful action
- Measure results and create feedback loop

# Career Development: Discuss With Your Manager

- Short-term career goals/objectives (1-5 years)
- Long-term career goals/objectives (+5 years)
- Needed experiences
  - Education and training
  - Job assignments
  - Developmental activities



# Career Development: Manager's Role

- Help discover career interests
- Identify resources
- Assist with preparing the plan
- Review, revise and adjust plan
- Assess progress and provide feedback

# Career Development: Mentors and Coaches

- Experience
- Knowledge
- Good listening/sounding board
- Help find resources
- Honest and candid

# Career Development: Resumes

- Objective
- Summary lists of skills
- Employment history
- Degrees, certificates, honors, articles
- Hobbies?

# Career Development: Cover Letters

- Address to a person
- Less is more!
- Focus on what you can do for employer
- Express enthusiasm and passion
- Request action
- Proper ending

# Career Development: Interviewing Skills

- Proper attire – in-person or online
- Be prepared to answer tough questions
- Be prepared to ask meaningful questions
- Follow-up

## Career Development: Resources

- *What Color Is Your Parachute?*  
by Richard Bolles
- *You, Inc.* by Harry and C.C. Beckwith
- Career One Stop (U. S. DOL)  
<http://www.acinet.org>

# Boot Camp: Certification

Recognition of expertise.

Changing demographics in mail center management.

Potential requirements for certain positions.

# Certificates vs. Certification

Certificates – proof of attendance.

Certification – confirmation through an exam or similar process.



# Certificate Programs

Offered through the National Postal Forum, local Postal Customer Councils and other conferences.

Evidence of:

- Attendance
- Commitment
- Awareness

# Certification Programs

## US Postal Service – Business Mail Academy

- MDP
- Periodicals Professional

## Professional Associations

- IPMA (CMM)

# Mailpiece Design Professional (MDP)

Self-study course with open-book exam.

Areas covered:

- Mailpiece Design
- Barcoding specifications and requirements
- Mail classes and processing categories
- Addressing and return address information
- Endorsements
- Reply mail
- Permit imprints

<http://www.nced.com/bma/>

# Periodicals Professional

Residential program at the USPS-NCED in Norman, OK.

Areas covered:

- Basic mail piece elements and authorization
- categories Advertising
- Statements of ownership
- Publisher records
- Eligibility reviews
- Mail piece construction, preparation and
- sortation standards
- Documentation

<http://www.nced.com/bma/>

# Certified Mail Manager (CMM)

International Publishing Management Association  
([www.ipma.org](http://www.ipma.org)).

Candidate must have a minimum of 5 years management experience.

Application must be accompanied by three letters of recommendation.

# CMM

Recertification is required every five years.

CMM must accumulate 15 professional credits.

Credits earned by:

- Membership in mail manager associations
- Attending educational seminars
- Serving as proctor for certification examinations
- Publishing articles related to mail management
- Serving as a leader
- Instructing or lecturing on mail management

# CMM

Six hour exam (with lunch break), multiple-choice and essay questions.

Areas for testing include:

- computer skills
- financial management
- general management
- mail management
- personnel management
- technical skills

# Questions?

Patrick Ring  
Boston University  
[pring123@bu.edu](mailto:pring123@bu.edu)



Mark Fallon  
The Berkshire Company  
[mmf@berkshire-company.com](mailto:mmf@berkshire-company.com)

