Basic Design Elements
Flats

2017
Importance of Flat Standards

Incorrect Barcode Placement

Too rigid.

Not uniformly thick.

Automated Flats Sorting Machine
Agenda

- Physical Standards of Flats
- Addressing Standards for Flats
- Automation Flats
Flats – Physical Standards

Length is the physically longer dimension

Height is perpendicular to the length
Flat-size pieces must be:

- **Flexible**
- Uniformly thick (within $\frac{1}{4}''$)
- **Rectangular**
- **Deflection**
Flexibility Test – Part One

First test pieces with the longest side parallel to the edge of a flat surface
Flexibility Test – Part One

If the piece can pass this test **AND** does not contain a rigid insert, no further testing is necessary.

If the piece passes this test but it **DOES** have rigid contents, go to the next step, part 2.

**Note:** A permanent bound edge is not considered a rigid item.
Flexibility Test – Part Two

Mailpieces that pass first test and contain rigid contents

Flat-size piece more than 10”
Flexibility Test – Part Two

For flats, length is the longest dimension.

FLEX TEST
Flats less than 10 inches that contain a rigid insert; perpendicular to surface.

1 inch minimum flexibility required

Flat-size piece less than 10”

Half of Piece Length

1”
Deflection Test

For flats, length is the longest dimension

DROOP TEST
For flats 10 inches or longer

3 inch maximum droop
Deflection Test

For flats, length is the longest dimension.

DROOP TEST
For flats less than 10 inches long

Cannot droop more than 2 inches less than the extended length
Uniform Thickness

- Flat-size mailpieces must be uniformly thick so that any bumps, protrusions, or other irregularities do not cause more than 1/4-inch variance in thickness.

- Mailers must secure nonpaper contents to prevent shifting of more than 2 inches within the mailpiece if shifting would cause the piece to be nonuniformly thick or result in the contents bursting out of the mailpiece.
Flats – Physical Standards

Rectangular

- May be prepared with finished corners not exceeding a radius of .125” inch ($\frac{1}{8}$ inch)
Flats – Physical Standards

Polywrap Film or Similar Material:
- Only products listed as approved on the USPS RIBBS Web site may be used

Physical Requirements:
- Outlined in DMM section 201.4.5
Flats – Physical Standards

Polywrap Film or Similar Material:

- Wrap direction must be around the longer axis

- Seam:
  - Parallel to longer dimension
  - Front or back
  - Not over address or barcode
Flats – Physical Standards

1½”

½”

1½”
Flats – Physical Standards

Labels, Stickers, and Release Cards

- 201.4.8.1 – Use
- 201.4.8.2 – Pressure-Sensitive Label
- 201.4.8.3 – “Sandwich” Label
- 201.4.8.4 – Flats with Attached Release Cards
- 201.4.8.5 – Standards for Release Cards
Catalogs

- A bound flat-sized mailpiece with at least 16 pages meeting flat physical criteria.

- Provide a listing of products offered for sale arranged systematically and include images, photographs or illustrations of the products, descriptive details, and prices.

- Must contain an order form, a phone number, or a web address to place orders and provides shipping options for the products offered for sale.
Physical Standards of Flats

Addressing Standards for Flats

Automation Flats
Flats – Addressing

- Minimum 8-point type (6-point for automation flats)
- 6-point if all capital letters with DPBC
- Characters in address can not overlap
- Address lines can not touch or overlap
- Address elements separated by no more than five blank character spaces
Address Placement
Enveloped, Polywrapped, or Card-style Flats

Top edge

Top half
Address Placement - Bound or Folded Flats

Top half

Bound or folded edge

.Mail Entry & Payment Technology

******** 5-DIGIT 98765
ATTN: VICE PRESIDENT
ABC COMPANY
123 MAIN ST
ANYTOWN US 98765-4321
Additional Physical Standards by Mail Class:

- 201.5.1 – First-Class Mail
- 201.5.2 – Standard Mail
- 201.5.3 – Bound Printed Matter
- 201.5.4 – Media Mail and Library Mail
- 201.5.5 – Priority Mail Express, Priority Mail and Critical Mail Flats
Physical Standards of Flats

Addressing Standards for Flats

Automation Flats
## Automation Flats – Physical Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Height</td>
<td>5”</td>
<td>12”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td>6”</td>
<td>15”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thickness</td>
<td>.009”</td>
<td>0.75”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Automation Flats

Weight Maximums

- First-Class Mail: 13 ounces
- Periodicals: 20 ounces
- Standard Mail: < 16 ounces
- Bound Printed Matter: 20 ounces
Automation Flats

Prohibitions
- Protrusions
- Staples

Tabs, Wafer Seals, Tape, and Glue

Booklet-Type Piece or Magazine
Flats – Physical Standards

Short Covers
- More than $\frac{3}{4}$” from each edge
- Secured with at least two tabs etc. at least 1” from top and bottom edges of the cover

Outside Stickers
- Affixed with permanent adhesives
Barcode:
- Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb)

Placement:
- On address side at least 1/8 inch from any edge of the piece

Clearances:
- 1/8 inch between the leftmost and rightmost bars to any printing, label edge or window edge
- .028” inch above and below barcode to any printing, label edge or window edge
Visit our websites at:

www.usps.com

http://pe.usps.gov/

Contains the DMM, IMM and various publications.

https://postalpro.usps.com/

Contains information on Intelligent Mail, Full Service, eInduction, Seamless Acceptance etc.
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MONDAY – FRIDAY, 7am – 5pm CST