

Addressed Admail vs 1st Class Mail

I get asked everyday what the major differences are between Addressed Admail, (aka bulk mail, 3rd class mail, LCP or Letter Carrier Presort), and Lettermail (aka 1st class mail). There are quite a few differences. I'll start with the most basic which would be cost. On a standard number 10 envelope, Lettermail postage would be .54 ¢, with Addressed Admail your postage cost can get to as low as .36¢ per piece.

Basically Addressed Admail is presorted for Canada Post by a mail house. Your database gets corrected and sorted by Canada Post certified software. The software actually sorts the mail by the route the Letter Carrier walks down your street to deliver the mail, that's why they call it Letter Carrier Presort. The incentive postage cost is given because Canada Post basically only has to deliver the mail, they do not have to run the letters through their sorting machines. I am simplifying this procedure a bit to make it understandable. Depending on the level of the sort, Direct to station or to Final Letter Carrier walk the postage varies accordingly.

Because the lettershop that is preparing your mail is presorting the mail, you also get added benefits including mailing pieces that would not be allowed to mail by Lettermail standards, an example of this would be pieces that are not sealed all the way around such as a folded newsletter. If you had an 8.5 x 11 folded in half you would have to put the piece in an envelope if it were Lettermail. A tab would not do the trick; it would have to be sealed 100% around the mail piece.

You're probably wondering why anyone would bother to mail anything Lettermail with all the benefits of Addressed Admail. Actually there are many benefits to Lettermail as well. Undeliverable Lettermail is returned back to the sender if it cannot be delivered; undeliverable Admail is thrown out or recycled.

The major difference is the time of delivery. The delivery charts below are from Canada Post's website.

1st Class delivery times

LOCAL 2 business days

WITHIN A PROVINCE 3 business days

NATIONAL 4 business days

Addressed Admail delivery times

LOCAL 3 business days

WITHIN A PROVINCE 4 – 5 business days

NATIONAL 4 – 15 business days

Only certain types of mail are acceptable as Addressed Admail. They must:

- promote the sale or use of products or services
- report on financial performance, primarily for promotional purposes; or
- solicit donations or contributions.

Addressed Admail has a minimum quantity of 1,000 pieces. There are no minimums for Lettermail.

How do you decide when to send Addressed Admail as opposed to Lettermail?

Lettermail is opened more often than Addressed Admail but because the cost is substantially lower you can send out more Admail to compensate for the shortfall. If you are sending out over 1000 pieces and all the materials in the envelopes are the same there is quite a savings to sending out Admail. If you do a little research in regards to direct mail marketing, such as using taglines on envelopes, you can get more people to open your Admail envelopes.

Mailings and any form of advertisement are a numbers game. Send out ½ of your mailing Lettermail the other ½ Admail. Keep track of who responded from which mailing, track your numbers and what it costs you to mail each type of mailer. Once you've done that try to change your envelope. Send half via Admail and the other half via Lettermail again keeping track of your numbers. If you keep changing and adapting your advertising you'll find that has more effect on your outcome than whether you choose Lettermail or Admail. You may find that there is no difference in response rates. The key is test and measure for yourself. You can find a Mail Tracking sheet on our website.

In closing this article I have left a few things out such as Admail over 5,000 pieces needs a 95% address accuracy report or your postage gets up-charged but the charge is minimal. There is also something called a phantom mailing that you can do if your admail amounts are under the 1000 minimum piece, allowing you to mail as admail and get the reduced postage cost. Addressed Admail is a great way to promote your business and if tested can increase sales dramatically.

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