



Tracking In Difficult Times

Protecting Your
Year-End Mailings
with Mail Tracking

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Tracking In Difficult Times - Protecting Your Year-End Mailings with Mail Tracking

The 2020 fall mailing season – November through January – was a difficult experience. The Postal Service was struggling with high absenteeism and an unprecedented volume of packages due to COVID-19. Marketing mail was missing delivery dates by weeks – sometimes months. First-In, First-Out control was lost, and some mailings from late October sat long after later mailings were delivered. Even First-Class Mail was losing its way, and responses were often slow to come in, stuck in the Postal abyss. Of course, print and mail service providers were under intense pressure from their customers. They weren't getting donations or any other kind of response. Where was the mail?

Naturally, my first response is that they should have tracked their mail, but that oversimplifies it a bit. There are many elements to mail tracking and different styles of tracking that may be valuable. Our objective here is to provide a more detailed guide to using mail tracking in the mailing season ahead.

Will Fall 2021 be better?

There are certainly challenges, and consistently heavy volume of packages and new transportation hubs being implemented makes it hard to say. The only way to be in control is by tracking your mail.



How Mail Tracking Works – The Crash Course

Mail Tracking is provided by the Postal Service using the **Informed Visibility**® program. By encoding the Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb) printed on every piece of commercial mail in a certain way, the mail piece will be detected as it passes through the sorting machine in the Postal system. This scan information will be sent to the mailer, enabling the mailer to follow their mail through the system, leaving a trail of breadcrumbs. Each piece of mail may go through three-to-five different sorting machines, possibly even more. In the end, the mailer is left with a pile of breadcrumbs that need to be managed, interpreted, and sorted. That's where mail tracking service providers like SnailWorks come in, turning all those scans into usable reports.

With Informed Visibility, there is more than piece tracking data available as well. The trays that mail pieces are transported in, also have their own version of an IMb, as well as the container or pallet those trays are carried on – even the trucks. These are also scanned as they travel through the Postal system. The Informed Visibility system links all these components into an organized whole, working with a variety of scans and the information provided by the mailer in their electronic documents – their eDocs.

The Informed Visibility program shares information on where mail pieces are, where their containers are, and even when replies are coming in. This is the information you need to keep control of your mail and bring peace of mind to your clients.

Following Your Mail

Of course, you want to know if and when your mail is delivered, but there are other stages at which you can follow it, particularly when there are Postal Service problems. The path of a typical piece of letter mail is below:

Scan Details For Mailpiece:

| Bar Code | Service Type Id | MID | Serial Number | *Delivery Date | UserDefined1 | UserDefined2 | UserDefined3 |
|----------|-----------------|--------|---------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 00 | 514 | 202380 | 065523072 | 03/29/2021 | | | |

| Addressee |
|--|
| Cynthia Sorrells 9044 Chestnut Grove Rd. Frederick, MD 21701-261244 |

All Fields

| Informed Visibility Scan Details | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------|-----------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|--------------|---------------------|----------|--------------|---------|
| Scan Date | FCLT ID | Facility | Event Code | Description | Stop The Clock | Routing Code | Handling Event Type | eDoc | Container ID | Tray ID |
| 3/26/2021 9:49:14 PM | 92899 | ANAHEIM | 873 | FAST Appointment Arrived | N | 21701261244 | Assumed | 17471102 | 000076 | 000009 |
| 3/26/2021 9:50:56 PM | 92899 | ANAHEIM | 874 | Container Accepted | N | 21701261244 | Assumed | 17471102 | 000076 | 000009 |
| 3/27/2021 12:07:44 AM | 92799 | SANTA ANA WINDOW SVCS | 876 | Arrived at Facility | N | 21701261244 | Assumed | 17471102 | 000076 | 000009 |
| 3/28/2021 11:38:41 AM | 21233 | BALTIMORE | 893 | Sortation/Distribution | N | 21701261244 | Actual | 17471102 | 000076 | 000009 |
| 3/28/2021 6:08:42 PM | 21233 | BALTIMORE | 918 | Sequenced for Delivery - 1st Pass | Y | 21701261244 | Actual | 17471102 | 000076 | 000009 |
| 3/28/2021 10:23:28 PM | 21233 | BALTIMORE | 919 | Final Sequencing for Delivery | Y | 21701261244 | Actual | 17471102 | 000076 | 000009 |
| 3/29/2021 12:01:02 PM | 21701 | FREDERICK | 517 | Delivered | Y | 21701261244 | Logical | 17471102 | 000076 | 000009 |

The first scan shown is when the mail was accepted in Anaheim, California, at 9:49 PM on March 26. Subsequent scans show the mail arriving and being sorted in Baltimore, Maryland, and ultimately being delivered in Frederick just after noon on March 29. You'll note that the first three scans shown in California are "assumed" scans. This means that the piece itself wasn't scanned, but the container it was traveling in was, and the container scan was "assumed" to the piece by referencing the eDoc. Understanding this mail path is helpful in analyzing challenged mailings.

Keeping an Overview of All Your Mailings

The SnailWorks platform provides reports on the delivery status for all pieces you have in the mail and can also alert you when a mailing is not meeting expectations. The Daily Delivery Report provides a quick view of the mail you are tracking and can be automatically emailed to you. This notification can be set to notify you based on mail delivered or mail that has received its first scan.

Late Delivery Exception Report

Jobs mailing within the last 21 days considered to be late

Criteria: Jobs mailed within the last 21 days having a delivery percentage less than 75%. First-Class Mail after 10 days is considered late. Standard Mail after 15 days is considered late.

| Company | Job Name | Description | Split Name | Split Description | Drop Date | Job Id | Split Id | Total Mailed | Delivered Today | % Delivered Today | Total Delivered | % Delivered | Mail Class | Elapsed Days | Days Late |
|-------------------------|----------|-------------|------------|-------------------|-----------|--------|----------|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|-----------|
| Wounded Warrior Project | DD2114WV | DD2114WV | Panel-5 | Panel-5 | 8/13/2021 | 377059 | 1 | 25,032 | 4 | 1,124.00 | 4,420 | 17.66 | Standard Mail | 20 | 5 |

Daily Delivery Report

Jobs mailing within the last 21 days

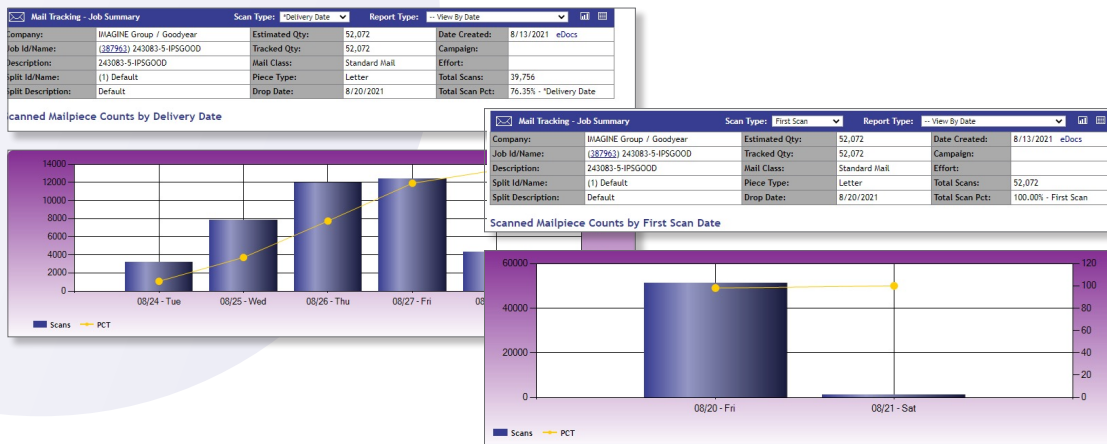
| Company | Job Name | Description | Split Name | Split Description | Drop Date | Target Range | Job Id | Split Id | Total Mailed | Delivered Today | % Delivered Today | Total Delivered | % Delivered | Elapsed Days | Days Late |
|-------------------------|----------|-------------|---|---|-----------|--------------|--------|----------|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|-----------|
| Wounded Warrior Project | DD2114WV | DD2114WV | Cal F1 Post It Note 9-11 BB Card Insert T-P7 | Cal F1 Post It Note 9-11 BB Card Insert T-P7 | 8/13/2021 | 8/27 - 9/3 | 377059 | 4 | 50,017 | 1,214 | 2.43 | 47,736 | 95.44 | 19 | |
| Wounded Warrior Project | DD2114WV | DD2114WV | Cal F1 Post It Note Sustainer Checkbox ART T-P4 | Cal F1 Post It Note Sustainer Checkbox ART T-P4 | 8/13/2021 | 8/27 - 9/3 | 377059 | 6 | 50,017 | 991 | 1.98 | 47,156 | 94.28 | 19 | |
| Wounded Warrior Project | DD2114WV | DD2114WV | Cal F1 Vinyl Decal Paperclip Premium T-P8 | Cal F1 Vinyl Decal Paperclip Premium T-P8 | 8/13/2021 | 8/27 - 9/3 | 377059 | 7 | 25,017 | 1,248 | 4.99 | 22,847 | 91.33 | 19 | |
| Wounded Warrior Project | DD2114WV | DD2114WV | Calendar Follow Up-Cal F1 Blood Carrier T-P9 | Calendar Follow Up-Cal F1 Blood Carrier T-P9 | 8/13/2021 | 8/27 - 9/3 | 377059 | 2 | 25,017 | 361 | 1.44 | 23,574 | 94.23 | 19 | |
| Wounded Warrior Project | DD2114WV | DD2114WV | Calendar Follow Up-Cal F1 LVR Post It Note Control-P2 | Calendar Follow Up-Cal F1 LVR Post It Note Control-P2 | 8/13/2021 | 8/27 - 9/3 | 377059 | 3 | 13,966 | 413 | 2.96 | 13,350 | 95.59 | 19 | |
| Wounded Warrior Project | DD2114WV | DD2114WV | Calendar Follow Up-Cal F1 Post It Note Control-P1 | Calendar Follow Up-Cal F1 Post It Note Control-P1 | 8/13/2021 | 8/27 - 9/3 | 377059 | 5 | 769,111 | 15,779 | 2.05 | 736,013 | 95.70 | 19 | |
| Wounded Warrior Project | DD2114WV | DD2114WV | Calendar Follow Up-Sticker F1 Post It Note Control-P6 | Calendar Follow Up-Sticker F1 Post It Note Control-P6 | 8/13/2021 | 8/27 - 9/3 | 377059 | 8 | 49,771 | 2,135 | 4.29 | 46,948 | 94.33 | 19 | |
| Wounded Warrior Project | DD2114WV | DD2114WV | Panel-5 | Panel-5 | 8/13/2021 | 8/27 - 9/3 | 377059 | 1 | 25,032 | 1,488 | 5.94 | 1,976 | 7.89 | 19 | |

You can also create a Late Delivery Exception Report that will alert you when a mailing's performance seems to be in trouble. You can select what you consider "late" by class of mail, as well as what percentage of a product you want to see delivered before that late date. If the mailing appears to be running late you will automatically get a notification.

Looking for Trouble

When you or your client are concerned about a mailing you can systematically explore the tracking data for the job to better ascertain exactly what is going on.

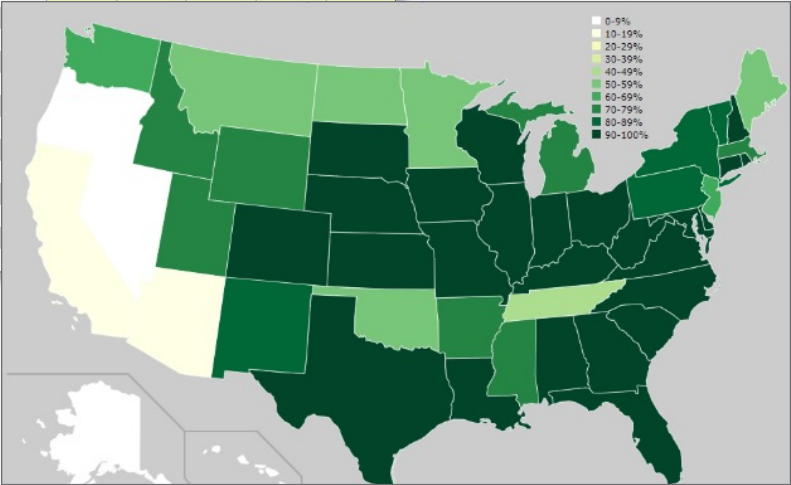
When you view a job, the first thing you will generally look for is simply how much has been delivered so far.



If you have delivery in some areas, and not in others, looking at a state or map breakdown can be helpful in identifying a local issue.

| Job Summary By STATE | Pieces Tracked | Delivery Scans | % Scanned | ID Subscribers | ID Emails | THU 08/19 | FTT 08/20 | SAT 08/21 | MON 08/23 | TUE 08/24 |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| CA | 249 | 61 | 24.5 | | | | | 3 | 50 | 6 |
| CO | 25 | 8 | 32.0 | | | | | 5 | 3 | |
| CT | 50 | 21 | 42.0 | | | | 2 | 11 | | |
| DC | 12 | 11 | 91.7 | | | | 1 | 1 | | |
| DE | 8 | 8 | 100.0 | | | | 3 | | | 1 |
| FL | 133 | 82 | 61.7 | | | | | 23 | 3 | 7 |
| GA | 27 | 15 | 55.6 | | | | | 5 | | 2 |
| HI | 6 | 3 | 50.0 | | | | | | 3 | |
| IA | 13 | 13 | 100.0 | | | | | 2 | 5 | |
| ID | 6 | 3 | 50.0 | | | | | | | |
| IL | 95 | 91 | 95.8 | | | | | 21 | 3 | 4 |
| IN | 24 | 22 | 91.7 | | | | | 5 | | 1 |
| KS | 12 | 11 | 91.7 | | | | | | 1 | 5 |
| KY | 11 | 11 | 100.0 | | | | | 2 | 1 | |
| LA | 14 | 9 | 64.3 | | | | | 5 | | |
| MA | 73 | 57 | 78.1 | | | | | | 20 | 5 |
| MD | 73 | 69 | 94.5 | | | | | | | |
| ME | 3 | 3 | 100.0 | | | | | | | |
| MI | 66 | 65 | 98.5 | | | | | | | |
| MN | 24 | 13 | 54.2 | | | | | | | |
| MO | 27 | 25 | 92.6 | | | | | | | |
| MS | 2 | 2 | 100.0 | | | | | | | |
| MT | 2 | 1 | 50.0 | | | | | | | |
| NC | 38 | 30 | 78.9 | | | | | | | |
| ND | 3 | 1 | 33.3 | | | | | | | |
| NE | 8 | 8 | 100.0 | | | | | | | |
| NH | 12 | 11 | 91.7 | | | | | | | |
| NJ | 227 | 220 | 96.9 | | | | | | | |

**Digging into
Your Mail
Tracking
Reports**



If you cannot figure out what is going on with your mail, the SnailWorks mail tracking experts can help you look through a vast array of reports that will help you identify delivery problems.

Tracking More than Mail Pieces

Of course, you want to know if and when your mail is delivered, but there are other stages at which you can follow it, particularly when there are Postal Service problems. The path of a typical piece of letter mail is below:

| Split Id/Name: (1) Default | | Piece Type: Letter | | | | | Total Scans: 20,629 | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|---|-----------|-----------|--|
| Split Description: Default | | Drop Date: 8/24/2021 | | | | | Total Scan Pct: 27.60% - *Delivery Date | | | |
| Container Barcode | Containers Tracked | Container Scans | % Scanned | ID Subscribers | ID Emails | Fri 08/20 | Sun 08/22 | Mon 08/23 | Tue 08/24 | |
| 99M107831000000686839 | 1 | 1 | 100.0 | | | 1 | | | | |
| 99M107831000000686840 | 1 | 1 | 100.0 | | | 1 | 1 | | | |
| 99M107831000000686841 | 1 | 1 | 100.0 | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | |
| 99M107831000000686842 | 1 | 1 | 100.0 | | | 1 | | | | |
| 99M107831000000686843 | 1 | 1 | 100.0 | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | |
| 99M107831000000686844 | 1 | 1 | 100.0 | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| 99M107831000000686845 | 1 | 0 | 0.0 | | | | | | | |
| 99M107831000000686846 | 1 | 0 | 0.0 | | | | | | | |
| Totals: | 8 | 6 | 75.0% | 0 | 0 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 1 | |

Container Scans for Container Barcode: 99M107831000000686840

| Container Scan Details | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|--------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|------------|------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Scan Date/Time | Scan Facility City | Scan Facility Name | Scan Facility State | Scan Facility ZIP | Scan Locale/Key | Scan State | Tray Count | Piece Count | Bundle Count | AppointmentID | eDoc ContainerID | eDoc ContainerZIP | eDoc JobID | eDoc SubmitterCRID | eDoc UserLicense Code | Handling Event | Wcb | Mail Class | Mail Shape | FAST Appointment | FAST Appointment Unload/EndTime |
| 8/20/2021 2:11:29 PM | HARTFORD | HARTFORD | CT | 06101 | V20284 | Entered at USPS | 26 | 9220 | 32 | U000630279 | 000235 | 07097 | 00078881 | 5023900 | AP51 | Assumed Actual | 99M107831000000686840 | Standard | Letter | 2021-08-20 13:11:43-0500 | 2021-08-20 13:25:06-0500 |
| 8/20/2021 2:13:42 PM | HARTFORD | HARTFORD | CT | 06101 | V20284 | Entered at USPS | 26 | 9220 | 32 | U000630279 | 000235 | 07097 | 00078881 | 5023900 | AP51 | Actual | 99M107831000000686840 | Standard | Letter | | |
| 8/20/2021 7:44:48 PM | HARTFORD | HARTFORD | CT | 06101 | V20284 | Enroute Depart | 26 | 9220 | 32 | U000630279 | 000235 | 07097 | 00078881 | 5023900 | AP51 | Actual | 99M107831000000686840 | Standard | Letter | | |
| 8/22/2021 6:54:29 AM | JERSEY CITY | NEW JERSEY NDC | NJ | 07097 | V10697 | Enroute Arrive | 26 | 9220 | 32 | U000630279 | 000235 | 07097 | 00078881 | 5023900 | AP51 | Actual | 99M107831000000686840 | Standard | Letter | 2021-08-20 13:11:43-0500 | 2021-08-20 13:25:06-0500 |
| 8/22/2021 3:34:36 PM | JERSEY CITY | NEW JERSEY NDC | NJ | 07097 | V10697 | Enroute Arrive | 26 | 9220 | 32 | U000630279 | 000235 | 07097 | 00078881 | 5023900 | AP51 | Actual | 99M107831000000686840 | Standard | Letter | 2021-08-20 13:11:43-0500 | 2021-08-20 13:25:06-0500 |

Taking Action When Trouble is Found

Most mailers look to communicate with two parties when mail is snagged:

- The Postal Service
- Their customer

Only the Postal Service has a real chance of getting your delayed mail moving. Armed with detailed tracking data from their own system (IV), you can be very specific about the problems that exist and the resolution you want. In an overloaded fall mailing season, mailers with the greatest visibility are most likely to be prioritized. SnailWorks reports identify exactly what facilities are involved and often what stage of processing the mail is in.

Your customer needs some reassurance from you that you have some insight into specifically where their mail is and when it might be delivered. You cannot always get the mail moving any faster but at least your customer knows that you are providing what you promised.

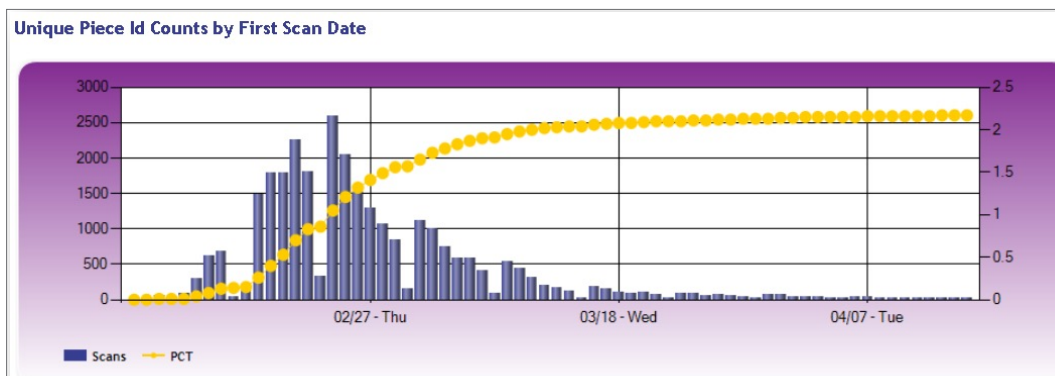
Not every mail delay is definitively identified or resolved. However, there is still peace of mind and a sense of control in knowing where the mail is.

Tracking Response Mail

Ensuring that outgoing mail is delivered is most mailers' first concern, but just as important is the response coming back. Fundraisers, in particular, depend on inbound reply mail for their biggest donations.

In busy times, we have seen processing of BRM fall to the bottom of the priority list for some postal units, with reply mail accumulating at the Post Office. We have helped clients clear up a few of these roadblocks in this past year. Beyond worrying about the speed of delivery, inbound tracking also allows you to get counts on mailed responses almost immediately. Receiving quick response data is essential in today's direct response environment.

SnailWorks offers very simple solutions for tracking responses. In most cases, just a simple barcode change makes your reply mail trackable.



Don't Be Caught Off Guard this Mailing Season

With so many changes occurring at the Postal Service, no one can predict how they will perform in the high-volume fall and holiday season, but you can be prepared:

- Keep an eye on all of your mailings and be proactive in identifying possible delivery issues.
- Know how to dig into a mailing when concerned – determine if issues are national or local. Lean on your tracking provider to help interpret.
- Track response, too. Keep cash flow secure and response rates available.
- Work through delivery problems with the Postal Service armed with detailed reporting. Keep open lines of communications with your customers – they count on you to be their postal Sherpa.

The mailing industry depends on a busy fall season – that's when we thrive. Stay in control and keep your customers informed with mail tracking. It's more important now than ever.