

Shipping Options That Save Money

(NAPSA)—A common task shared by consumers and small-business owners is shipping, and navigating the different shipping carriers and services can be confusing. But it doesn't have to be, and understanding the options can save time and money.

Here's a breakdown of the top carriers—USPS, FedEx and UPS—and their strengths, so that you can send that next package with confidence and ease.

The Cost-Effective Choice for Small Packages

USPS is the most affordable option for small packages—particularly those weighing 5 lbs. or less. It is also the preferred option if you are shipping to a residential address because it does not tack on any residential delivery surcharges.

If you're shipping something heavier than 5 lbs., consider a USPS Flat or Regional Rate box. These boxes can be a cost-effective choice for small, heavy items.

And remember: If you are shipping to PO Boxes or APO/FPO/DPO addresses (military and diplomatic addresses), USPS is the **only** option for delivery.

Other reasons why many choose USPS include:

- Delivery is available—with limited exceptions—365 days a year.

- Tracking capabilities give shippers the visibility they need, with up to 11 scan points.

- Businesses don't have to go to the Post Office to ship their packages. Instead, the USPS will pick up packages directly from your home, office or warehouse upon request.

Shipping expert and Endicia co-founder Harry Whitehouse identifies the Postal Service's strengths: "If you're shipping lightweight packages to residential addresses and not looking at the Postal Service, you should really investigate them as a carrier option. USPS is the most cost-effective option for smaller packages, helping business owners achieve competitive pricing for their lighter-weight goods."

Cost-Effective Choices for Large Packages

UPS and FedEx are the most affordable options for larger or heavier packages—particularly those weighing over 5 lbs. and incapable of fitting in a USPS Flat/Regional Rate box.

USPS Priority Mail vs. FedEx/UPS Ground Service*			
Residential Delivery			
2-lb. Package Across 6 Zones (ex.: Palo Alto, CA to Lincoln, NE)			
Base	USPS	FedEx	UPS
Base Charge	\$8.26	\$8.47	\$8.47
Fuel Surcharge	\$0.00	\$0.77	\$0.80
Residential Surcharge	\$0.00	\$3.35	\$2.90
Total Cost	\$8.26	\$12.59	\$12.17

*The USPS Priority Mail rates reflect Commercial Base Pricing and the FedEx/UPS rates reflect the Standard List Rates and published surcharges as of March 2014.

The right mix of shipping services will save your company money and allow you to offer more attractive shipping rates to customers.

UPS and FedEx are also worth investigating if you are shipping to a business address. It's worth noting that UPS and FedEx tack on surcharges for residential delivery.

USPS Priority Mail vs. FedEx/UPS Ground Service*			
Residential Delivery			
12-lb. Package Across 6 Zones (ex.: Palo Alto, CA to Lincoln, NE)			
Base	USPS	FedEx	UPS
Base Charge	\$28.58	\$11.86	\$11.86
Fuel Surcharge	\$0.00	\$0.99	\$1.03
Residential Surcharge	\$0.00	\$3.35	\$2.90
Total Cost	\$28.58	\$16.20	\$15.79

*The USPS Priority Mail rates reflect Commercial Base Pricing and the FedEx/UPS rates reflect the Standard List Rates and published surcharges as of March 2014.

There are other reasons for choosing UPS and FedEx. For example, they have a variety of guaranteed-date and time-specific delivery options. UPS and FedEx are also a better option if a package weighs more than 70 lbs., as the USPS does not accept packages over that weight limit.

Finding The Right Mix

"Each carrier offers individual strengths, but when it comes down to it, it's all about finding the right shipping mix," added Whitehouse. "Luckily, consumers and business owners don't have to go it alone. With help from shipping technologies, such as Endicia (and with the tips offered here), you can easily identify the most cost-effective shipping solution in every situation."

To learn more about saving on shipping, visit www.endicia.com.