

Small Business News & Notes

Easy Way To Purchase Postage Saves Time And Taxes

(NAPS)—An increasing number of small and home-based businesses are discovering a way to save time now and trouble at tax time.

They're doing it with the help of a new generation of digital postage called Information Based Indicia (IBI). Like other forms of postage such as stamps and meter impressions, IBI is printed on an envelope in the upper right hand corner or on a label for an envelope or package. It shows postage has been paid.

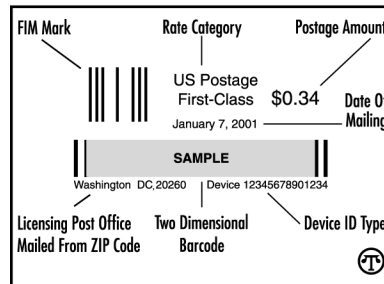
The indicia include a barcode as well as printed data. The barcode makes security easier and the bar-coded information will help the Postal Service to offer more services in the future.

Postage can be bought online and the IBI applied from a PC. This provides access to postage in just the right amount, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with no need to go to the post office or wait on line.

What's more, when postal rate changes go into effect, you don't have to struggle with new ways to use old stamps.

Another advantage is that you have accurate postage accounting records, the amount of postage you've bought and used, easily maintained and integrated with accounting software packages. That can make it easier to get the tax credit to which your company is entitled.

Other beneficial features include an optional advertising area permitting companies to personalize mail pieces with messages or logos.



Small businesses are giving a stamp of approval to a convenient new way to purchase postage.

Products for postage purchase and printing from a computer using standard ink jet and laser jet printers are developed by commercial providers and approved by the U.S. Postal Service. Different companies offer product variations, but all are held to U.S. Postal Service requirements. Customers can pick the products that best meet their business needs.

To purchase postage, a customer establishes a connection with a PC Postage vendor's Internet server. The postage is bought through electronic fund transfer or a credit card. Depending on product design, the postage can be either downloaded to a device attached to the customer's PC or stored in a vendor's Internet server. When the customer prints the postage, the dollar amount is deducted from the prepaid account. As rates and requirements change, the software vendor will supply their customers with any necessary upgrades.

You can learn more about this useful service at the post office or online at www.usps.com/ibip.