

Intelligent Mail® barcode (IMBC) – What does it mean for you?

Effective January 2013 the U.S. Postal Service is further implementing the Intelligent Mail® barcode, which combines data from the existing POSTNET™ and PLANET™ barcodes, as well as other information into one comprehensive barcode model. This is a new postal service code used to sort and track letters, flats, postcards, QBRM (Business Reply Mail) and Permit Reply Mail. With this introduction, in order to qualify for automation prices for the best discount on bulk mailing you'll need to utilize this code.

Intelligent Mail® barcode does have two options with the Postal Service. There is Basic and Full Service. Basic is relatively simple. Full Service has additional requirements including electronic documentation. The table with information from the USPS below outlines the Intelligent Mail® options.

Mail/Mail Containers	Basic	Full-Service
Mail Pieces	IMBC required	Unique IMBC required
Trays	IM tray barcode on labels – optional	Unique IM container barcode on placards is required
Pallets	IM container barcode on placards – optional	Unique IM container barcode on placards is required

Here are some other facts about the Intelligent Mail® barcode features and benefits from the U.S. Postal Service showing why the new system is better.

IMBC:

- Holds all routing, sorting and additional services information in one barcode
- Enables unique identity of individual mail pieces
- Offers OneCode (Address Change Services) ACS® at less cost than traditional ACS®
- Allows more space on the envelope or mailer for marketing or other messages
- Allows customers to take advantage of the lowest price offerings

Companies doing frequent bulk mailings obviously like to take advantage of not only the benefits that Intelligent Mail® provides, but cost savings is a very important issue. There are varied software programs that allow for the actual configuration of the necessary barcode to be printed onto the documents or labels for the documents being mailed. One key consideration aside from the software, however, is the ability to actually print the configured code.

DASCOM Americas has a variety of serial matrix printers designed to be compatible with most software programs to actually do the physical printing of the barcode.

DASCOM model printers with IMBC compatibility include the T2150, T2250, T2265+, T2280+, LA650+, LA800+, T2365, T2380, 4347-i08 and 4347-i10.

Additional comprehensive information on Intelligent Mail can be found at the USPS site:

<https://ribbs.usps.gov/index.cfm?page=intellmailmailpieces>.