

Product Tracking PCC

Wednesday July 15, 2026



Agenda



Why Visibility
Matters



What is “Good”
Visibility



Failure Points
and Risks



Best Practices
for Scan Success



What the Future
Holds



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Why Visibility Matters



The Cost of Poor Visibility: Tracking is now a requirement, not a feature.



Customer Impact

Increased “Where is my order?” inquiries
Loss of confidence in delivery



Operational Impact

Higher support volume
Manual investigations



Business Impact

Reshipments and refunds
Marketplace penalties

Visibility Matters – the stats



Package visibility **fuels customer confidence, drives revenue, and empowers residential and commercial users** with precise, up-to-the-second package insights.



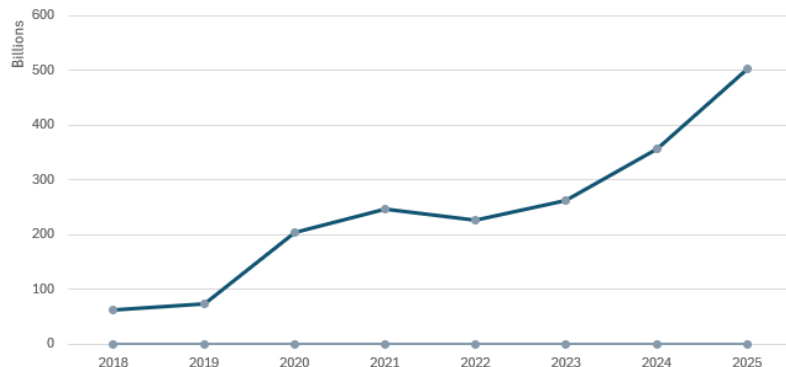
Package Volume: Up **19%** since 2019.

Tracking Requests: Up **582%** since 2019.

Bottom Line: Demand for real-time insights is outstripping physical volume 30 to 1.

	2019	2025	Percent Increase
Package Volume	6.2B	7.4B	19%
Tracking	73.8B	503.6B	582%
Email requests	337M	2.9B	760%
Webhooks	3.9B in 2023	82.1B	2,005%

TRACKING REQUESTS



“Good” Visibility



Image sourced from USPS digital images

Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
API	Application Programming Interface
DMM	Domestic Mail Manual
ID	Informed Delivery
IMmb	Intelligent Mail Matrix Barcode
IMpb	Intelligent Mail Package Barcode
IV-MTR	Informed Visibility Mail Tracking and Reporting
MID	Mailer ID

Acronym	Meaning
MTAC	Mailers Technical Advisory Committee
OCR	Optical Character Recognition
PTR	Product Tracking and Reporting
SPEF	Shipping Partner Event File
SSF	Shipping Services File
UAA	Undeliverable as Addressed
WISMO / WIMP	Where is my Order / Package?

Anatomy of Tracking

The Lifecycle: From label creation and manifest upload (SSF/SPEF) to acceptance, in transit, and final delivery.

The Sources: Where do you get this data?

The Audience: Who uses this data?



Images sourced from USPS digital images

The Lifecycle

What is good visibility?

Complete tracking event chain

Label printed

Acceptance scan

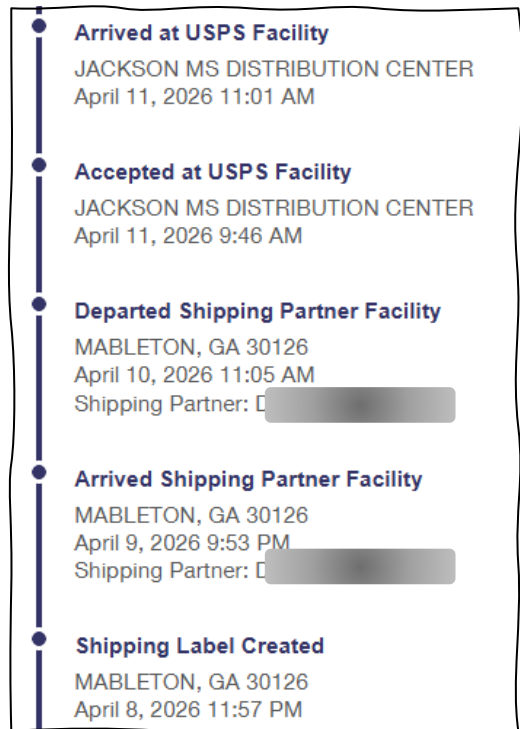
Processing scans

Arrival at Unit

Out for Delivery

Delivery confirmation

Detailed exception events with location accuracy



The Sources

Product Tracking and Reporting (PTR) powers package tracking through:

- USPS.com Tracking
- Informed Delivery Package Information
- Email & SMS Tracking Notifications
- Tracking Webhooks / Subscriptions
- USPS API Integrations (Tracking v3.0 and v3.2)
- Scan Event Extract Files
- Shipping software providers
- Marketplaces
- Retailer websites
- And other consumer facing channels

In CY25
(1/1/25 – 12/31/25)

14.7B+

tracking requests
on USPS.com

4.2B+

Tracking emails
sent

15.9B+

Informed
Delivery package
inquiries and
emails

82.1B+

Webhook events
sent

Failure Points and Risks

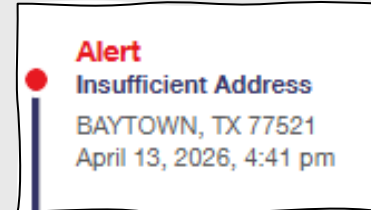


Image sourced from USPS digital images

Failure Points & Risks

Physical Gaps: Label placement, barcode/print quality, and packaging errors.

Data & Security Gaps: Inconsistent manifest data, counterfeit labels, and MID misuse/security risks.

Operational Gaps: Key points where the physical-to-data link can break.

Risks: delays, missed scans, looping, returned to sender



Image sourced from USPS digital images

Physical Gaps – Label Placement

Do:

- Place label on largest flat surface, parallel to longest side



Don't:

- Fold the label over the edge of the box



Physical Gaps – Label Placement

Do:

- If you must label over a seam, avoid crossing the seam with the barcode



Image sourced from USPS digital images

Don't:

- Place on the seam of a box



Physical Gaps – Label Placement

Do:

- Ensure the label is readable by placing it horizontally on tubes



Images sourced from <https://postalpro.usps.com/parcellabelingguide>

Don't:

- Wrap the label around a tube, making it unreadable



Images sourced from <https://postalpro.usps.com/parcellabelingguide>

Physical Gaps – Print Quality

Do:

- Use high contrast black on white on proper paper.
- Use clean quiet zone (no tape)

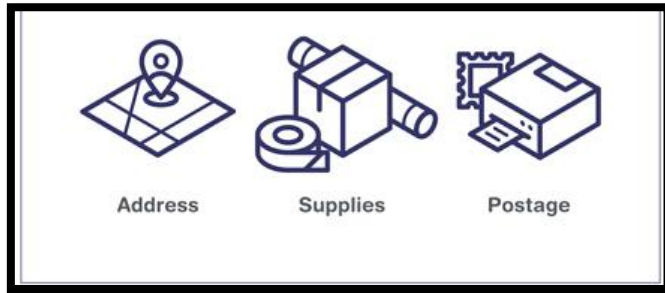
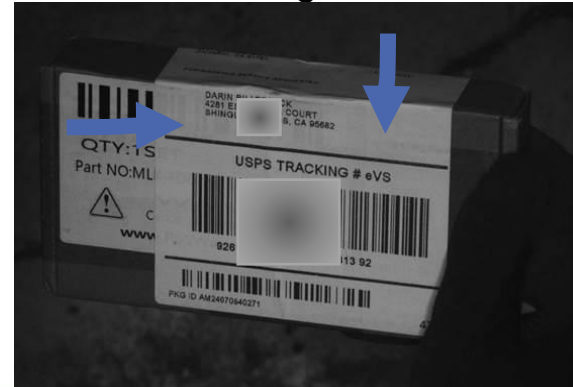


Image sourced from <https://www.usps.com/ship/packages.htm>

Don't:

- Use thin label stock - barcodes and text under the label are visible
- Have poor print quality, including streaks and fading



Physical Gaps – Print Quality

Do:

- Use high contrast black on white with quality printer ink and sufficient dry time



Don't:

- Have poor print quality, including streaks and fading



Physical Gaps – Packaging

Do:

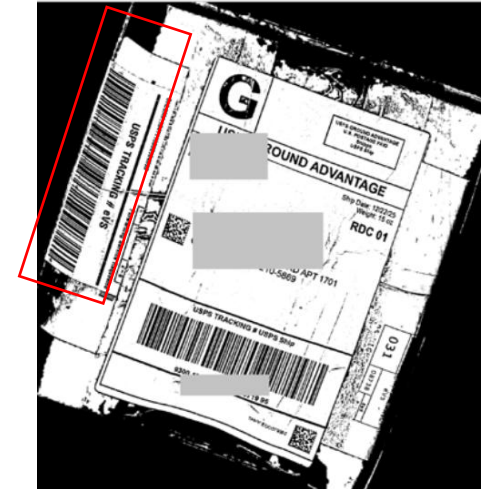
- Properly deface or remove old labels and hazmat markings



Image sourced from https://about.usps.com/notices/not128/not128_003.htm

Don't:

- Leave old barcodes and markings on a reused shipping box



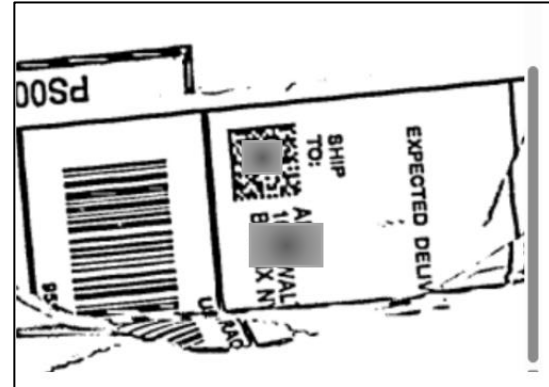
Physical Gaps – Packaging

Do:

- Use Self Adhesive labels
OR
- Use clear shipping tape to securely affix labels on all four sides and to cover address areas.
- Avoid putting tape over the barcode. Mail Processing equipment cannot scan barcodes with tape over them.

Don't:

- Secure only part of a label, enabling it to catch and be ripped off during automated processing



Physical Gaps – Packaging

Poly bags are cost-effective but can be tricky to automate due to their irregular shapes and varying contents

Do:

- Flatten the contents to apply the shipping label and avoid creases
- Use a “snug fit” size poly bag for contents and fill excess space with filler for bags that are larger than content
- Affix the label to the largest flat area and avoid placing it over seams or bulges that could distort the barcode.
- Ensure your mailer is at least 2 mils thick for items up to 5 lbs and 4 mils thick for items up to 10 lbs

Don't:

- Have too much empty space / overhang (“selvage”)
- Use for heavy or fragile goods
- Overstuff



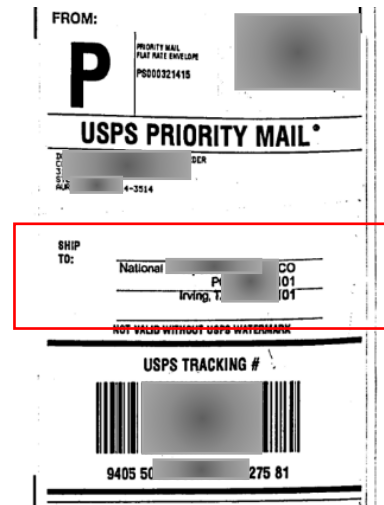
Physical Gaps – Address Placement

Do:

- Validate your address, including ZIP +4, Delivery Point, and Secondary Unit designators
- Use DMM Section 602, Basic Standards for All Mailing Services – Addressing
 - <https://pe.usps.com/archive/pdf/dmmarchive20100607/602.pdf>
- Use Publication 28 – Addressing
 - <https://pe.usps.com/cpim/ftp/pubs/pub28/pub28.pdf>

Don't:

- Improperly address
- This reduces OCR (Optical Character Recognition) ability to read
- This address is **right** justified instead of **left**
- Lines in address impede OCR read



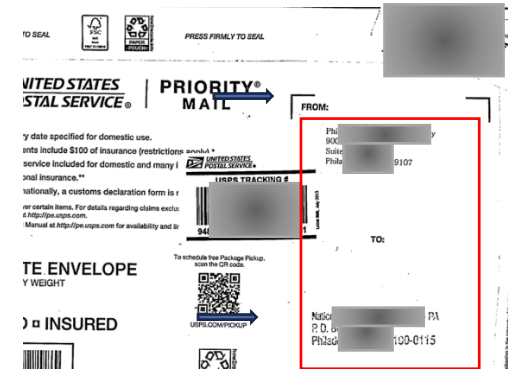
Physical Gaps – Address Placement

Do:

- Use DMM Section 602, Basic Standards for All Mailing Services – Addressing
 - <https://pe.usps.com/archive/pdf/dmmarchive20100607/602.pdf>
- Use Publication 28 – Addressing
 - <https://pe.usps.com/cpim/ftp/pubs/pub28/pub28.pdf>

Don't:

- Improperly address
- This delivery address is not properly indented past the return address



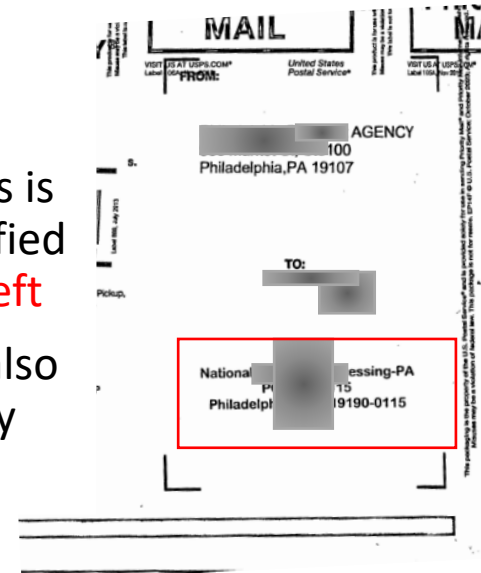
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- Use Publication 28 – Addressing
 - <https://pe.usps.com/cpim/ftp/pubs/pub28/pub28.pdf>

Don't:

- Improperly Address
- This address is **center** justified instead of **left**
- Address is also not properly indented



Data & Security Gaps

Where do scans break down?

- Missing manifest information/address
- Incorrect routing information (mismatch between routing in barcode/SSF and address on package)
- Container nesting errors
- Address correction & forwarding issue
- Duplicate tracking numbers (120 days)
- Counterfeit and Fraudulent labels



Operational Gaps

- Why do scans break down?
- Unreadable or poorly placed labels
 - Won't be picked up by automation
 - Require OCR to sort
 - Can require manual key entry, which are subject to human error
- Induction without acceptance event
- Oversized and non machinable packages require manual handling and often missed scans
- Packages with damaged barcodes will be delivered, but without tracking visibility

Latest Update

We now anticipate delivery of your package the next business day. We apologize for the delay.

Get More Out of USPS Tracking:

 USPS Tracking Plus®

Alert

Awaiting Delivery

March 28, 2026, 9:13 pm

Out for Delivery

GERMANTOWN, MD 20874

March 28, 2026, 9:01 am

[See All Tracking History](#)

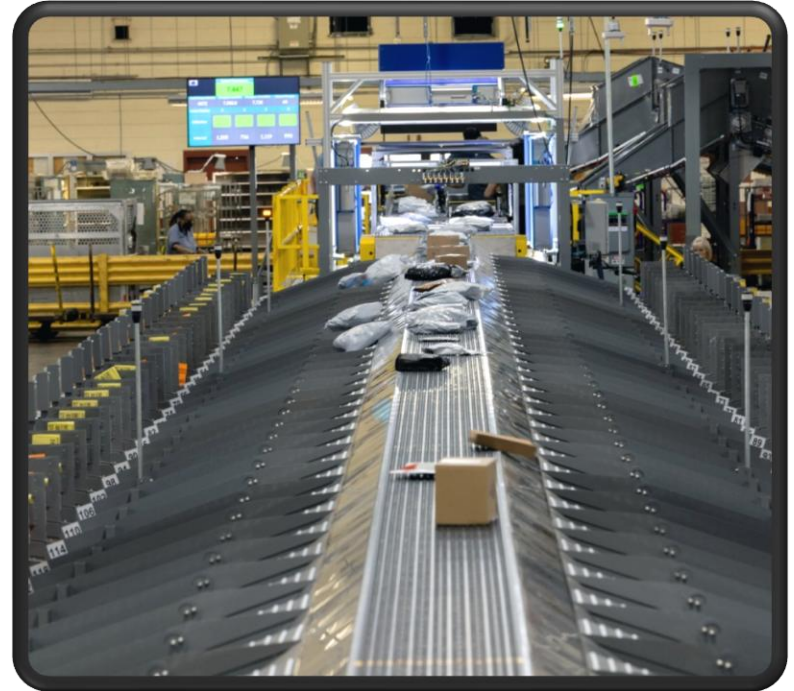


Image sourced from
<https://news.usps.com/2025/08/04/the-next-generation-of-sorters-is-here/>

Best Practices for Scan Success



Image sourced from USPS digital images

Best Practices for Scanning Success

- ❑ **Optimization:** Choosing the right tools, printer types, label stock, and packaging.
- ❑ **Execution:** Placement of labels (following the "Do's and Don'ts") and design for automation.
- ❑ **Integration:** Leverage software systems for better data flow.



Image sourced from <https://www.usps.com/ship/packages.htm>

Optimization: Barcode and Label

- ☐ Use the “Do and Don’t” rules, and:
 - ☐ Use correct Service Type Code and MID
 - ☐ Never reuse tracking numbers within 120 days
- ☐ Consult the Parcel Labeling Guide for more information
- ☐ Test / verify sample runs before scaling
- ☐ Refer your customers to the USPS.com page or your own best practices page

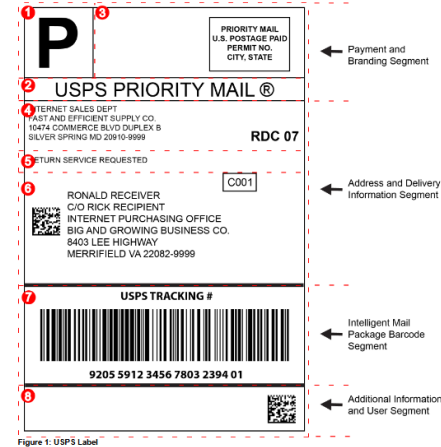


Figure 1: USPS Label

Parcel Labeling Guide

For USPS® Domestic Shipping Labels

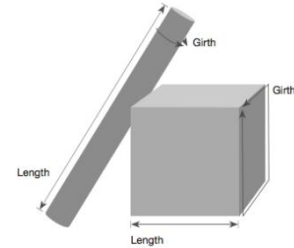
Key Resource: <https://postalpro.usps.com/parcellabelingguide>



Execution: Design for Automation First

Avoid packaging with negative scanning impacts:

- Reflective plastic surfaces
- Dark poly materials
- Curved cylinders
- Crushed corners, reused unstable boxes
- Overfilled cartons
- Non machinable sizes, weights, and shapes



Integration



Tracking APIs



Webhooks



Scan Event
Extract files



Modernization: PTR is currently being modernized and both PTR (v3.0) and PTR2 (v3.2) Tracking APIs are available for integration



Integration with the USPS: Get direct, low-latency data from USPS systems.



Third-Party Integrations: Platforms offering flexible systems and value-added services tailored to your business, enabling faster adaptation with minimal development.



Improved Customer Experience: Customers can track their orders directly on your website, increasing time spent on your platform and building trust.



Proactive Engagement: Use webhooks to trigger automatic email/SMS alerts for every milestone—from "Label Created" to "Delivered."



Support Relief: Reduce "Where is my order?" calls by providing real-time self-service tracking.

Integration: Pre Production Label Approval Checklist

Verify barcode readability score

Confirm data elements and routing

Validate payment and Shipping Services files

Integrate with USPS Systems for tracking (Scan Event Extracts, APIs, Webhooks) or third party providers

Get your labels certified by the NCSC (National Customer Service Center)

- Call: 1-877-264-9693 Option 5
- USPS Mailing and Shipping Solutions Center Call: 1-877-672-0007
- Delivery.confirmation@usps.gov



Future Outlook and Takeaways



Image sourced from USPS digital images

Future Outlook & Takeaways

What's Changing:

- ✓ New tracking access controls
- ✓ Future barcode standards and enhancements
- ✓ Picture Proof of Delivery



Image sourced from
USPS digital images

What's Changing: Package Tracking Data Access Control

- Starting April 1, 2026, the USPS will enhance security and ensure that access is granted to the appropriate entities, by implementing access controls to our tracking methods (API, webhooks, and scan event extract)
- Package tracking data will be available to end merchants, shippers, and label providers at no cost
- Other businesses will be able to access package tracking information with an IP agreement; may be subject to a fee

User Type	Access	Fees
Shipper / Platform Create labels with barcodes containing issued mailer ID (MID)	Access to label generation, rates and tracking for MIDs directly owned	No Cost
Label Provider / Consolidator Label provider that has been granted full access to a shipper's MID to produce labels, access rates and receive tracking data	Access to label generation, rates and tracking	No Cost
Service Provider A third-party service provider, for example a tracking analytics, or audit services, authorized by a shipper to access their MID solely for tracking data	Access to tracking data for select MIDs	Paid
Other Companies who provide tracking data to customers for all shippers	Access to tracking data only	Paid

Need more info?



Contact Support



User Group 2 – PTR / USPS Ship
Task Team 40 – IMpb Evolution (Linear to 2D) -->
Work Group 198 – IMmb Modernization

- **Current State:** Linear barcodes are vulnerable and reaching their data limit.
- **Future State:** 2D barcodes offer a scalable, secure, and data-rich alternative.
- **Next Step:** Launching an industry Work Group to define standards and the rollout roadmap.

**Want to participate?
Contact us!**



Picture Proof of Delivery



Building customer trust and confidence is the core of USPS Picture Proof of Delivery, which will capture a photo at the final drop-off location to enhance security, reduce disputes, and verify package placement.



Shipper pilot aimed for Fall 2026 via Webhooks



Expanded pilot targeted for January 2027



```
"eventAttribute": "01",  
"eventCity": "WASHINGTON",  
"eventCode": "01",  
"eventState": "DC",  
"eventTimestamp": "2026-07-06T13:23:02-05:00",  
"eventType": "Delivered, In/At Mailbox",  
"eventZipCode": "20001",  
"GMTTimestamp": "2026-07-06T18:23:02Z",  
"GMTOffset": "-05:00",  
"imageUrl": "XYZTBD.url",  
"trackingNumber": "9205500000000000000000",  
"veriPoint": true
```

Resources

Start with PTR
on Postal Pro!



Name	URL
Need help integrating?	https://developers.usps.com/apis https://developers.usps.com/contact-us https://emailus.usps.com/s/usps-APIs
Parcel Labeling Guide	https://postalpro.usps.com/parcellabelingguide
USPS.com information on packing, labeling and shipping packages	https://www.usps.com/ship/mail-shipping-services.htm https://about.usps.com/posters/pos81.pdf https://www.usps.com/ship/packages.htm https://about.usps.com/postal-bulletin/2007/html/pb22200/pb8kitt_010.html
Addressing	DMM Section 602 https://pe.usps.com/archive/pdf/dmmarchive20100607/602.pdf Publication 28 – Addressing https://pe.usps.com/cpim/ftp/pubs/pub28/pub28.pdf
MTAC – User Group 2, Task Team 40, Work Group 198	https://postalpro.usps.com/mtac
PTR: Pub 199, Modernization info, Scan Event Codes docs and more!	https://postalpro.usps.com/product-tracking-and-reporting



More questions? Send us an email!

Amanda Kirschner





Informed Delivery Mobile®



Scan to go to the Apple App store

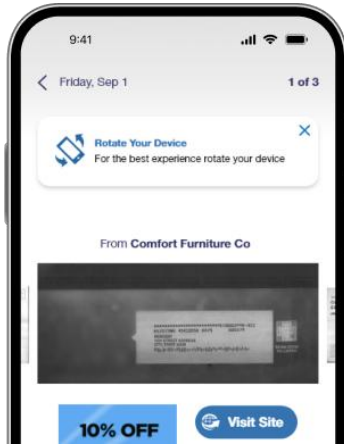
Download the
Informed Delivery
Mobile app today.



Scan to go to the Google Play store

Mobile app users can preview incoming mail and packages, and...

Manage incoming mail and
interact with digital content



Get real-time updates with
optional push notifications



Track packages and share
package statuses with
others

