

PREFACE

USPS-LR-L-132

PRIORITY MAIL FLAT-RATE BOX QUALITATIVE MARKET RESEARCH

This Category 2 library reference consists of the final report by National Analysts for its qualitative research on Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box mailers. Witness Scherer cites to and sponsors this research in his Priority Mail Rate Design testimony (USPS-T-33).

**PRIORITY MAIL FLAT RATE BOX
QUALITATIVE MARKET RESEARCH**

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Attachments:

- A. Post Office Intercept Focus Group Flyer
- B. Screening Forms
- C. Discussion Guides
- D. Stimulus Materials

I. INTRODUCTION

National Analysts was commissioned by the United States Postal Service to perform qualitative research on the Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box that complements the internal analyses being performed by Postal Service personnel.

Specifically, this qualitative research was undertaken to better understand the: (1) characteristics of Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box mailings and sources used to obtain supplies; (2) motivations and benefits (i.e., value) attached to its usage; (3) impact of the Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box on other postal and non-postal mailing methods; and (4) future needs and expectations of current Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box users. This information is not readily available from Postal Service data sources and requires direct discussions with Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box users. Furthermore, the findings presented in this Category 2 library reference support the testimony of Mr. Tom Scherer.

II. PROJECT OVERVIEW

Qualitative research -- focus groups and in-depth interviews -- was undertaken to capture the opinions and experiences of the range of Postal Service customers currently using Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes. Both household and business users were included as were customers who paid postage for at least some of their boxes at the retail counter (considered retail customers) and those who paid postage for at least some of their boxes electronically (considered non-retail customers). Retail business and household users were queried in four different cities from March 22, 2006 to April 11, 2006. Two retail business groups and one household group were convened in each city: New York, Los Angeles, Phoenix, and Houston, for a total of twelve focus groups overall. Non-retail business users were interviewed individually by telephone from March 3, 2006 to April 13, 2006 to ensure that some of the largest non-retail business users of Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes were included in this research.¹ Multiple sources were used to identify potential

¹ Those who paid postage for their Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes using both methods – at the retail counter and via electronic means – were designated retail if they participated in the focus groups and non-retail if they completed in-depth telephone interviews.

respondents for screening and inclusion in both the focus groups and in-depth interviews to ensure that the full range of current users was included.

All potential participants were telephone screened to determine eligibility prior to their participation. Retail business and household customers were considered eligible if they had: 1) mailed at least one package between December 1, 2005 and February 28, 2006 using a Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box; and 2) paid the postage for that package at a post office counter. Non-retail business customers were considered eligible if they had: 1) mailed at least one package between December 1, 2005 and February 28, 2006 using a Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box; and 2) paid the postage for that package electronically and *not* at a post office. Detailed information regarding the sample design, development of the research materials, data collection procedures, analysis, and key findings appears in the following sections.

III. SAMPLE DESIGN

A. Sample Sources

The sample for this research came from five different sources. Some of these sources were used for both the focus groups and in-depth telephone interviews, while others were used for only one of them. Table 1 below identifies each source and the purpose for which it was used. A more complete description of each source follows thereafter.

Table 1
Sample Sources & Their Uses

Sample Sources	Focus Groups	In-Depth Telephone Interviews
Pitney Bowes DDD	X	X
Click-N-Ship	X	X
PC Postage		X
Local & Facility Directories	X	
Post Office Intercepts	X	

- Pitney Bowes DDD

This electronic file, provided by the Postal Service, represented customers (once transaction-level data were aggregated) who ordered Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box supplies from Pitney Bowes DDD between December 1, 2005 and February 28, 2006. It contained relevant customer identification data (e.g., business name, address, telephone number, etc.) as well as the volume of boxes ordered during this timeframe.

- Click-N-Ship

This electronic file, provided by the Postal Service, represented customers (once transaction-level data were aggregated) who used Click-N-Ship between December 1, 2005 and February 28, 2006 to pay postage and/or prepare labels for their Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes. It contained relevant customer identification data as well as a paid/unpaid label designation and type of account (e.g., personal/business) which were needed to separate retail/non-retail and business/household customers.

- PC Postage

This electronic file contained the names and relevant postage information for individuals or companies that used PC Postage between December 1, 2005 and February 28, 2006 to pay for their Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes. Nationwide users of any of the PC Postage vendors were represented. It included the name of the PC Postage vendor, user name, address, telephone number, and number of Flat-Rate Boxes sent within the relevant time period.

- Local and Facility Directories

This source included both electronic and paper directories of businesses and households maintained by the focus group facility (i.e., their own database of potential respondents) as well as white/yellow pages containing listings within the recruitment radius of the focus group facility.

- Post Office Intercepts

This list was developed during the recruitment process. It included retail household and business customers using Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes at two post offices within the recruitment radius of each focus group facility known to have high volume Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box usage.

B. Focus Group Sample (Retail Business & Household Users)

The portion of the Pitney Bowes DDD and Click-N-Ship files that corresponded to the recruitment radius of each focus group facility (defined by ZIP Codes) was provided to each facility with instructions to call listed individuals or businesses at random from each list.² In addition, each facility was permitted to supplement these lists with customers identified through the post office intercepts and/or from their own or other local directories. In terms of the post office intercepts in each city, recruiters were stationed at each post office for several hours over a two-day period. They handed out flyers (see Attachment A) inviting interested Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box customers to call the specific focus group facility in each city to be screened for possible participation in the focus group discussion.

C. In-Depth Telephone Interview Sample (Non-Retail Business Users)

Each of the three lists used to recruit in-depth telephone interview respondents was stratified by volume (high and non-high volume customers) to ensure that some of the largest non-retail business customers were included in this research. In addition, quotas were established such that a specific number of completed interviews would be obtained from each list.

The definitions used for high/non-high volume and the targeted number of interviews varied by list given different usage levels as follows:

² The portion of the Click-N-Ship file that was provided to the facilities represented only those who prepared their label online and did not pay the postage online. In addition, the file was sorted by account type so that it would be easier and more efficient for recruiters to identify and contact retail business and household customers as needed.

- Pitney Bowes DDD: ordering 5,000 or more Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes between December 1, 2005 and February 28, 2006 was used as the cutoff for high and non-high volume. Overall, the sampling plan called for completing 5 high volume and 10 non-high volume interviews from this list.
- Click-N-Ship: sending 300 or more Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes with paid labels between December 1, 2005 and February 28, 2006 was used as the cutoff for high and non-high volume. Only those designated as business accounts were considered eligible. The sampling plan called for completing 2 high volume and 3 non-high volume interviews from this list.
- PC Postage: sending 500 or more Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes between December 1, 2005 and February 28, 2006 was used as the cutoff for high and non-high volume. The sampling plan called for completing 3 high volume and 7 non-high volume interviews from this list.

IV. DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH MATERIALS

A. Documents Required

Two sets of materials were developed for use in this research: (1) screening forms to determine eligibility and solicit participation during the recruitment phase; and (2) discussion guides and stimulus materials for use during the focus group discussions and in-depth telephone interviews.

B. Content of Documents

Screening Forms

Separate screening forms were developed and used for the different types of respondents as eligibility requirements differed slightly. Retail business and household users were considered eligible if they had: 1) mailed at least one package between December 1, 2005 and February 28, 2006 using a Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box; and 2) paid the postage for that

package **at a post office counter**. Non-retail business customers were considered eligible if they had: 1) mailed at least one package between December 1, 2005 and February 28, 2006 using a Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box; and 2) paid the postage for that package **electronically** and **not** at a post office counter, Automated Postal Center (APC), or by using their own postage meter.

The screening forms (see Attachment B) included questions to verify household and/or business Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box usage, determine eligibility for the study, and obtain selected characteristics of Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box usage. In order to ensure a broad range of customer opinions and experiences, recruiters were instructed to obtain a mix of respondents based upon selected characteristics. Specifically, for business respondents there were questions to:

- Verify the telephone number.
- Determine/confirm a potential respondent's responsibility regarding business mailing decisions so that only the responsible individual was interviewed.
- Eliminate any potential respondent whose household members had worked or were currently working for mail/package services, market research or advertising providers.
- Eliminate any potential respondent who had participated in a group discussion for market research purposes within the previous six months.
- Determine the number of business packages that had been mailed using a Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box between December 1, 2005 and February 28, 2006.
- Identify whether those Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes contained physical items or documents.
- Identify whether the recipients of these Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes were businesses or households.

- Determine how the Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box postage was paid.
- Identify the business type and number of employees in respondent's business.

For household respondents, there were questions to:

- Verify the telephone number.
- Determine/confirm a potential respondent's responsibility regarding household mailing decisions so that only the responsible individual was interviewed.
- Eliminate any potential respondent whose household members had worked or were currently working for mail/package services, market research or advertising providers.
- Eliminate any potential respondent who had participated in a group discussion for market research purposes within the previous six months.
- Determine the number of household packages that had been mailed using a Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box between December 1, 2005 and February 28, 2006.
- Identify whether the contents of those Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes contained physical items or documents.
- Identify whether recipients of the Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes were businesses or households.
- Determine the age, annual household income, and ethnicity of the potential respondent.

Discussion Guides and Stimulus Materials

Two discussion guides (see Attachment C) were developed: one for the focus group discussions and another for the in-depth interviews. The guides were designed to elicit information on current Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box usage, motivations, and benefits. In addition, questions were posed regarding previous shipping methods used as well as future methods that would be utilized were Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes unavailable. Specifically, there were questions to:

- Determine the number and shapes of Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes used in the three months prior to the discussion or interview.
- Elicit the characteristics of the Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box mailings, including the postage payment methods, package contents, destinations, and methods by which packages were entered into the mail stream.
- Identify the sources used for obtaining Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box supplies and respondents' assessment of these sources.
- Discuss the reasons why Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes are used and their value.
- Identify the shipping methods used prior to the introduction of the Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box, and what would be used were they unavailable in the future.
- Assess the need for additional Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box sizes and/or shapes.

To enhance the discussion of the reasons why Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes are used and their perceived benefits, three versions of the stimulus materials (see Attachment D) were prepared corresponding to the type of respondent – focus group business customers, in-depth telephone interview business customers, and focus group household customers. The business customer stimulus materials varied only in terms of wording to make each suitable for either self-administration (in the focus groups) or interviewer administration (in the in-depth telephone interviews). The household customer stimulus sheet contained

fewer items as those statements pertaining exclusively to business customers were not included (e.g., simplifies business operations, etc.).

V. DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

A. Screening and Recruiting

Potential participants were contacted by telephone for screening and possible invitation to attend a focus group discussion or complete a telephone interview. Participation was reconfirmed by telephone or email two days prior to each focus group or in-depth interview. Subsequently, each non-retail business customer was called and interviewed at the scheduled time unless rescheduling proved necessary. The retail business and household customer focus groups convened as scheduled.

B. Conduct of the Focus Groups and In-Depth Telephone Interviews

Prior to conduct of the focus groups/interviews, the characteristics of cooperating respondents were reviewed to make certain the desired distributions in terms of usage and demographic/firmographic characteristics were achieved. The research project was managed and performed by Ms. Rothschild, a Vice President of National Analysts. She was supported by an experienced project manager. Ms. Rothschild conducted all of the focus groups and a portion of the in-depth telephone interviews; the remaining in-depth interviews were conducted by the project manager.

After the groups/interviews were completed, the results were analyzed. Key findings appear in Section VI below.

C. Characteristics of Focus Group and In-Depth Telephone Interview Participants

In total, 12 focus group discussions and 30 in-depth telephone interviews were completed: 4 focus group discussions with retail household customers; 8 focus group discussions with retail business customers; and 30 in-depth telephone interviews with non-retail business customers. (See Tables 2 and 3 below.) In total, nearly 140 individuals were queried as

part of this research. Between 7 and 10 individuals participated in each focus group. Among the 108 focus group respondents, 26 came from the Pitney Bowes DDD list; 7 came from the Click-N-Ship list, and the remaining 75 came from either local directories or post office intercepts.

Table 2
Distribution of Focus Group Participants by Respondent Type & City

Respondent Type	Total	New York	Los Angeles	Phoenix	Houston
Consumer Participants	35	9	8	8	10
Business Participants	73	20	19	18	16
Total	108	29	27	26	26

Table 3
Distribution of In-Depth Telephone Interview Participants
by Volume & Sample Source

Respondent Type	Total	Pitney Bowes DDD	PC Postage	Click-N-Ship
High Volume Users	10	5	3	2
Non-High Volume	20	10	7	3
Total	30	15	10	5

VI. KEY FINDINGS AND INSIGHTS

A. Overview

Key findings from the 12 focus groups and 30 in-depth telephone interviews are organized as follows: (1) characteristics of Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box mailings and supply sources; (2) motivations and benefits attached to its usage; (3) impact of Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes on postal and non-postal mailing methods; and (4) future needs and expectations of current Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box users.

B. Characteristics of Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box Mailings & Supply Sources

Business and household customers use both Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box shapes to send their items. While both shapes are used for physical items (e.g., books, clothing, tapes, electronics, collectibles, etc.) and documents, customers prefer the cube-shaped box for physical objects and the shirt-shaped box for papers, reports, and other documents. The cube-shaped box is preferred for objects because of the way it opens and users' ability to place items in the box more carefully and securely. Both box shapes are being sent to customers, family members, friends, and military personnel stationed overseas.

Packages typically weigh three pounds or more. Many respondents felt that their Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes were usually in the 3 to 10 pound range, although some could point to a few heavier exceptions (e.g., 15, 20, or 25 pounds). The heaviest packages frequently contained books, equipment parts, cosmetics/grooming aids, and coins or other collectibles. Shipping destinations include all fifty states, as well as APO/FPO addresses. Respondents indicated that they sent their boxes locally and to neighboring and distant states. Several indicated that they used Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes to send "Adopt A Soldier" packages regularly.

Generally, retail customers obtained and paid their postage for these boxes at the post office (either at the window or Automated Postal Center – APC), although for some of their mailings, they used their postage meters or even some form of online postage. In contrast, non-retail customers (i.e., all those interviewed by telephone) primarily paid postage either online or through their postage meters. They rarely, if ever, paid for their postage in the retail setting.

Retail customers most frequently reported entering their Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes into the mail stream at a post office retail window. However, these same customers also indicated that they had deposited packages in collection bins, at designated counter locations, or at loading docks in some post offices on a few occasions when they had prepared their shipping labels and paid postage online. Occasionally, retail customers (i.e., those who most often paid for and deposited their packages at the post office)

reported handing their fully prepared packages to their mail carrier. In contrast, high volume non-retail business customers most often arranged for carrier pick-up and rarely, if ever, deposited their packages at the retail counter.

Retail and non-retail customers reported using both Non-Flat-Rate Priority Mail Boxes and Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes regularly, with no confusion as to which box type is the appropriate one to use on a given occasion. Respondents reported that they could readily decide which Priority Mail box (i.e., non-flat-rate or flat-rate) to use based on a combination of factors, namely, the: (1) size and weight of the items being mailed; (2) package destination; and (3) convenience/ease of use.

Retail customers reported using two sources for obtaining their Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes. Those sending relatively few boxes (e.g., less than 10 in a 3-month period) typically obtain them at post offices. Those who needed larger quantities ordered them online, through the USPS website, so they would have sufficient quantities on hand to meet their volume needs. Non-retail customers routinely ordered online and only occasionally obtained some of their boxes from area post offices when necessary (e.g., their stock was depleted before they could place an order or their expected shipment arrived). Ordering these boxes online is perceived as a major convenience, especially since other supplies (e.g., Express Mail boxes, envelopes, etc.) are often requested at the same time.

C. Motivations and Benefits Attached to Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box Usage

- Saving Money and Improving Ease of Use/Convenience

Initially, nearly all users – retail and non-retail and business and household customers – reported they were prompted to use Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes because of the savings in postage costs. However, now, in addition to saving money, other benefits related to the convenience and ease of using these boxes have become equally important. Business customers, in particular, note that their time is valuable, and that products designed to increase efficiency, reduce preparation hassles, simplify business record-keeping, and, thus, save them time are especially attractive. By avoiding the need to weigh each package and consult

zone charts to determine postage costs, business customers are able to streamline and simplify their mailing operations. In some cases, business and household customers indicate that even when the flat rate is a slightly higher price than regular non-flat-rate Priority Mail postage, the convenience of using the Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box outweighs any postage savings they might have obtained otherwise. One retail business customer aptly conveys the thoughts expressed by several others:

“It’s really time-consuming to go to USPS.com and figure out what your box weighs [depending upon its destination]. Sometimes you’re six ounces off and it bumps the postage up to the next rate; it just isn’t worth saving \$1.05 to spend twenty minutes online to try to figure out what it’s going to cost. And then you get to the post office and it’s wrong anyway.”

As many business and household customers conclude:

“You don’t have to worry about what it weighs...you just throw it in the Flat-Rate Box and you ship it.”

- Stimulating Business Growth

Knowing postage costs up front enables business users to communicate the shipping costs to prospective customers without having to weigh the contents in advance. This is especially important to eBay retailers, who are able to post exact shipping prices with their products. The flat-rate box allows retailers to offer prospective buyers the opportunity to purchase more products without incurring additional shipping fees. Furthermore, a sizable contingent indicated that they now include promotional materials or gifts with their orders without added postage costs. This procedure enables them to promote their businesses more effectively.

“It encourages my customers to buy more. If they buy an extra item, it’s not going to cost them any more for shipping.”

"If my customer has five pounds' worth of stuff and there's more space left over in there, rather than putting just padding in there, we'll add promotional stuff...This helps promote our business. It makes our customers happy to get freebies."

- Increasing Military "Care" Packages and Other Communications

Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes have encouraged those participating in Adopt-A-Soldier programs to do so with more ease and frequency. By using Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes, these respondents note they are able to send more of the items requested by soldiers serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, and to send these care packages more frequently without incurring higher shipping expenses. In fact, for those who budget a specific monthly amount (e.g., \$150) for such mailings, the Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes enable them to spend more on the contents (e.g., clothes, magazines, etc.) because they spend less on the postage.

"I've been sending boxes to Iraq. I just throw things in for the service guys. I can really just pack it up and it saves me postage. So, then I can afford to put more stuff in for the service people. I have \$150 a month to spend on this. This is like my charity work. If, instead of spending \$12 on a box, I can spend \$8.10, that leaves me \$4.00 where I can pick up another eight packs of tuna fish when it's on sale for the soldiers, or I can put in another container of powdered Gatorade. I do 'x' number of soldiers. So I take 'x' amount of money per soldier. And what I don't have to spend in shipping, I can put into the contents."

As the wife of a military veteran noted:

"I'm in a group with a bunch of veterans and we adopted a platoon. The Flat-Rate Boxes are great for that. You can fit a lot in those

boxes. I probably wouldn't send some of the [requested] heavy items if I were paying more."

- Obtaining Speedier & More Reliable Delivery

Some of the Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box retail and non-retail business and household users mentioned that speedier and more reliable delivery is another added benefit. Because flat-rate boxes are often being used for packages going long distances (e.g., coast-to-coast), they arrive at their destinations more quickly than they would had ground services been used. This improved delivery speed enables household users to send gifts more quickly (and economically) and business users to delight their own customers.

"People are just astounded at how quickly they get their package...When people get their parts from us really quickly, they'll remember that and they'll shop more from us."

D. Impact of Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box on Postal & Non-Postal Mailing Methods

All types of customers reported that their Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box volume has come from three sources. First, some portion represents merely a transition from non-flat-rate Priority Mail to the flat rate. Second, a small portion has come as a result of upgrading from other Postal Service mail classes (e.g., Media Mail or Parcel Post). Third, a sizable portion represents incremental volume from non-postal competitors.

While the service upgrades and incremental volume represent customer cost savings, many users point out, at the same time, that Priority Mail Flat-Rate Boxes are reliably delivered in two to three days everywhere in the United States, versus four, five, or more days using competitors' ground services. With lower shipping costs and better delivery times, the Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box is deemed a better value overall.

“Our customers are so impressed because we use Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box and they get their boxes in two to three days. They swear they just ordered it. They’re like, ‘I just ordered that last night and this morning, the box is on my step.’ They just love that. If you have something heavier that you might have used FedEx ground for, that could take five days. With Flat-Rate Box, you have the huge savings in time and the savings in the cost.”

E. Future Needs & Expectations of Current Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box Users

Although the two existing Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box shapes are meeting the needs of most customers, there is interest in additional flat-rate box shapes and sizes to accommodate both smaller and larger items. Ideally, users sending small objects (e.g., small cosmetics, jewelry, etc.) would like a ½ cube and those who now use two cubes for one shipment would like a double size one.

Business customers have come to rely upon the Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box as a vital component of their business operations. The ease of use and cost savings have brought greater efficiency and simplicity to their business shipping operations. As a result, many express the belief that the Postal Service is demonstrating a new commitment to garnering and keeping package shipments. A non-retail business customer states:

“The image of the post office isn’t like the Pony Express anymore, an archaic company. They [the Postal Service] are on the same wave length as the rest of us. They’ve made it simple and they understand that time is of the essence. They’re working with people for convenience.”

Accordingly, current users are unequivocal in expressing the opinion that the Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box has become one of their preferred shipping methods.

Attachments

- A. Post Office Intercept Focus Group Flyer**

- B. Screening Forms**
 - **Business Focus Groups**
 - **Household Focus Groups**
 - **In-Depth Telephone Interviews**

- C. Discussion Guides**
 - **Business and Household Focus Groups**
 - **In-Depth Telephone Interviews**

- D. Stimulus Materials**
 - **Household Focus Groups**
 - **Business Focus Groups**
 - **In-Depth Telephone Interviews**

A. Post Office Intercept Focus Group Flyer



**ATTENTION
PRIORITY MAIL FLAT RATE BOX USERS**

The Postal Service is interested in your opinions on its new Priority Mail flat rate boxes. If you have used this product within the past three months for business or personal use and would like to help us continue to improve this product and provide better service, you may qualify to participate in a lively focus group. **If you qualify and attend the group, you will be paid for your participation in this study.**

For more information about this month's focus groups in New York conducted by the market research firm of National Analysts, please call Barbara at Schlesinger Associates, 800-981-3923, ext. 420 (Monday through Sunday) by March 22 to ensure there is a spot left for you!

Thank you,

Greg Whiteman
Manager, Market Research
United States Postal Service

Beth Rothschild
Vice President
National Analysts



**NATIONAL ANALYSTS
RESEARCH & CONSULTING**

B. Screening Forms

USPS FLAT RATE BOX FOCUS GROUP SCREENER
BUSINESS CUSTOMERS -- NEW YORK CITY

IDENTIFY MALE OR FEMALE:

FEMALE

MALE

GET A MIX

FROM LIST:

CHECK ONE:

DDD

CLICK-N-SHIP

FROM DATABASE

OTHER

(SPECIFY)

ASK FOR NAME ON LIST OR, IF ONLY COMPANY NAME IS PROVIDED, ASK TO SPEAK WITH THE PERSON MOST RESPONSIBLE FOR SELECTING MAILING METHODS FOR BUSINESS PACKAGES. OR, CALL USING DATABASE/REFERRALS, ETC.

NAME: _____

COMPANY NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE: _____

ZIP CODE: _____

TELEPHONE #: (_____) _____

GROUP SCHEDULE

Attending:

Wednesday, March 22, 2006

GROUP 1 () 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM – Business Customers

Thursday, March 23, 2006

GROUP 3 () 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM – Business Customers

SUGGESTED INTRODUCTION: Hello, I'm _____ calling for National Analysts, a market research and consulting firm in Philadelphia. We're conducting a research study about the Postal Service's new Priority Mail flat rate boxes. We're inviting people who meet certain qualifying specifications to participate in an informal group discussion on **(DAY/DATE)**. May I ask you a few questions to see if you qualify? **[IF NECESSARY]** All of your comments will be confidential.

Are you available on that date?

Yes ()

No () **THANK AND TERMINATE**

1. Are you the person in your company who has the primary responsibility for making decisions about which carriers and services to use when shipping packages for business purposes?

Yes () **SKIP TO Q.3**

No ()

2. What is the name of the person in your company who has the primary responsibility for making decisions about which carriers and services to use when shipping packages for business purposes? **RECORD NAME AND ASK TO SPEAK TO THAT PERSON. REPEAT INTRODUCTION AND Q.1**

NAME AND PHONE # OF SHIPPING DECISION MAKER

3. Are or were you, or is or was any member of your household or family now or in the past employed by: **READ**

Yes No

The U.S. Postal Service? () ()

A market research company? () ()

An advertising agency? () ()

FedEx, UPS or DHL? () ()

TERMINATE IF "YES" TO ANY OF THE ABOVE

4. Have you ever attended a group discussion for market research purposes?

Yes ()

No () **SKIP TO Q. 6**

5. When was the last time you attended?

MONTH

YEAR

TERMINATE IF WITHIN THE PAST SIX MONTHS

6a. Within the last 3 months, that is, between December 1, 2005 and now, has your business mailed at least one business package using a Priority Mail flat rate box (***by that we mean*** either of the two Priority Mail boxes with a fixed price that does not depend upon the weight of the package) and paid the postage for that package ***at a post office counter even if you printed a mailing label online?***

Yes ()

No () **THANK AND TERMINATE**

6b. Within the past 3 months, how many business packages has your company mailed using a Priority Mail flat rate box (***by that we mean*** either of the two Priority Mail boxes with a fixed price that does not depend upon the weight of the package), where you paid the postage ***at a post office counter even if you printed a mailing label online. (READ)***

0 () **THANK AND TERMINATE**

1 ()

2 to 5 ()

6 to 10 ()

11 to 24 ()

25 to 49 () **GET A MIX**

50 to 99 ()

100 to 249 ()

250 to 499 ()

500 or more ()

TRY TO RECRUIT ONE GROUP WITH RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE 99 OR FEWER TRANSACTIONS, AND THE OTHER WITH RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE 100 OR MORE TRANSACTIONS

7a. Within the last 3 months, have **you** personally paid for any of these Priority Mail flat rate boxes at the post office counter?

Yes () **SKIP TO Q.8**

No () **CONTINUE**

7b. Did you personally decide to use the Priority Mail flat rate box for these business packages instead of some other shipping carrier or service?

Yes ()

No () **THANK AND TERMINATE**

**TRY FOR HALF OF EACH GROUP WHO ANSWER "Yes" to Q.7a
AND HALF WHO ANSWER "Yes" TO Q.7b**

8. Thinking about these business packages, generally what were their contents? Did they contain:
READ AND CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

Physical items (e.g., CDs, DVDs, merchandise, samples, etc.) o ()

GET A MIX

Business papers (e.g., contracts, reports, etc.)? ()

9. To whom were these business packages sent? **READ AND CHECK ALL THAT APPLY**

Businesses, or ()

GET A MIX

Households? ()

10. What type of business is primarily conducted by your organization? **READ AND SELECT ONE.**
GET A MIX OF BUSINESS TYPES.

Agriculture, Mining, Construction	()
Transportation	()
Manufacturing	()
Wholesale	()
Retail/Mail Order	()
Professional Services (e.g., accounting, law, consulting, etc.)	()
Real estate, Insurance, Financial services	()
Printing, Publishing, Communications	()
Non-Profit	()
Healthcare	()
Education	()
Government or Military	()
Other? (Specify) _____	()

11. How many full-time equivalent employees work at your organization? **READ AND SELECT ONE**

- | | | |
|----------------|-----|------------|
| 1 to 9, | () | |
| 10 to 49, | () | |
| 50 to 99, | () | GET |
| 100 to 499, or | () | A |
| 500 or more? | () | MIX |

EXTEND INVITATION TO ELIGIBLE RESPONDENT AND RECORD INFORMATION ON FRONT.

We'd like to invite you to participate in this informal group discussion.

You will receive \$_____ for participating in this research project.

USPS FLAT RATE BOX FOCUS GROUP SCREENER
HOUSEHOLD CUSTOMERS -- NEW YORK CITY

IDENTIFY MALE OR FEMALE:

() FEMALE
GET A MIX
() MALE

FROM LIST:
CHECK ONE:

DDD ()
CLICK-N-SHIP ()
FROM DATABASE ()
OTHER ()

(SPECIFY)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE: _____

ZIP CODE: _____

TELEPHONE #: (_____) _____

GROUP SCHEDULE

Attending:

Wednesday, March 22, 2006

GROUP 2 () 8:00 PM to 10:00 PM – Consumers

SUGGESTED INTRODUCTION: Hello, I'm _____ calling for National Analysts, a market research and consulting firm in Philadelphia. We're conducting a research study about the Postal Service's new Priority Mail flat rate boxes. We're inviting people who meet certain qualifying specifications to participate in an informal group discussion on **(DAY/DATE)**. May I ask you a few questions to see if you qualify? **[IF NECESSARY]** All of your comments will be confidential.

Are you available on that date?

Yes ()

No () **THANK AND TERMINATE**

1. Within the last 3 months, that is, between December 1, 2005 and now, have you personally mailed at least one package using a Priority Mail flat rate box and paid the postage for that package **at a post office counter even if you printed a mailing label online?**

Yes ()

No () **THANK AND TERMINATE**

2. Are or were you, or is or was any member of your household or family now or in the past employed by: **READ**

Yes No

The U.S. Postal Service? () ()

A market research company? () ()

An advertising agency? () ()

FedEx, UPS or DHL? () ()

TERMINATE IF "YES" TO ANY OF THE ABOVE

3. Have you ever attended a group discussion for market research purposes?

Yes ()

No () **SKIP TO Q. 4**

4. When was the last time you attended?

MONTH

YEAR

TERMINATE IF WITHIN THE PAST SIX MONTHS

5. Within the past 3 months, how many household packages have you mailed using a Priority Mail flat rate box (**by that we mean** either of the two Priority Mail boxes with a fixed price that does not depend upon the weight of the package), where you paid the postage **at a post office counter even if you printed a mailing label online.** **(READ)**

0 () **THANK AND TERMINATE**

1 ()

2 to 5 ()

6 to 10 ()

11 to 24 ()

25 to 49 () **GET A MIX**

50 to 99 ()

100 to 249 ()

250 to 499 ()

500 or more ()

6. Thinking about these packages, generally what were their contents? Did they contain: **READ AND CHECK ALL THAT APPLY**

Physical items (e.g., CDs, DVDs, merchandise, etc.)? ()

GET A MIX

Documents ()

7. To whom were these packages sent? **READ AND CHECK ALL THAT APPLY**

Businesses ()

GET A MIX

Households ()

8. Is your age: **READ**

Under 21,	()	TERMINATE
<hr/>		
21 to 35,	()	GET
36 to 45,	()	
46 to 55,	()	A
56 to 70, or	()	MIX
<hr/>		
Over 70?	()	TERMINATE

9. Is your total annual household income before taxes (**READ**)

Under \$20,000,	()	RECRUIT NO MORE THAN 1-2
<hr/>		
\$20,000 to \$39,999,	()	GET
\$40,000 to \$54,999, or	()	A
\$55,000 or more?	()	MIX

10. Would you describe yourself as: **READ**

White/Caucasian,	()	GET
African-American,	()	
Hispanic/Latino,	()	A
Asian-American, or	()	MIX
Another race or ethnicity?	()	
_____	()	
(SPECIFY)		

EXTEND INVITATION TO ELIGIBLE RESPONDENT AND RECORD INFORMATION ON FRONT. We'd like to invite you to participate in this informal group discussion.

You will receive \$_____ for participating in this research project.

NATIONAL ANALYSTS

**STUDY #U002-16-881
MARCH 2006**

RECRUITER INITIALS _____

INTERVIEWER: _____
(Please initial upon completion.)

INCENTIVE PAID () \$ _____

INTERVIEWER #1 BBR ()
INTERVIEWER #2 ASR ()

GET A MIX
East ()
Midwest ()
South ()
West ()

**USPS FLAT-RATE BOX IN-DEPTH TELEPHONE INTERV
BUSINESS CUSTOMERS**

QUOTA (FROM 3 LABELED LISTS PROVIDED):	
<u>CHECK ONE:</u>	
DDD List	()
RECRUIT 10	
DDD List (highest vol.)	()
5 RECRUIT	
PC Postage List	()
RECRUIT 7	

ASK FOR NAME ON LIST OR, IF ONLY COMPANY NAME IS PROVIDED, ASK TO SPEAK WITH THE PERSON MOST RESPONSIBLE FOR SELECTING MAILING METHODS FOR BUSINESS PACKAGES.

NAME: _____

COMPANY NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

BUSINESS TELEPHONE #: () _____ FAX: () _____
(AREA CODE) (AREA CODE)

APPOINTMENT:	INTERVIEW PHONE #:
_____	() _____
DAY/DATE	This # is: home () office () other ()

TIME	

Respondent Time: _____

SEND HONORARIUM TO (If different from address above):

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____ ZIP CODE: _____

SUGGESTED INTRODUCTION: Hello, I'm _____ calling for National Analysts, a market research and consulting firm in Philadelphia. We are conducting research to learn more about the Postal Service's new Priority Mail flat rate boxes. We are inviting people who meet certain qualifying specifications to participate in a 20- to 30-minute telephone interview, which will be scheduled for a convenient date and time. May I ask you a few questions to see if you qualify? **[IF NECESSARY]** Your identity will remain confidential, and your comments will be used for purposes of this research study only.

1. Are you the person in your company who has the primary responsibility for making decisions about which mailing methods to use when shipping packages for business purposes?

Yes () **SKIP TO Q.3**

No ()

2. What is the name of the person in your company who has the primary responsibility for making decisions about which mailing methods to use when shipping packages for business purposes? **RECORD NAME AND PHONE #. ASK TO SPEAK TO THAT PERSON. REPEAT INTRODUCTION AND Q.1**

NAME AND PHONE # OF SHIPPING DECISION MAKER

3. Are or were you, or is or was any member of your household or family now or in the past employed by: **READ**

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
The U.S. Postal Service?	()	()
A market research company?	()	()
An advertising agency?	()	()
FedEx, UPS or DHL?	()	()

TERMINATE IF "YES" TO ANY OF THE ABOVE

4. Within the past 3 months, how many business packages has your company mailed using a Priority Mail flat rate box (**by that we mean** either of the two Priority Mail boxes with a fixed price that does not depend upon the weight of the package), where you paid the postage for that package electronically (using a method such as PC Postage, Click-N-Ship, a postage meter or permit) and not paid for it at a post office counter, *even if you printed a label using Click-N-Ship?*

0	()	THANK AND TERMINATE
1	()	
2 to 5	()	
6 to 10	()	GET
11 to 24	()	A
25 to 49	()	MIX
50 to 99	()	
100 to 249	()	
250 to 499	()	
500 or more	()	

5. Thinking about these business packages, generally what were their contents? Did they contain:
READ AND CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

Physical items (e.g., CDs, DVDs, merchandise, samples, etc.)?	()	
Business papers (e.g., contracts, reports, etc.)?	()	GET A MIX

6. To whom were these business packages sent? **READ AND CHECK ALL THAT APPLY**

Businesses	()	
Households	()	GET A MIX

7. Within the past 3 months, which of the following methods did you use to pay postage for the package(s) you sent using Priority Mail flat rate boxes: **READ AND SELECT ALL**

Postage meter	()
Permit imprint	()
Click-N-Ship on USPS website	()
Stamps. com	()

- Endicia ()
- eBay ()
- Shipstream Manager ()
- Other: _____ ()
(Specify)

**IF ONLY ONE METHOD SELECTED, SKIP TO Q.9
IF 2 OR MORE METHODS SELECTED, ASK Q.8**

8. Within the past 3 months, which postage method did you use most often to pay postage for the packages you sent using Priority Mail flat rate boxes? **READ AND SELECT ONE**

- Postage meter ()
 - Permit imprint ()
 - Click-N-Ship on USPS website ()
 - Stamps. com ()
 - Endicia ()
 - eBay ()
 - Shipstream Manager ()
 - Other: _____ ()
(Specify)
- GET**
- A**
- MIX**

9. What type of business is primarily conducted by your organization? **READ AND SELECT ONE.**
GET A MIX OF BUSINESS TYPES.

Agriculture, Mining, Construction	()
Transportation	()
Manufacturing	()
Wholesale	()
Retail/Mail Order	()
Professional Services (e.g., accounting, law, consulting, etc.)	()
Real estate, Insurance, Financial services	()
Printing, Publishing, Communications	()
Non-Profit	()
Healthcare	()
Education	()
Government or Military	()
Other (Specify):	()

10. How many full-time employees work at your organization? **READ AND SELECT ONE**

- | | | |
|----------------|-----|------------|
| 1 to 9, | () | |
| 10 to 49, | () | |
| 50 to 99, | () | GET |
| 100 to 499, or | () | A |
| 500 or more? | () | MIX |

EXTEND INVITATION TO ELIGIBLE RESPONDENT AND RECORD INFORMATION ON FRONT.

You will receive \$_____ for participating in this research project.

C. Discussion Guides

**Experimental PM Flat-Rate Box Research
Focus Group Discussion Guide – Business & Household Customers**

I. INTRODUCTION (5 to 10 minutes)

- **Ground Rules:** Taping, observers, confidentiality, no cell phones, etc., candor
- **Background & Objectives:** The purpose of today's discussion is to: 1) talk about your use of Priority Mail boxes, especially the flat-rate boxes; 2) identify the benefits and liabilities (if any) associated with using them; and 3) determine what you did when these flat-rate boxes were not available and what you would do if they no longer became available
- **Introductions:**
 - Businesses: Name, title, business type, and parcel shipping responsibilities
 - Consumers: Name, types of "box" mailings

II. PM FLAT-RATE BOX USAGE (25 to 30 minutes)

- **Since the beginning of 2006, which is approximately three months, how many Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes have you/has your business sent? (By flat-rate box, we mean the boxes that can be sent for \$8.10 – previously for \$7.70 – anywhere in the U.S. for this rate regardless of their contents or weight.)**
- **Now I would like to talk about the characteristics of these Priority Mail Flat-Rate box mailings/shipments. In general,...**
 - How many smaller/taller boxes and how many larger boxes were used?
 - What type of postage do you/does your business typically put on the boxes (e.g., stamps, meter, permit imprint, PVI, PC Postage, Click-N-Ship, etc.)? Why?
 - What is typically inside the boxes (e.g., reports, documents, merchandise, tapes, DVDs, etc.)?
 - About how much do the boxes typically weigh? How do you know the weight of the boxes (e.g., from actually weighing them or estimating)?
 - To whom are the boxes typically being sent (e.g., friends, relatives, consumers, business customers, etc.)?
 - Typically, from where are they being sent and where is their destination?
 - How do you/does your business typically enter them into the mail stream (e.g., given to carrier, call for pick-up, take to post office, drop in box, etc.)?

- ***Now think about the last Priority Mail Flat-Rate box mailing you/your company had and tell me about it. What was...***
 - In the box?
 - What type of postage did you put on the box?
 - To whom was it being sent?
 - Where was its destination?
 - Which size box did you use?
 - How much did it weigh?
 - How was it entered into the mail stream?
 - Was this a typical or an atypical flat-rate box mailing? *(Explain why or why not)*

- ***From what sources have you obtained these Flat-Rate Priority Mail boxes? (PROBE)***
 - Local post office (in the neighborhood versus main/special one)
 - Ordering in bulk from USPS supply center
 - How often?
 - How many boxes in each order?
 - What method was used to order them (e.g., online, phone, fax)?
 - Why use this source?
 - How did you find out about this source?
 - Other (e.g., carrier delivered them to you)?

- ***What do you like best about the sources you use for obtaining your Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes? What do you like least? Were supplies plentiful enough?***

III. PM FLAT-RATE BOX USAGE MOTIVATIONS & BENEFITS *(30-45 minutes)*

- ***Generally speaking, what are the reasons why you/your business uses Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes? (PROBE)***
 - Circumstances under which initial decision to use was made
 - Identify first usage occasion and ask for package characteristics
 - Determine if decision made at post office counter or elsewhere
 - Ascertain the decision dynamics – who was involved & why chosen
 - Circumstances under which current decisions to use are made
 - Ascertain extent to which decision criteria change from occasion-to-occasion & influence of...
 - Weight?
 - Contents?
 - Cost?
 - Distance?

- ***In your opinion, what value, if any, do the Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes have for you/your business? (Probe type of value...)***

- Time savings?
 - Cost savings?
 - Convenience/ease of use?
 - Simplification?
 - Enhanced image of product and/or Postal Service?
 - Improved personal/company image?
 - Improved business operations?
- ***(Pass out PM Flat-Rate Box Evaluation Sheet) For each statement on this sheet, please indicate the extent to which it does or does not describe this benefit or value to you/your business. Then we will discuss each of the statements in more detail.***
 - Identify the statements rated most highly & discuss
 - Identify the statements rated least highly & discuss
 - ***Looking over all the statements on the sheet as well as any others that we have discussed, in your view, what are the most important reasons why you/your business uses Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes? (Identify your top 3 and rank order them.)***
 - Attempt to establish relative importance of cost versus convenience
 - Assess impact on perceptions of the Postal Service & Priority Mail product

IV. PREVIOUS & FUTURE PM FLAT-RATE BOX USAGE (20-30 minutes)

- ***To the best of your recollection, how did you/your business send the items now being sent using Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes?***
 - Identify if new items are being sent that were not sent previously (*i.e., if the Priority Mail Flat-Rate box created new mailings that did not exist before*)
- ***What items, if any, would you/your business like to be able to use a Priority Mail Flat-Rate box for today, but are not able to?***
 - What prevents you from using the boxes available today?
 - What minor modifications in the box shape would enable you to use it?
 - If that new shape were available, how many mail pieces might you send using the Priority Mail Flat-Rate box that you do not send today?

(Note for Moderator: If the suggested shape is likely to exceed .34 cubic volume communicate that the price would be likely to increase above \$8.10)

(Large box inside dimensions: 11-7/8 L x 3-3/8 D x 13-5/8 W)

(Small box inside dimensions: 11 L x 8-1/2 D x 5-1/2 W)

- ***Suppose the Postal Service decided to discontinue the Flat-Rate box; that is, they would still offer Priority Mail boxes, but they would not have a flat-rate for them. What would you/your business do? (PROBE)***
 - Would you/your business continue to use Priority Mail?
 - If not, what other product(s) would be used? Why?

V. THANK YOU & WRAP UP (5 minutes)

- ***Collect Evaluation Sheet***
- ***What other comments, if any, do you have regarding the Priority Mail Flat-Rate box?***

**Experimental PM Flat-Rate Box Research
In-Depth Telephone Interview Guide**

I. INTRODUCTION (2 to 3 minutes)

- **Ground Rules:** Taping, confidentiality
- **Background & Objectives:** The purpose of our interview today is to: 1) talk about your use of Priority Mail boxes, especially the flat-rate boxes; 2) identify the benefits and liabilities (if any) associated with using them; and 3) determine what you did when these flat-rate boxes were not available and what you would do if they no longer became available
- **Introduction:** Name, title, business type, and parcel shipping responsibilities

II. PM FLAT-RATE BOX USAGE (8 to 10 minutes)

- **Since the beginning of 2006, which is approximately three months, how many Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes has your business sent? By flat-rate box, we mean the boxes that can be sent for \$8.10 – previously for \$7.70 – anywhere in the U.S. for this rate regardless of their contents or weight.**
- **Now I would like to talk about the characteristics of these Priority Mail Flat-Rate box mailings/shipments. In general,...**
 - What size box is your business using? (*Probe dimensions*)
 - What type of postage does your business typically put on the boxes (e.g., stamps, meter, permit imprint, PVI, PC Postage, Click-N-Ship, etc.)? Why?
 - What is typically inside the boxes (e.g., reports, documents, merchandise, tapes, DVDs, etc.)?
 - About how much do the boxes typically weigh? How do you know the weight of the boxes (e.g., from actually weighing them or estimating)?
 - To whom are the boxes typically being sent (e.g., friends, relatives, consumers, business customers, etc.)?
 - Typically, from where are they being sent and where is their destination?
 - How does your business typically enter them into the mail stream (e.g., given to carrier, call for pick-up, take to post office, drop in box, etc.)?
 - (*If taken to P.O.:*) What proportion has the postage already affixed and what proportion do you pay the postage at the retail counter?
- **Now think about the last Priority Mail Flat-Rate box mailing your company had and tell me about it. What was...**

- In the box?
 - What type of postage did you put on the box?
 - To whom was it being sent?
 - Where was its destination?
 - Which size box did you use?
 - How much did it weigh?
 - How was it entered into the mail stream?
 - Was this a typical or an atypical flat-rate box mailing? *(Explain why or why not)*
- ***From what sources have you obtained these Flat-Rate Priority Mail boxes? (Probe...)***
 - Local post office (in the neighborhood versus main/special one)
 - Ordering in bulk from USPS supply center
 - How often?
 - How many boxes in each order?
 - What method was used to order them (e.g., online, phone, fax)?
 - Why use this source?
 - How did you find out about this source?
 - Other (e.g., carrier delivered them to you)?
 - ***What do you like best about the sources you use for obtaining your Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes? What do you like least? Were supplies plentiful enough?***

III. PM FLAT-RATE BOX USAGE MOTIVATIONS & BENEFITS *(8-10 minutes)*

- ***Generally speaking, what are the reasons why your business uses Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes? (Probe...)***
 - Circumstances under which initial decision to use was made
 - Identify first usage occasion and ask for package characteristics
 - Determine if decision made at post office counter or elsewhere
 - Ascertain the decision dynamics – who was involved & why chosen
 - Circumstances under which current decisions to use are made
 - Ascertain extent to which decision criteria change from occasion-to-occasion & influence of...
 - Weight?
 - Contents?
 - Cost?
 - Distance?
- ***In your opinion, what value, if any, do the Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes have for your business? (Probe type of value...)***
 - Time savings?
 - Cost savings?

- Convenience/ease of use?
 - Simplification?
 - Enhanced image of product and/or Postal Service?
 - Improved personal/company image?
 - Improved business operations?
- ***(Go to Evaluation Sheet) I am going to read some statements and for each one, please indicate the extent to which it does or does not describe your business's experiences using the Priority Mail Flat-Rate box. Indicate your response on a scale from "1" to "6" with "1" being does not describe your experience at all and "6" means describes your experience extremely well.***
 - Identify the statements rated most highly & discuss
 - Identify the statements rated least highly & discuss
 - ***Thinking about all the statements I read as well as any others that we have discussed, in your view, what are the most important reasons why your business uses Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes? (Identify the top 3 and have respondent rank order them.)***
 - Attempt to establish relative importance of cost versus convenience
 - Assess impact on perceptions of the Postal Service & Priority Mail product

IV. PREVIOUS & FUTURE PM FLAT-RATE BOX USAGE (5 to 8 minutes)

- ***To the best of your recollection, how did your business send the items now being sent using Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes?***
 - Identify if new items are being sent that were not sent previously (*i.e., if the Priority Mail Flat-Rate box created new mailings that did not exist before*)
- ***What items, if any, would your business like to be able to use a Priority Mail Flat-Rate box for today, but are not able to?***
 - What prevents you from using the boxes available today?
 - What minor modifications in the box shape would enable you to use it?
 - If that new shape were available, how many mail pieces might you send using the Priority Mail Flat-Rate box that you do not send today?
(Note for Interviewer: If the suggested shape is likely to exceed .34 cubic volume, communicate that the price would be likely to increase above \$8.10)
(Large box inside dimensions: 11-7/8 L x 3-3/8 D x 13-5/8 W)
(Small box inside dimensions: 11 L x 8-1/2 D x 5-1/2 W)
- ***Suppose the Postal Service decided to discontinue the Flat-Rate box; that is, they would still offer Priority Mail boxes, but they would not have a flat-rate for them. What would your business do? (Probe...)***

- Would you/your business continue to use Priority Mail?
- If not, what other product(s) would be used? Why?

V. THANK YOU & WRAP UP (2 minutes)

- ***What other comments, if any, do you have regarding the Priority Mail Flat-Rate box?***

D. Stimulus Materials

Name: _____ City: _____ Group Date/Time: _____

**PM Flat-Rate Box Evaluation
(Focus Groups – Household Customers)**

1. For each statement on this sheet, please indicate the extent to which it does or does not describe your experiences using Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes.
2. Please rank order up to three reasons from this list that best explains why you use Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes.

Statement	Q. 1						Q. 2
	Does not Describe Experience At All			Describes Experience Extremely Well			Top 3 Reasons for Use (1,2,3)
a. Enables me to prepare my package faster.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
b. Allows me to avoid weighing my package.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
c. Enables me to bypass post office lines.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
d. Enables me to avoid referring to a price chart.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
e. Enables me to mail items after the post office counter closes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
f. Enables me to give/leave my package for the postal carrier.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
g. Makes the post office counter transactions go faster.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
h. Enables me to save postage.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
i. Allows me to fully prepare my package ahead of time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
j. Makes me feel more secure about my package.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
k. Improves delivery reliability (i.e., helps it get there on time).	1	2	3	4	5	6	
l. Keeps the package contents from getting damaged.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
m. Enables me to use free USPS boxes rather than my own.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
n. Improves the image of the Postal Service.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
o. Simplifies my mailings.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
p. Enables me to mail in an identifiable/easily seen package.							
q. Enables me to get supplies conveniently.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
r. Other: (SPECIFY)							

3. Which of these comes closest to your feelings about the cost of using Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes compared to regular (non-flat-rate) Priority Mail boxes? Would you say, they cost:

Less money than regular Priority Mail boxes,	1
About the same amount of money, or	2
More money than regular Priority Mail boxes?	3

4. Which of these comes closest to your feelings about the convenience of using Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes compared to regular (non-flat-rate) Priority Mail boxes? Would you say, they offer:

Less convenience than regular Priority Mail boxes,	1
About the same level of convenience, or	2
More convenience than regular Priority Mail boxes?	3

Name: _____ City: _____ Group Date/Time: _____

PM Flat-Rate Box Evaluation
(Focus Groups -- Business Customers)

1. For each statement on this sheet, please indicate the extent to which it does or does not describe your experiences using Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes.
2. Please rank order up to three reasons from this list that best explain why your business uses Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes.

Statement	Q. 1						Q. 2
	Does not Describe Experience At All			Describes Experience Extremely Well			Top 3 Reasons for Use (1,2,3)
a. Enables my business to prepare its packages faster.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
b. Allows my business to avoid weighing its packages.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
c. Enables my business to bypass post office lines.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
d. Enables us to avoid referring to a price chart.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
e. Enables us to mail items after the post office counter closes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
f. Enables us to give/leave our packages for the postal carrier.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
g. Makes the post office counter transactions go faster.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
h. Enables my business to save money on postage.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
i. Allows my business to fully prepare packages ahead of time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
j. Makes us feel more secure about our packages.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
k. Improves delivery reliability (i.e., helps it get there on time).	1	2	3	4	5	6	
l. Keeps the package contents from getting damaged.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
m. Enables us to use free USPS boxes rather than my own.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
n. Improves the image of the Postal Service.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
o. Enables us to tell customers exact postage costs upfront.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
p. Enables my business to control its costs better.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
q. Simplifies my accounting function.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
r. Simplifies my business operations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
s. Enables us to mail in an identifiable/easily seen package.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
t. Improves the image of my business.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
u. Enables us to get supplies conveniently.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
v. Other: (SPECIFY)							

3. Which of these comes closest to your feelings about the cost of using Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes compared to regular (non-flat-rate) Priority Mail boxes? Would you say, they cost:

Less money than regular Priority Mail boxes,	1
About the same amount of money, or	2
More money than regular Priority Mail boxes?	3

4. Which of these comes closest to your feelings about the convenience of using Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes compared to regular (non-flat-rate) Priority Mail boxes? Would you say, they offer:

Less convenience than regular Priority Mail boxes,	1
About the same level of convenience, or	2
More convenience than regular Priority Mail boxes?	3

Name: _____ Interview Date/Time: _____

PM Flat-Rate Box Evaluation
(In-Depth Telephone Interviews -- Business Customers)

- For each statement, please indicate the extent to which it does or does not describe your experiences using Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes.
- Please rank order up to three reasons from this list that best explain why your business uses Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes.

Statement	Q. 1						Q. 2 Top 3 Reasons for Use (1,2,3)
	Does not Describe Experience At All				Describes Experience Extremely Well		
a. Enables my business to prepare its packages faster.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
b. Allows my business to avoid weighing its packages.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
c. Enables my business to bypass post office lines.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
d. Enables us to avoid referring to a price chart.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
e. Enables us to mail items after the post office counter closes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
f. Enables us to give/leave our packages for the postal carrier.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
g. Makes the post office counter transactions go faster.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
h. Enables my business to save money on postage.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
i. Allows my business to fully prepare packages ahead of time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
j. Makes us feel more secure about our packages.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
k. Improves delivery reliability (i.e., helps it get there on time).	1	2	3	4	5	6	
l. Keeps the package contents from getting damaged.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
m. Enables us to use free USPS boxes rather than my own.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
n. Improves the image of the Postal Service.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
o. Enables us to tell customers exact postage costs upfront.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
p. Enables my business to control its costs better.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
q. Simplifies my accounting function.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
r. Simplifies my business operations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
s. Enables us to mail in an identifiable/easily seen package.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
t. Improves the image of my business.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
u. Enables us to get supplies conveniently.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
v. Other: (SPECIFY)							

3. Which of these comes closest to your feelings about the cost of using Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes compared to regular (non-flat-rate) Priority Mail boxes? Would you say, they cost:

Less money than regular Priority Mail boxes,	1
About the same amount of money, or	2
More money than regular Priority Mail boxes?	3

4. Which of these comes closest to your feelings about the convenience of using Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes compared to regular (non-flat-rate) Priority Mail boxes? Would you say, they offer:

Less convenience than regular Priority Mail boxes,	1
About the same level of convenience, or	2
More convenience than regular Priority Mail boxes?	3