



MEMORANDUM

To: Greg Whiteman, Bob Smith and Bob Michelson
From: Neil Wolch and Lisa Brunning
cc: Jeff Resnick and Becky Yalch
Date: Wednesday, October 7, 2009
Re: USPS 5-Day Delivery Quantitative Research – Pretest Findings

Yesterday, we completed a pretest among National, Premier and Preferred Accounts. A total of 19 interviews were completed. The average duration of those interviews was a bit over 28 minutes; as you know, the interview length was estimated to be 10 minutes. The table below details the number of completes by account type, the number of applications they answered questions about, the average number of applications, and the average interview length for the pretest:

	Total	National	Premier	Supplemental Preferred	Representative Preferred
Number of Applications					
One	5	0	3	0	2
Two	2	1	0	1	0
Three	1	0	1	0	0
Four	4	0	2	0	2
Five	5	0	0	0	5
Six	2	0	0	0	2
Average Number of Applications	3.4	2.0	2.3	2.0	4.3
Average Interview Length	28.3	33.6	23.2	21.8	31.2
Total Number of Completed Interviews	19	1	6	1	11

The long interview duration raises some major concerns. It impacts data quality, as respondents stop giving well thought out answers after a while; this is made worse by the fact that the questions appear to be redundant. This also leads a relatively high proportion of respondents to quit before completing the interview. A survey that annoys respondents could impact their impressions of USPS, since they know the study is being conducted on your behalf. Finally, the long duration would have a substantial impact on study costs.

The length of the interview is driven largely by number of applications that respondents are asked about (the number for which they have responsibility).

- Our expectation was that National and Premier Accounts would only be responsible for one application; clearly, this is not the case. We only completed one interview with a National Account, but they were responsible for 2 applications (bills/invoices/statements and payments); we completed 6 interviews with Premier Accounts, and they were responsible for an average of 2.3 applications.
- We expected Representative Preferred Accounts to be responsible for multiple applications, but the average (4.3) is fairly high.

A secondary driver of the long duration (and respondents' frustration) is the set of firmographic questions at the end regarding they days mail and packages are sent and received (total of eight questions).

Detailed below are some recommended changes we would like to discuss with you at your earliest convenience:

- Limit the number of applications asked about:
 - Preferred Accounts, Small Business and Consumers – ask about all of the applications they send in aggregate (as opposed to one application at a time).
 - National, Premier and Supplemental Preferred Accounts – limit the number of applications asked about to one. To determine which application to ask about, we could ask which application is their primary application, which application is most important to their business, or something similar in order. Alternatively, we could follow the same approach recommended for Preferred Accounts and Small Businesses.
*Note: these changes would not limit the study analyses, which will be conducted at the **product** level.*
- Limit the number of products asked about to only those that are applicable to the application. We had already incorporated some restrictions (e.g., not including pre-sort FCM for small businesses) in the previous version of the questionnaire, but we think we can limit the list further.
 - In a separate document we have detailed, for your review the products that we feel are applicable to each application by respondent type for your review. For some applications the list is still long, but most likely necessary.
- In the firmographic section of the survey, we ask respondents a total of 8 questions about days of the week they send mail, receive mail, send packages and receive packages; for each topic, we ask which days apply and which day of the week is the heaviest. Please note that a given respondent might not know about both mail and packages, and they might not be in the best position to speak to what they receive. Also, it could be hard for respondents to give a single answer as to which day is heaviest.
 - Could we just ask about what they send, and limit it to mail and/or packages, based on what we know (from previous questions) they are responsible?
 - Perhaps we can combine the all days and heaviest day questions into one, by asking which days are critical days for their organization to send mail/packages (and receive, if we keep those questions); we would allow for multiple responses.

Following are some additional findings from the pretest:

- At S7 (applications) we had some “other” responses that we would prefer to categorize into one of the existing applications if possible:
 - There were some mentions of letters and correspondence. Should each of these be classified as general communications?
 - We also had a few people mention newsletters. Should that go in general communications, advertising or marketing materials, or newspapers/periodicals?
 - Once we make these decisions, we will update the application descriptions accordingly.
- At Q2 (products used), we had responses of certified mail, wire, online checking, postal permit and electronic. All were single mentions; at this point, we will just keep an eye on it.

Please let us know when you are able to talk through these issues.