Cheapest Way to Do Postage – Meter or Online Account?

Dear Firm,

What is the least expensive way to do postage - a postage meter, an online USPS account, other?

Thanks,

We have a pretty low-end Pitney-Bowes postage meter that costs $38.75 per month. If I didn't share it with others, I think it would be much more expensive than other options.

Nanci Bockelie, Utah

Yes.

That is to say - predictably - it depends.

- You can print incidental postage from the USPS at no surcharge on their web site. It does not integrate with your Outlook or your case management system, or Word, or...

- You can rent a postage meter, but it has an ongoing charge. It may include an integrated scale, ZIP lookup for rating for small parcels, etc.

- You can get a PC postage account (there are several providers; I use and love Stamps.com, and I've been with them since they were beta and I had no commercial motivation for using them), but it involves a monthly fee. It integrates with digital scales, integrates with Word and Outlook, etc. Different apps are available for PC and Mac. It may also give you access to UPS and/or FedEx accounts and discounts.

You need to first determine:

- Which solutions integrate with your case/client management system(s)?
- Do you even need integration?
- How much variety is there in your mail pieces?
- Do you do high-volume mailing (such as sending to whole lists of potential clients with accident reports, traffic tickets, foreclosures, etc.)?
- Do you need to have multi-user access at once?
- Do you want to print postage directly on envelopes, labels, etc.?
- Do you use Certified Mail (such that support for return receipt cards is handy)?
- Is your volume sufficient that a monthly fee, amortized over your volume, is justifiable? (Or is the simple convenience of digital postage sufficient to justify your monthly charges?)

There are probably other questions. There is probably a great deal of
discussion of this in the archives, as well.
I have a commercial stamps.com account. I pay ~$25/month. It's remarkably flexible, does CM/RR with
ease (If you can see it: http://customer.stamps.com/Store/catalog/product2.jsp?id=prodcertifiedmailsdc-
3910)
Some supplies cost money, such as the CM/RR cards, and certain labels, but the vast majority of my
postage is printed directly on the envelope.

Richard J. Rutledge, Jr., North Carolina

The cheapest way is to buy stamps at the post office and stick them to the (expletive deleted) letters
yourself!!!!!!

James Moriarty, Iowa

Couldn't agree more!

Jim Winiarski

While there is an added cost in that you need to purchase their envelopes,
for certified mail, I use certified mail labels dot com.

You laser print your mailing information and postage on an 8.5 x 11 sheet
of paper and fold as needed to fit the size of envelope you are using.

The nice thing about it is that you avoid having to use the little green
return receipt post card - signature, if needed, is obtained
electronically. You can also track letters online.

Darrin Class, Washington

I use standard envelopes from Office Depot.

And judges seem to like little green cards with original signatures. But
all the tracking is built into the software, so I can print out a summary of
mailing/shipping to attach to an affidavit or certificate of service for any
First Class mailing.

Richard J. Rutledge, Jr.

What Rick to eloquently said. My stamps.com is $15.99/mo. I'll also add that it automatically checks the address we're using with the USPS database to ensure it is the correct one.

Refunding postage is very easy.

My IT guy has stamps.com set to using an Outlook address book so both of my assistants use the same address book rather than individual stamps.comaddress books - so when a client moves the change has to be made only once.

Deb Matthews, Virginia