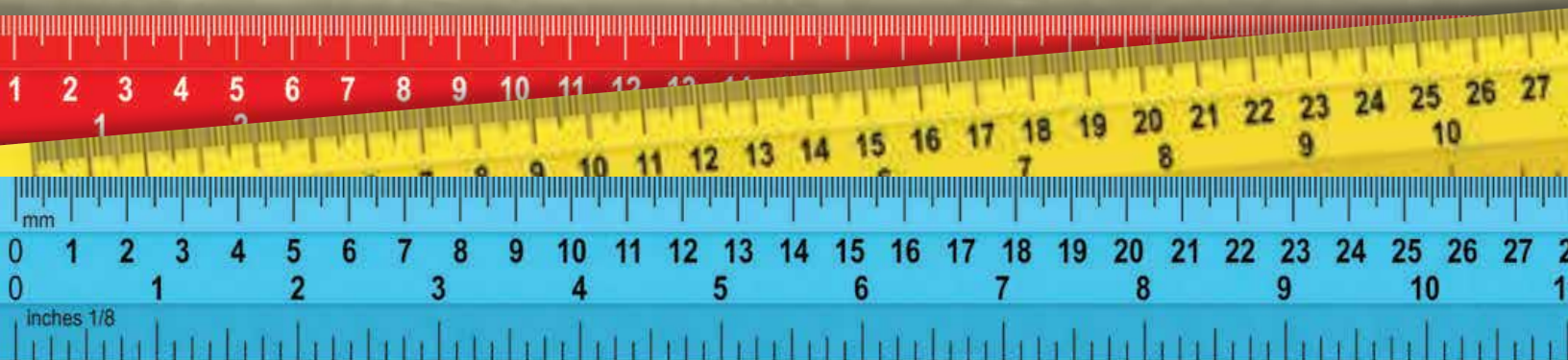




ARE YOU MAKING THIS TOP MAILING MISTAKE?



Sometimes in an effort to be creative or cut costs, marketers will design mail pieces in nonstandard sizes or using nonstandard materials. They may realize that the mail piece will not be machine-readable, but they figure they will make up for the higher postage with higher ROI or lower paper costs. What they don't realize is that the piece may end up being undeliverable.

Don't think this is something that only happens to other people. Even if you've been designing mail pieces for years, you can still end up with one of those "oops!" moments. Failure to meet minimum mailing dimensions is actually the number one mailing mistake cited by the United States Postal Service.



The USPS minimum dimensional standards for mail pieces are as follows:

MINIMUM HEIGHT: 3.5"

MINIMUM LENGTH: 5"

MINIMUM THICKNESS: .007"

It's critical to keep these minimums in mind when selecting materials or creating a design. Even if you know the dimensional standards, sometimes marketers make assumptions about meeting those standards that can have very bad outcomes.

For example, when one postal customer wanted to create a unique piece, it designed a 4"x4" card that it intended to send using Marketing Mail (Presorted Standard) non-automation letter pricing. The customer expected to pay more because the design did not meet the required aspect ratio, but it

did not realize that the piece actually fell below the minimum sizing and could not be mailed.

Another customer used a lightweight paper to create a letter-size, bi-fold self-mailer intended to obtain commercial letter pricing. The customer figured the mail would be considered non-machinable because of the thickness of the paper, but with the design being folded, they did not think minimum thickness would be an issue. They thought wrong. The thickness still failed to meet the USPS minimum mailing standards and, again, the piece could not be mailed.

Any time you create a new mail piece design, run it by our experts before you mail. Experimenting with creative designs and cost-saving measures is terrific, but it's important to make sure you are doing it within the USPS mailing guidelines. It's an extra step, but it's worth the time.

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