

## Informed Delivery: A USPS Success Story

Those of you who are heavy into print and mail applications will be familiar with the annual promotions offered by the United States Postal Service (USPS). These mailing promotions have names like Tactile Sensory and Interactive Mailpiece Engagement, Emerging and Advanced Technology, Earned Value Reply Mail, Personalized Color Transpromo and Mobile Shopping. The list of promotions has been unvarying for years, although some of the details have evolved over time. Perhaps the most remarkable of these promotions is the one called Informed Delivery. The success and rapid growth of Informed Delivery makes it something that all mailers should pay close attention to.

### What is Informed Delivery?

From an end-user perspective, Informed Delivery enables the user to preview their mail and manage their soon-to-arrive packages. Via e-mail, an app or a web dashboard, users can view grayscale images of the exterior, address side of

their incoming letter-sized mail while also tracking packages.

There are a variety of reasons why consumers sign up for Informed Delivery. User quotes released by the USPS provide some of the rationale for joining:

- When I'm traveling, I can see what arrives in my mailbox and remind my husband to take action on important mail.
- I receive temperature-sensitive medication by mail, so [Informed Delivery] is especially important for me during summer and winter.
- I watch for bills that come to my elderly father's mailbox so he doesn't miss paying them.
- My P.O. box is in another city. I want to know when my mail is arriving there so I don't have to drive in every day.
- We are going through the college application/admission process and I want to see when we get responses from colleges ahead of time.

Tracking packages is another end-user advantage of Informed Delivery. Users can check the delivery status of packages and find out when they are scheduled to arrive. They can leave delivery instructions if they know they will not be home to accept a package. In case of a missed delivery, they can also schedule for a package to be redelivered.

From a mailer perspective, the USPS notes that Informed Delivery gives "business mailers the opportunity to engage users through an integrated mail and digital marketing campaign that generates additional consumer impressions, interactions, and insights." (See more at <https://bit.ly/Informed-Delivery-22>.)

### The growth of Informed Delivery

The USPS keeps close tabs on the users of Informed Delivery. As of April 2021, the Informed Delivery program had over 37 million users. At the same time, more than 90,000 interactive campaigns had been completed by about 2,000



registered mailers. In the previous year, nationwide participation increased from around 15% of eligible households to more than 22%.

The demographics of Informed Delivery users skew heavily toward whites (69%), women (56%) and older users (56% are over age 55). That is one important factor to consider when creating a campaign. If your target audience is significantly different from this, you may not get the response you desire.

Open rates for Informed Delivery e-mails have consistently been around 65%, although they bumped up

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## HUMAN RESOURCES

### Cal/OSHA Amends and Extends COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards

On December 16, 2021, Cal/OSHA readopted the Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standards (ETS), but with several revisions (downloadable at <https://bit.ly/CALOSHA-22-covid>). The new version will be in effect from January 14, 2022, to April 14, 2022. After this, Cal/OSHA hopes to have permanent standards in place.

The following provides an overview of some of the most significant changes:

**Employees who test positive for COVID-19 must be excluded from the worksite** until return-to-work criteria are met, even if they are asymptomatic.

**Return-to-work criteria for those who had close contact but did not develop COVID-19** have changed.

Fully vaccinated, asymptomatic employees do not have to quarantine. They can return to the worksite immediately, provided they wear a face covering and maintain six feet of separation between themselves and others at work for 14 days following the last date of the close contact.

Asymptomatic employees who are not fully vaccinated can do one of the following:

- Quarantine for 14 days after the last known close contact, and then return to work without any restrictions.
- Quarantine for 10 days and then return to work, where they must

wear a face covering and maintain six feet of separation between themselves and others at work for 14 days following the last date of close contact.

- Return to work 7 days after the close contact if they test negative for COVID-19 using a test in which the specimen was taken at least five days after the last known close contact. In this case the employee must wear a face covering and maintain six feet of separation between themselves and others at work for 14 days following the date of the last close contact.

**Employers must make COVID-19 testing available at no cost**, during paid time, to all employees who have had close contact or were at the worksite during an outbreak. This includes those who are fully vaccinated and asymptomatic. Note that an outbreak is defined as when three or more employees test positive for COVID-19 within an exposed group during a 14-day period.

Self-administered and self-read tests are only allowed if the employer or an authorized telehealth proctor observes the test.

**The definition of "face coverings" has been clarified.** Appropriate face coverings should completely cover the nose and mouth and be secured to the head with ties, ear loops or elastic bands



that go behind the head. These face coverings cannot have any slits, visible holes or punctures. In addition, they must "fit snugly over the nose, mouth and chin with no large gaps on the outside of the face."

Furthermore, there is a new criterion for cloth face coverings: The cloth, which still must be of at least two layers, cannot let light pass through it when held up to a light source.

**The definition of "worksite" has been clarified.** For purposes of COVID-19 employee notification, "worksite" does not include locations where the employee worked by themselves without exposure to other employees. It also does not include the employee's personal residence or other alternative work location that the employee chose for working remotely.

### How to Effectively and Compassionately Handle Dismissals and Layoffs in a Remote Workplace

In December, Better.com CEO Vishal Garg made news headlines for firing 900 employees over a Zoom call—in the midst of the holiday season. The termination was effective immediately.

While you are unlikely to take such drastic action, how does a business or manager lay off employees effectively and compassionately while operating in a remote workplace?

1. **Always have difficult conversations, including terminations and layoffs, on a one-on-one basis.** Even if you can't be in the same room as the person physically, the employee's manager should have a personal conversation with the employee over video conference.
2. **Make sure that the news is shared individually, not to a large group.**
3. **Consider timing.** If there are other major events going on in the employee's life, such as a wedding or major holiday, you may want to reconsider the timing of the termination.
4. **Don't name call.** The reasons for termination can be communicated, whether it is company downsizing or poor performance, but avoid name calling.

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## GOVERNMENT & LEGISLATIVE

### California Adopts New CDC Guidance Regarding Quarantine and Isolation Periods With Its Own Twists

On December 27, 2021, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated their isolation and quarantine recommendations for the general public, including more limited time periods for quarantine and isolation periods. On December 30, 2021, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) released updated guidance to conform to the new CDC guidelines but added additional requirements, including testing to exit isolation or quarantine after the fifth day (which the CDC now acknowledges is the "best approach" but does not require as part of its formal guidance). Notably, the new guidance also introduces a distinction between boosted and non-boosted individuals for the first time. The key requirements and takeaways from this new guidance are detailed below.

#### New Isolation and Quarantine Guidance

##### Positive COVID-19 Cases

All individuals who test positive for COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status, natural immunity, or lack of symptoms, should take the following steps:

1. Isolate for at least **five days** following

the positive test.

2. Wear a "well-fitting mask"\* around others for a total of **ten days**.
3. If symptoms are not present or are resolving **and** a diagnostic test collected after **five days or later** is negative, then isolation can end.
4. If an individual chooses not to test (or is unable to), but symptoms are not present or resolving, then isolation can end after **10 days**.

\*The CDPH guidance recommends that individuals "ideally" use a "surgical mask or respirator" during the days following isolation or exposure.

##### COVID-19 "Exposure"

The new CDPH guidance provides two options for those who have been "exposed" to COVID-19, depending on whether the individual has been vaccinated or boosted, if booster eligible: \*\*.

**Unvaccinated or Vaccinated and "Booster Eligible," But Not Boosted:** If an individual is unvaccinated or vaccinated and "booster eligible" but has not yet received their booster dose, they should take the following steps:

1. Isolate for at least **five days** after the exposure event.

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## NATIONAL NEWS

### PaperSpecs Live [unboxed] Hands-on Virtual Mini Design Conference Returns in February!



#### REGISTRATION CLOSES FEB 3

**PaperSpecs Live [unboxed]**  
**Ticket Sales Close: Feb. 3, 2022**  
**Event: Feb. 17, 2022**  
**10 AM – 1 PM PT**  
**Cost: \$27\*** (includes ticket & print sample box)  
**To Register:**  
<https://bit.ly/UNBOXED-Feb22>

To maintain their competitive edge, graphic designers and brand owners must see – and feel – the latest trends in printing, finishing and paper. That's what the PaperSpecs Live [unboxed] "mini design conference" is all about, merging online presentations with real-life print samples sent to attendees in time for the event.

During the next Live [unboxed] on Feb. 17th, special guest Evelio Mattos,

sustainable packaging designer and host of the Package Design Unboxed podcast, will reveal the power and sustainability of some of today's most innovative packaging, sharing expertise he's derived from designing packaging for everyone from Nordstrom and Tesla to Tiffany & Co.

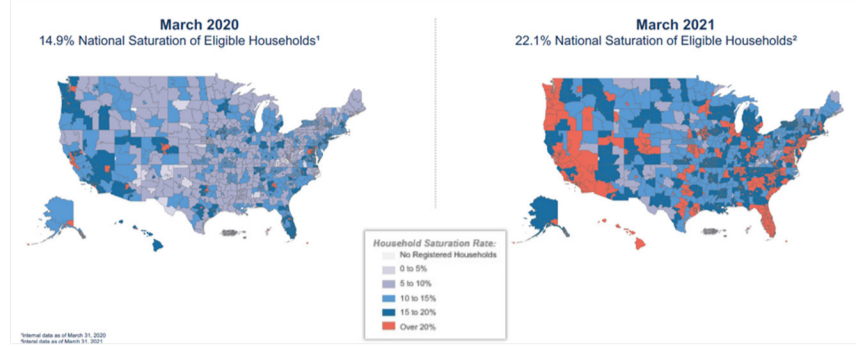
"Just because COVID has changed the way we do business doesn't mean designers can afford to miss the latest trends," explains PaperSpecs Founder Sabine Lenz. "Not only does our Live [unboxed] event continue to bring them the latest printing, finishing and paper trends in one 3-hour experience, but our guest speaker – as well as the samples attendees receive in their print sample boxes – remind them why they fell in love with print in the first place."



FEATURE ARTICLE

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Figure 1: Informed Delivery Enrollment Saturation



Source: United States Postal Service, Informed Delivery Year in Review, March 2020 – March 2021, Updated April 2021

significantly starting in April 2020 and did not drop again until August of that year (perhaps in some way driven by the COVID-19 pandemic).

After first beginning as a pilot project in 2014, Informed Delivery was expanded to most ZIP codes in 2017. Its growth has continued at a rapid pace since that time. A key feature for mailers is its ability to integrate digital elements to enhance marketing campaigns. From an omni-channel perspective, Informed Delivery is important because

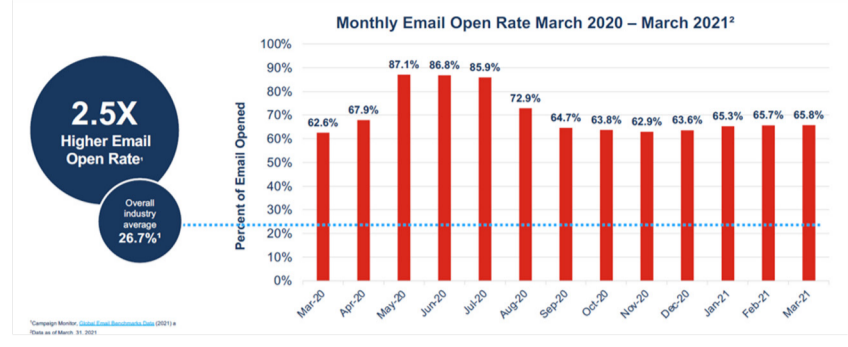
it generates multiple impressions from a single mail piece (digital and physical).

The survey numbers provided by the USPS are very encouraging in terms of user involvement, engagement and overall satisfaction. Of the six promotions that the USPS will offer in 2022, Informed Delivery is the one that stands out as having the broadest immediate impact for a wide range of mailers.

**Benefits for mailers**

For mailers, the foremost benefit of

Figure 3: Informed Delivery e-Mail Open Rate



Source: United States Postal Service, Informed Delivery Year in Review, March 2020 – March 2021, Updated April 2021

Informed Delivery is that it enables them to tie hardcopy mail to digital content. When the user is informed of their incoming mail, that amounts to an additional digital impression for the recipient or recipients (multiple household members may be Informed Delivery users). An important additional benefit is that mailers can enhance the scanned images that the consumer is receiving.

Informed Delivery also enables the mail recipient (or other household members) to take immediate action by clicking on an image or website link, even before they have retrieved their mail from their physical mailbox. In addition, mailers and marketers can coordinate their multi-channel campaigns while collecting information on open and click-through rates.

**Conclusions and recommendations**

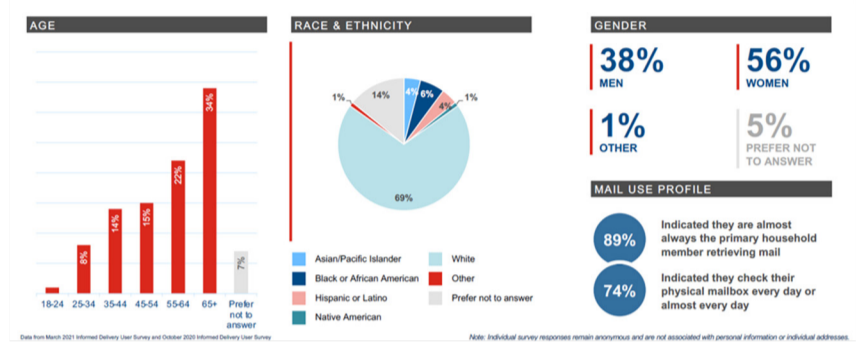
Two websites provide additional insight on Informed Delivery. One, intended

primarily for end-users, is <https://informedelivery.usps.com>. At this site, users can review features and benefits, access sign-up and best practices FAQs, and also receive Informed Delivery updates. The other source is the business mailers website at [www.usps.com/informedeliverycampaigns](http://www.usps.com/informedeliverycampaigns). Here, business mailers can learn about campaign creation and how to get started.

Informed Delivery stands out as an interesting USPS success story, and one that printers and mailers would do well to leverage. It also speaks to the different ways that a range of consumers are viewing the printed mail that they receive. Perhaps the most important aspect for marketers is that Informed Delivery gives them an opportunity to integrate their digital campaigns with an effective and measurable print component.

Source: Provided by Canon Solutions America

Figure 2: Informed Delivery Self-Reported Demographics



Source: United States Postal Service, Informed Delivery Year in Review, March 2020 – March 2021, Updated April 2021

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HUMAN RESOURCES

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5. **Have a second person (ideally a representative from HR) present for the meeting in case there's later a question about what was said.**
6. **Look at any applicable employment contracts or other relevant legal documents.** If the employee has an employment contract in place, you'll want to understand the terms of that agreement before making any employment decisions or having the conversation about dismissal.
7. **Keep your emotions in check.** Employment terminations are a challenging situation for anyone, but it's important to not focus on your own feelings when having the conversation with the employee.
8. **Discuss lay-offs and other employment separations with labor and employment counsel before making decisions.** An employment attorney can help guide you through the termination process so that it goes as smoothly as possible and you minimize the risk of any potential legal action from a disgruntled ex-employee.

Source: Laura B. Friedel, Partner, Levenfeld Pearlstein LLC, [www.lplegal.com](http://www.lplegal.com).

GOVERNMENT & LEGISLATIVE

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2. Wear a "well-fitting mask" around others for a total of **ten days**.
3. If symptoms are not present **and** a diagnostic test collected after **five days or later** is negative, then isolation can end.
4. If an individual chooses not to test (or is unable to), but symptoms are not present, then isolation can end after **10 days**.

**Boosted or Vaccinated But Not Yet "Booster Eligible":** If an individual has received a booster shot or is vaccinated

and not yet "booster eligible," they should take the following steps:

1. The individual does **not** need to isolate or quarantine.
2. Wear a "well-fitting mask" around others for a total of **ten days**.
3. The individual should take a diagnostic test on the **fifth day after exposure**.

*\*\*Updated CDPH guidance defines someone as "booster eligible" depending on which vaccine they received and the time period following the recommended doses: Moderna – six months after second*

*dose; Pfizer-BioNTech – six months after second dose; Johnson & Johnson – two months after first dose; WHO emergency-use-listed vaccines – six months after receiving all recommended doses; mix-and-match vaccines – six months after getting all recommended doses.*

Source: Emily Burkhardt Vicente, Partner, Co-Chair Labor and Employment. A version of this article was first published by Hunton Employment & Labor Perspectives, [www.HuntonLaborBlog.com](http://www.HuntonLaborBlog.com).

CLASSIFIEDS

Available items for sale located in Oregon - 7 boxes Reincarnation 100 Matte Blue White 120# Cover, 300 sheets per box, 26.00 x 40.00, 100% recycled paper. More info contact Lane Weatherly at [lane@wilcoxfail.com](mailto:lane@wilcoxfail.com).

Want to place a classified ad? Contact Wendy Ferruz, 323.728.9500, Ext. 262, [wendy@piasc.org](mailto:wendy@piasc.org)

PIASC Events Calendar

**FEB 1**  
**WEBINAR: 2022 CA Labor Law Updates**  
Tuesday, February 1st  
Online  
[www.piasc.org/events](http://www.piasc.org/events)

**AUG 17-19**  
**Americas Print Show 2022**  
Wednesday-Friday, August 17-19  
Columbus, OH  
[www.americasprintshow22.com](http://www.americasprintshow22.com)

For full list of workshops and virtual classes, please visit [www.piasc.org/events](http://www.piasc.org/events)

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