

The Vanishing Tourist Postcard

When was the last time you visited an art museum's gift shop? In years past, one could guarantee that the gift shop would include an extensive selection of postcards. Today, though, that is changing. Large museums like Boston's Museum of Fine Arts and Chicago's Art Institute have dramatically downsized their postcard offerings, replacing them with other saleable items that are presumably more attractive to visitors and more profitable for the museum. What is behind this shift? Before we consider the future of postcards, let's start with a brief history.

The history of postcards in the United States

In the United States, people started attaching postage to cards and mailing them in the mid-19th century. In February of 1861, Congress passed an act allowing privately printed cards to be sent in the mail, as long as they weighed no more than an ounce. In November of 1870, Postmaster General John Creswell recommended that the United States Postal Service (USPS) create its first postal cards. These postcards, which first became available in 1873, were imprinted with prepaid one-cent postage and sold by postal authorities. A first-class stamp was three cents at this time, making postcards a significant bargain—so long as you understood that your message would not be concealed by an envelope.

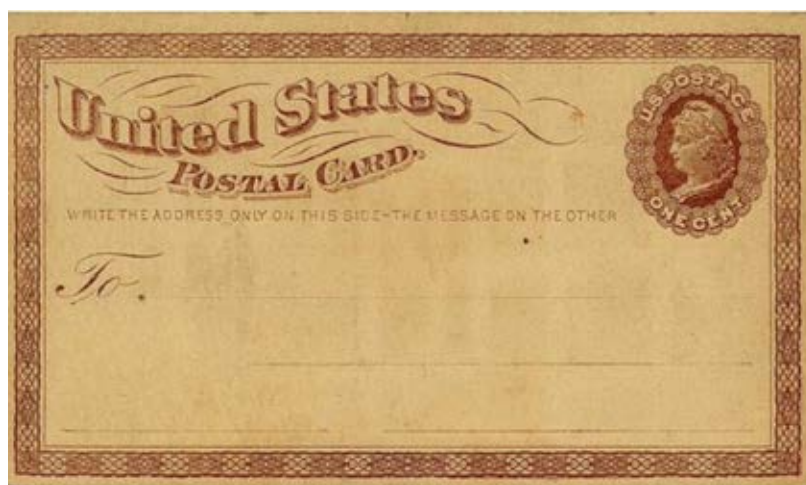


Figure 1: An Early United States Postal Service Postcard

Private publishers could print postcards as well, but it cost them two cents to mail.

In 1898, Congress passed an act allowing private printing companies to make postcards with the statement "Private Mailing Card, Authorized by Act of Congress of May 19, 1898." These cards now cost the same as government-produced ones (one cent). They had the address printed on one side, and room for a message or an image on the other side. It wasn't until 1907 or so that the concept of a "divided back" postcard came into being (i.e., one side would contain an image and the other side would be divided with half for a message and half for the address, much like modern-day postcards). The combination of advancing photo technologies and improved printing techniques increased the popularity of postcards, particularly as souvenirs. It wasn't until the 1990s that electronic communications first began to stifle the broad use of postcards.

A technological and generational shift

Today, most people are happy to take their own photos rather than buying and sending postcards with prepopulated images. They can then share these images themselves on social media, or via any other method they choose. This lends a personal touch to the images, which itself is why so many of today's captured images are selfies. Another electronic communication factor that plays into this

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BUSINESS MANAGEMENT



Are You Asking the Right Questions?

If the answer to a particular marketing problem is eluding you, sometimes what you need to do is ask different questions. As survey writers have long known, how you ask a question can have a significant impact on the answers you get. Here are some ideas for changing things up:

- **Ask from various angles** – For example, a marketing writer's "new client interview" might include the following questions: "What problems does your product solve for your customers?" "what benefits do you offer," and "what do people like about your product?" Although these questions are all related, they often produce very different answers. Why? Because they get the business owner to think about things in a different light.

- **Turn the question around** – Sometimes the question itself could be limiting your answers. If you're asking, "what is the sum of 6 + 6?" there's only one answer – which may or may not be the one you need. But if you change the question to "what two numbers can be added together to equal 12?" the possibilities expand.

- **Ask the opposite** – Similar to turning the question around, this can also be like playing "devil's advocate." For example, instead of "how can we reach our target market of preschool directors?" try "what would motivate preschool directors to want to contact us?"

- **Ask "why?"** – This can be a great way

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HUMAN RESOURCES

Reducing Burnout When You're Understaffed

When you're both super busy and understaffed, what can you do during this time to help your employees avoid burnout or extra stress before you can hire more employees? Here are some ideas:

- **Remove nonessential work duties:** For the positions that seem most stretched, make a list of tasks that could be put on hold (or perhaps reassigned).

You can invite input from employees, too, but we recommend acknowledging that they're overwhelmed and saying that you'll do your best to alleviate some of the pressure. Then hold off on nonessential tasks until business slows down or you've increased your headcount.

- **Allow for flexible scheduling:** If employees need to work longer hours on some days during the week, consider allowing them to work fewer hours on other days of the week. Note that some states have daily overtime, spread-of-hours or split-shift laws.

- **Budget for overtime:** Employees may need to work extra hours to keep up with the current demands of their job, so allow them to work overtime if you (and they) can swing it. If you're pretty sure overtime will be necessary,

inform employees of that ahead of time, so they can plan accordingly.

- **Ensure all equipment is fast and reliable:** It's important to identify, troubleshoot and correct any slow or nonworking equipment issues (such as laptops, internet hardware, cash registers or vehicles). If not resolved, these issues can slow down work and add to everyone's stress.

Shoring up your safety protocols may reduce the risk of COVID-related absences

- **Look for ways to automate:** Consider whether any of your employees' manual and time-consuming tasks could be eliminated or simplified with the use of new or different technology.

- **Increase safety protocols:** Employee absences related to COVID have created a significant strain for many employers during the pandemic. Shoring up your safety protocols may reduce the risk of COVID-related absences because of sickness or exposure. Depending on your circumstances, examples include improving ventilation, encouraging or requiring vaccination, requiring employees to wear masks and allowing employees to work remotely when possible.

Source: HR|BIZZ

MISCELLANEOUS

Celebrating Native.news' 100th Edition

Close to four years ago PIASC introduced Native.news, a biweekly newspaper that combines the information from what used to be four publications into just one. Today we are excited to celebrate our 100th edition!

Native.news keeps members informed about a wide array of topics, including:

- Business & Management
- Government & Legislative
- Human Resources
- Risk Management
- Technical & Technology
- Health
- National News
- Classifieds
- Upcoming Events
- And More

Why the newspaper-size pages? Because we love print, and wanted to pay homage to the vital role that newspapers have played in print's history. Plus, sitting down with a cup of coffee and a newspaper has long been one of the simple pleasures in life.

Of course, the publication's title—Native.news—is a print thing, also. When prepress requests files, they usually want the native files, i.e. the working files originally created in the graphics program. These file names all end in "dot something"...ergo ".news".

Watch for Native.news to arrive in your mailbox every other week, and e-Flash, our digital publication, to arrive in your email inbox on the off weeks. Past issues of both are always archived online at www.piasc.org. Happy reading! Here is to more editions!



GOVERNMENT & LEGISLATIVE

Did You Meet the Deadline for Ensuring 911 Calling Compliance?

The Ray Baum's Act (the "Act") requires companies to implement additional safeguards related to dialing 911 from the companies' phone systems, including any software programs used by computers to make phone calls. Aspects of the Act related to landlines/VOIP phones are already in effect and are less controversial. However, many companies have been caught off-guard given that the Act applies to software technology and enforcement of the Act began January 6, 2022. Many companies utilize software programs like Jabber, Webex, Teams, Zoom and other platforms that allow for the ability to make phone calls from a computer.

If your company operates a multi-line phone system, the Act applies, and you should take notice that the penalties for non-compliance are stiff. Fines of \$10,000 per violation plus \$500/day/violation can be levied against those companies that are non-compliant.

The Act has various obligations

Most companies will need to ensure that their phone and technology systems can:

1. Call 911 directly simply by typing "911" (without the use of any prefix).
2. Provide immediate notice to a central location at the facility where the 911 call is made. Such notice must be sent immediately and not delay the 911 call.
3. Ensure the notification to the central location will likely be seen or heard (e.g. it must be monitored).
4. Provide as precise of a physical address as possible with the 911 call (e.g. suite/office number in addition to the physical street address).

There are other intricacies to the Act and many practical considerations that companies should consider. For example, work-from-home arrangements complicate compliance with the Act. Companies should be aware of how work-from-home arrangements can create complexities about how the technology solutions need to be integrated to ensure compliance with the Act.

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FEATURE ARTICLE

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shift is the lack of familiarity that many of today's young people have with physical communications. Where can you even buy a stamp, and are there different kinds of stamps for postcards and letters?

In 1873, the cost difference between a postcard (1 cent) and a first-class stamp (3 cents) was significant. Today, a first-class stamp costs 59 cents while a postcard stamp is 40 cents. Is that 19-cent difference really going to make a difference if you want to send a postcard to your mom and dad? The bigger issue is actually finding a postcard stamp—which, sadly, does not come with the postcard you just bought!

Here's an interesting side note... the postcards that remain in museum stores like Boston's Museum of Fine Arts and Chicago's Art Institute are often oversized. This is great for reproducing images, but it also means that a first-class stamp is required to send them. According to regulations, postcards must be rectangular in shape and at least 3.5" x 5" but no more than 4.5" x 6" to be eligible for a postcard stamp. Thickness must be no smaller than 0.007 inches and no larger than 0.016 inches.

The use of innovative print technologies

Innovative print technologies like the lenticular example shown here provide an opportunity to reinvigorate postcard printing.

The use of metallic inks, foils, dimensional printing and other effects can turn a four-color postcard into a unique keepsake, whether it is mailed or not.

Conclusions and recommendations

It seems clear that smaller tourist postcards are reaching the end of their useful life. You will certainly continue to see them in many tourist locations, but given the small cost differential between a postcard stamp and a first-class stamp,

postcard producers will likely eventually move to a larger size.

Keep in mind that this discussion about the demise of postcards is primarily related to personal/consumer use. Postcards remain an extremely viable option for business communications. If you really look at what arrives in your mailbox these days, though, you'll likely see that marketers and advertisers also prefer to use larger-sized postcards.



Figure 2: Two Views of the Same Lenticular Postcard (made for Plimoth Patuxet by DesignMasters)

Although specialty printing capabilities could cause a small renaissance in personal postcard mailing, a few hurdles would first need to be addressed. The inconvenience of going to the post office to purchase stamps for a printed postcard is at the top of the list. Along the lines of Business Reply Mail, the USPS could allow a printer (or a mailer, or a marketer) to produce an indicia on a postcard that only incurs a charge when the card is mailed. This would keep the seller from having to pay in advance for postage for something that might never be sold or mailed. A system of this type is certainly possible with current tracking technologies. An additional advantage of this would be that the producer of the postcard would know that it had in fact been purchased and mailed.

The USPS has bigger fish to fry at the moment, but at some point the minimal difference between the cost of a postcard stamp and a first-class stamp might compel them to phase out postcard stamps entirely. If that becomes the case, then it opens the door for a real 21st century solution that could spur broader postcard use. This might then incentivize printers and designers to take tourist and promotional postcard production more seriously in the future.

Source: Provided by Canon Solutions

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HUMAN RESOURCES

Reminder: California Pay Data for 2021 Due on March 31

Back in 2020, Governor Newsom signed SB 973 into law. Under SB 973, employers that have 100 or more employees and at least one employee in California must report data regarding pay and hours worked by establishment, job category, sex, race and ethnicity.

The Department of Fair Employment and Housing's (DFEH's) information page regarding this can be found at www.dfeh.ca.gov/paydatareporting. This page includes links to the Pay Reporting Portal, an Excel template that you can use to submit your data, FAQs and more.

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

to dig deeper. Say you've discovered that your target audience wants to buy high-tech gizmos like yours because they're interested in the latest technology. If you fail to ask "why?" you might mistakenly focus on the technology itself, not realizing that the reason they're interested in the latest technology is that

they want bragging rights in front of their peers. Are you asking the right questions? If the solutions are eluding you, the answer just might be "no."

Source: Plumtree Marketing, www.PlumtreeMarketingInc.com

GOVT. & LEGISLATIVE

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While the enforcement of the Ray Baum's Act is vested in the Federal Communication Commission ("FCC"), violations of the Act still could help form the basis of private causes of action (e.g. legal theories of negligence, etc.).

Source: Jon L. Farnsworth, Partner, Spencer Fane LLP, www.SpencerFane.com. 612.268.7018, https://www.spencerfane.com/attorney/jon-farnsworth/

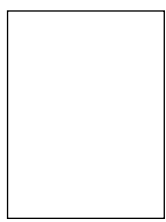
CLASSIFIEDS

Available items for sale, all located in Oregon - 7 boxes Reincarnation 100 Matte Blue White 120# Cover, 300 sheets per box, 26.00 x 40.00, 100% recycled paper. For more info contact Lane Weatherly at lane@wilcoxfail.com.

Want to place a classified ad? Contact Wendy Ferruz, 323.728.9500, Ext. 262, wendy@piasc.org

MEMBER NEWS

PrintReleaf just announced that they have added a new reforestation project in the United States. The project is in Mendocino, California and is a fire restoration project. PrintReleaf is planting many native species in the area in order to re-grow a once thriving area. For more details see https://printreleaf.com/projects/us-california.



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For full list of workshops and virtual classes, please visit www.piasc.org/events

PIASC Events Calendar

- MAR 2 WEBINAR: Alevant Workflow Automation (presented by GMA) Wednesday, March 2 Online www.piasc.org/events
- MAR 10 WEBINAR: Tips and Tricks for Working/Selling From Home Thursday, March 10 Online www.piasc.org/events
- MAR 14 WEBINAR: The Top 10 Sales Apps Thursday, April 14 Online www.piasc.org/events
- APR 2 International Printing Museum: Crazy Crafts Day for Kids Saturday, April 2 International Printing Museum www.primuseum.org/
- AUG 17-19 America's Print Show 2022 Wednesday-Friday, August 17-19 Columbus, OH www.americasprintshow22.com