Intelligent Mail Matrix Barcode (IMmb)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q- **What is the Intelligent Mail Matrix Barcode (IMmb)?**

   A- The IMmb is a two-dimensional, GS1 DataMatrix barcode used for routing and tracking of packages within the USPS processing network. Presently the IMmb is used in combination with the Intelligent Mail Package Barcode (IMpb) to improve processing efficiency.

Q- **How does the IMmb differ from the traditional Intelligent Mail Package Barcode (IMpb)?**

   A- Currently, the IMmb contains the exact same data as our IMpb. The key difference is that the IMmb is encoded as a GS1 DataMatrix barcode whereas the IMpb is encoded as a GS1-128 barcode. GS1 DataMatrix is more space-efficient, has error correction, and allows the possibility of expanding data in the future.

Q- **Why would I want a duplicate barcode on my packages?**

   A- The IMmb provides redundancy to recover visibility should the traditional linear barcode become unreadable/unscannable. Creasing, crinkling, extreme curvature, and a folded shipping label are a few of the common occurrences in which a traditional barcode could become unreadable/unscannable. These duplicate barcodes provide an extra level of visibility through the transit of your packages.

Q- **Is the new 2D IMmb barcode required on all packages?**

   A- No. However, beginning Jan 2024 the IMmb will be required when shipping Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT). Refer to the DMM for HAZMAT mailing information.

Q- **Is there an added charge (expense) for the IMmb?**

   A- No. The cost for mailing a package is determined by Mail Class, destination, weight/dimension, and any special services. The IMmb simply provides additional visibility.

Q- **How can I prepare my labels for the IMmb?**

   A- Postal Pro provides the information needed [2D IMpb Barcode Guide | PostalPro (usps.gov)](), including general guidance. (Publication 199, the Domestic Mail Manual (DMM) and the Parcel Labeling Guide)

Q- **I don't print my own labels. Are there service providers who print the IMmb?**

   A- Yes. Every USPS platform (Retail Units, Self Service Kiosks, Click-N-Ship, WebTools) prints the IMmb. In addition, Mail Service Providers, Shipping Solution Vendors and PC Postage companies can also print the IMmb.

Q- **What are the benefits of using a (IMmb) barcode for USPS shipments?**

   A- Improved visibility and tracking which can reduce customer "help desk" inquiries for the shipper.