

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
AUTOMATED POSTAL CENTER  
CUSTOMER SERVICE ADVISOR GUIDE

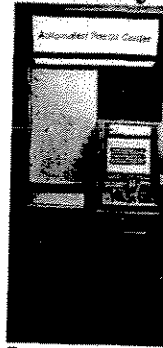


"MEET, GREET, AND EDUCATE!"

## **INTRODUCTION:**

As the Postal Service's "Customer Service Advisor," you will be introducing the new Automated Postal Center (APC) to our customers.

For the first 90 days following installation of the machine, you will be stationed in the lobby near the Automated Postal Center.



It will be your responsibility to:

- Help customers get acquainted with the machine.
- Encourage customers to use it.
- Assist them with their transaction.
- Answer any questions about the machine.

In this handbook you will learn about the machine, its functionality, and different ways that will assist you in making it a success in your office.

***“SUCCESS DEPENDS ON YOU!”***

## Section #1: Functionality of the APC

The Automated Postal Centers (APCs) provide 80 percent of the most common transactions handled at full service windows. These include:

- Weighing and rating letters, flats and parcels up to 70 pounds.
- Dispensing variable rate postage in any denomination for Express, Priority, First Class, International mail (under 1 lb) & Parcel Post Mail. *Note: Variable rate postage will also include the dollar (\$) amount for any of the special services selected as well.*
- Providing Postal Service and mailing information, i.e., mailing options, different classes of mail or special services.
- Certified Mail. *Note: At this time the APC will not print the Form 3800, but the correct postage may be purchased and applied.*
- Printing Express Mail forms. *\*It should be noted that the form printed will be an E-label, which means the form does not look exactly like our existing Express Mail forms.*
- Providing ZIP Code lookup.
- Providing the option to purchase Delivery Confirmation service.
- Generating a receipt for payment.

## Section #2: **Roles and Responsibilities**

**The Customer Service Advisor will be chosen by local management and may be any Postal Employee that has good “people skills” and is able to perform the temporary short term duties which are specific to the Automated Postal Centers.**

- Be neat and presentable. *Wear something that identifies you as a postal employee.*
  
- Practice good customer service. *Smile, be professional, have a good attitude, and don't “hound” the customer. Use the “Greet, Inquire, Suggest and Thank” (GIST) techniques when communicating with the customers.*
  
- Know what APC transactions are available to the customer.
  
- Screen customers entering the lobby to identify eligible APC transactions.
  
- “Sell” the machine and “Encourage the customer!” Explain how using the machine will minimize their time spent at the Post Office.
  
- Educate the customer. *Explain the different mailing options and services provided.*
  
- Answer questions from the customer.

- Keep postal forms and shipping supplies replenished.
  - Monitor drop box.
  - Provide feedback as requested (customer and employee).
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### **Section #3:** **Identifying and Greeting the Customer**

- Greet the Customer. (*ie. "Good morning, have you seen our new automated postal center?"*)
- Smile and be pleasant.
- Offer assistance by asking the questions:  
  
*"Do you need insurance?" If so, this transaction must be conducted at the full service window.*  
  
*"Is your package international?" If so, this transaction must be conducted at the full service window.*

**“Are you using debit or credit?”** *If NOT, this transaction must be conducted at the full service window or at the vending machine, if available.*

- Gently encourage and don't be overly aggressive.
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## **Section #4:** **Educate the Customer**

- Your goal is to “make the customer comfortable” with the APC.
- Allow the customers to complete the transactions themselves – *\*be there to offer assistance if necessary.*
- Verify the postage amount is adequate for the type of service indicated by the package.
- Mention other services available and the 24 hour availability (if applicable).
  1. Stamp purchases
  2. ZIP Code lookup.
  3. Express Mail
- Show where the mail is deposited.

## **Section #5:**

# **Customer FAQ's**

- **Q. What does an APC do?**
  - A. APC will perform 80% of the transactions currently performed at the full service counter. These transactions include the following:
    1. Dispensing postage strips in any denomination for Express, Priority, First Class, International letters up to one pound, & Parcel Post Mail.
    2. Providing Postal Service and mailing information.
    3. Providing ZIP Code lookup.
    4. Printing Certified Mail labels (*\*\*in a future software release*).
    5. Providing the option to purchase Delivery Confirmation Service.
    6. Generating a receipt for payment.
  
- **Q. Why will the APC only accept International letters under one pound?**
  - A. Because international letters under one pound do not require a customs form.
  
- **Q. Does APC weigh and rate?**
  - A. Yes, the APC weighs and rates envelopes, flats and parcels up to 70 pounds.
  
- **Q. Can you use the scale without completing a transaction?**
  - A. Yes, you can initiate a weigh/rate transaction to weigh an item without completing the transaction.

- **Q. Does the APC sell stamps only? Will the APC vend actual stamps/coils/booklets?**  
 A. No, the APC dispenses First Class stamp booklets (18 stamps per sheet) as well as postage strips in any denomination. APC will not vend single stamps or coils.
  
- **Q. Is there a date on the postage strip?**  
 A. Yes, the postage strip shows a "Date of Sale" and the amount.
  
- **Q. Will the APC accept credit/debit only? What about cash?**  
 A. Yes, the APC is a cashless machine and accepts payment via credit or debit cards only.
  
- **Q. Which credit cards are accepted?**  
 A. All major credit cards, Visa, Master Card, American Express and Discover.
  
- **Q. Will the customers need to enter credit/debit cards for every transaction?**  
 A. Credit Cards –
  - 1) The customer can purchase multiple items on one credit card dip.
  - 2) Each credit card dip has a limit of \$50.00, which is a pre-determined limit that has been set by the credit/debit process for self-service.
  - 3) The daily limit for each credit card is \$300.00.
  - 4) If a customer's total visit exceeds \$50.00, credit card payment is not offered as a choice, only debit. *(If the customer does not want to pay with debit, they could cancel the transaction and purchase within multiple visits, multiple indicias that would total to the amount needed to mail the article).*  
 B. Debit Cards –
  - 1) There are no local/daily limits, only the amount of money that is in the customer's account. Maximum single transaction is \$134.95.



- **Q. Is the screen bilingual? If not, when will it be?**  
A. No, the screen displays in English only. Bilingual functionality is planned for a future release of APC software.
  
- **Q. Is there going to be an Automated Postal Center in every Post Office?**  
A. This is a new machine, and at this time, it's only going into high volume / revenue offices.
  
- **Q. Is it safe to use this machine?**  
A. It has the same high security features as our window stations.
  
- **Q. If my package weighs 1 lb or more, do I have to give it to a postal employee?**  
A. No, this machine meets the FAA Aviation Security requirements as long as the customer has had an IBIP postage strip printed. Note: Customers are not supposed to put any packages that weigh more than one pound into the APC collection box unless the postage was purchased from the APC machine or from "click-n-ship."

## **Section #6:**

# **CSA Best Practices**

- Timely responses to pages within 30 minutes. *(If the CSA is also an operator).*
- Keep machine well maintained and clean. *(If the CSA is an operator)*
- Keep Postal forms and shipping supplies well stocked.
- Monitor drop box and report any problems to manager.
- Pager and keys are accountable items and are to remain on postal property with the assigned employee at all times. Relief employees will accept and sign for these items during breaks and lunches.
- Get to know your regular customers and coordinate with manager on any special needs! Eg: large mailers, etc.
- Encourage the customer to conduct the transaction.
- If a craft employee is filling this temporary position he/she should refer any “difficult” customer(s) to management for resolution.

## **Section #7:** **CSA On the Job Training**

- **On the day of install the CSA should attend the Servicing Employee training session (2 – 2 ½ hrs) to become familiar with the functionality and servicing of the APC.**
- **After the training, the District Training Coordinator (or designee) will briefly explain the responsibilities and goals of the CSA position, answer any questions, take the CSA through 2 – 3 transactions to familiarize the CSA with the customer screens and finally, observe the CSA interacting with a few customers to become “comfortable” in the position. (estimated time: 45 minutes – 1 hour)**

