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General Information

Postage $aver sorts one or more data files according to U.S. postal service (USPS) requirements for third class bulk mail. Postage $aver produces a complete report showing the composition of all mail packages and mail sacks, and the piece counts and postage totals necessary for completing post office bulk mailing statements. Postage $aver can also create an output file containing sort keys by sack and package, along with postal endorsement lines for printing on address labels or envelopes.

Postage $avers sort routine exceeds USPS requirements, to help your mail move faster, and Postage $aver calculates USPS entry discounts, so you save additional money.

Postage $aver also automatically rejects and lists any zip codes that are not in proper five-digit or nine-digit form, or which are not on the USPS chart of valid three-digit zip code areas. At the user's option, each zip code will also be checked against its state, and in many cases, its city, to insure accurate addressing.

What Kind of Mail Can Postage $aver Sort?

Postage $aver is designed to sort mail that:
 is classified as 3rd class bulk mail,
 fits the "letter" or "flat" mail categories,
 weighs less than 1.92 oz. per piece,
 is not mailed at barcode or zip+4 rates,
 is not mailed at carrier route or walk sequence rates.

We can provide special Postage $aver files for mail that fits "machinable parcel" or "irregular parcel" mail categories, or for mail that weighs more than 1.92 oz. per piece.   Please contact us for pricing if you regularly send such pieces by third class bulk mail and would like to use Postage $aver to sort these mailings.

Postage $aver can sort a maximum of 16,000 addresses at one time, from as many as 50 different files.

NOTE: The postal service has announced new postal classifications that will be effective on July 1, 1996.   Postage $aver will be upgraded to accommodate these changes. For information on these changes, please contact us at 70712.1661@compuserve.com, or write to Postage $aver, attn.: Scott Hochberg, 7505 Brompton, Houston, TX   77025.

Mailer Information Settings

Mailer's Home Post Office: This should be the post office where you have your bulk rate permit

City: Fill in your home post office's city, using all caps.

State: Fill in the two-letter postal abbreviation for your home post office's state, using all caps.

Zip: Fill in the five-digit zip code of the post office where you have your permit.   This zip code is used to determine what post offices you can use to earn entry discounts for your mail. Use only a five digit zip code here (not a nine-digit code.)

Mailings will be sent from: Indicate where you will deposit your mailing.   Mailings mailed at post office sorting facilities earn substantial postage discounts.   Postage $aver automatically chooses the appropriate sorting facilities for the zip code you entered above, and computes applicable mail entry discounts depending on your selection. If you don't know which button to set, ask the supervisor at the post office where you drop your bulk mail.

Regular/Non-profit: Postage $aver looks at these buttons to determine what rates to use when computing your postage costs. Most mailers use so-called "regular" third-class bulk mail rates. However, many non-profit organizations are eligible to use special non-profit rates when mailing third-class bulk mail. *You must apply and be approved by the USPS before using special non-profit rates.* Ask for USPS Form 3624 to apply for permission to use special non-profit rates.

Letter/Flat: Postage $aver looks at these buttons to determine what rates to use when computing your postage costs. This classification is determined strictly by the size of the mail piece, not by its content. Size categories are as follows (note that references to "longer" and "shorter" sides are based strictly on their measurement and are not determined by the orientation of the address label):

Letter:
Shorter side: minimum 3 1/2"; maximum 6 1/8"
Longer side: minimum 5"; maximum 11 1/2"
Thickness: minimum .007"' maximum 1/4"
If your mail piece is larger in one or more dimensions than the maximum for letter size mail, you must use the rates for flat-sized mail.

Flat:
Shorter side: maximum 12"
Longer side: maximum 15"
Thickness: maximum 3/4"

Note that the sorting system used in this version of Postage $aver is not accurate for mail weighing more than 1.92 oz. per piece.

Mail that is larger than flat-sized may be mailed at third-class rates, but requires a different sorting system.   If you regularly send third-class bulk mail that exceeds flat-sized dimensions or exceeds the weight limitation for this version of Postage $aver, we will be happy to provide you a quote for a special version of Postage $aver to meet your needs.

OK: Press this or hit enter to save your entries.

Cancel: Press this to return to the entries you previously saved.

Preferences Settings and Creating Output Files

When sorting, bad zip codes will always be skipped.   Also skip if zip code does not match:
These boxes allow you to decide whether Postage $aver will include or skip over zip codes that are apparently inconsistent with the states and cities that they are addressed to. If cities or states are not included in the files you are sorting with Postage $aver, these settings are ignored. These settings do not affect the operation of Postage $aver when you are verifying (rather than sorting) one or more files.

state name: If two-letter state abbreviations are included in your input file, Postage $aver will check the first three digits of each zip code to determine whether the state is correct for that three-digit zip area. If not, Postage $aver checks a list of zip codes that are exceptions to the three-digit list. If the state still looks incorrect, Postage $aver flags this entry. If this box is checked, this entry will not be included in your sorted mail. Whether the box is checked or not, this entry will appear in the "Rejected and Questionable Zip Codes" report at the end of the Bulk Mail Sort Report.

city name: If city names are included in your input file, Postage $aver will check the first three digits of each zip code to determine whether the zip code is in what the USPS calls a "unique city."   Unique cities are generally those with enough post offices to need an entire three-digit area. (For example, all zip codes starting with 770 are used by Houston post offices.) If the zip code being checked is part of a unique city, Postage $aver will look to see if the city name in your file matches that of the unique city.
If not, and if this box is checked, this entry will not be included in your sorted mail.   Whether the box is checked or not, this entry will appear in the "Rejected and Questionable Zip Codes" report at the end of the Bulk Mail Sort Report.
Warning: There are some post offices in unique cities that can be correctly addressed using a city name other than that of the unique city. Because of this, we recommend that you consider not checking this box, since the city may be correct even though Postage $aver questions it. Questionable zip/city combinations will be listed in the "Rejected and Questionable Zip Codes" report, regardless of whether you check this box.
Another warning: Since Postage $aver only carries a list of unique cities, and not a full list of post offices, many zip/city combinations will not be checked, regardless of whether you check this box.
Nonetheless, we think this is a useful tool for catching many errors.

Separate home SCF mail from other mixed states.
This box lets you create an extra sack for "leftovers" that are addressed within your home sorting area. Generally, the USPS gives you the option of creating this separate sack or of including these pieces in a "mixed states" sack of assorted mail. Since your mixed sack usually must travel to another city, separating the local mail tends to get it delivered faster.
Attention mailers in Alaska and Guam: The USPS requires that you create this separate sack, so that your local mail does not travel to the mainland. If you are a mailer in Alaska or Guam, you must check this box or your mailing will not meet USPS requirements.

Create output file:
When this box is checked, Postage $aver will create an output file for each file you sort. The output file is used to provide sorting information and endorsement lines back to your data base. (Endorsement lines are the lines you can use on your address labels to avoid using sticky red dots on your mail.)

The output file is a tab-separated text file. The data in each record of the file is in the

following order:
Sack number
Package number
Zip code number
Endorsement line.

The records in the output file are in the same order as the records in the input file, so the output file can be directly imported back into your data base. Then, to sort your data base so that labels will be printed in the same order as Postage $aver's Bulk Mail Sort Report, use the sack number as the primary sort, followed by the package number, followed by the zip code number. (Rejected pieces will be at the end of the list.) If you use Postage $aver to sort several data bases at once, there will be a sort file created for each data base, so that you can import each output file back into its corresponding data base without needing to separate the output files manually.

To use the endorsement line, place it as the very top line of each address, above all other address information including names and any other list identifiers. The endorsement line must be right-justified, and, if possible, all blank space on the line should be filled with asterisks. If you properly include the endorsement line with each address, you are not required to use USPS stickers to identify each package of mail.

Use Standard File Names:
This box determines what the output files created by Postage $aver will be named. If you do not check this box, Postage $aver will stop and ask you for a file name for each output file it creates. If you do not want to have to bother supplying these names, or if you want to create a script or macro in your data base program that looks for the same file name every time, then check this box. If this box is checked, the output file created when you sort a single data base file will be named "P$sort1.txt". If you sort two data bases together, the output file for the first data base will be named "P$sort1.txt", while the file for the second data base will be named "P$sort2.txt", and so on for additional data bases. Files using the standard file names will be placed in the same directory as Postage $aver.

Sorting and Verifying Mailing Lists

Sorting one or more data bases:
You may load one data base file or a series of data base files (to be combined into a single mailing) for Postage $aver to sort.   The data base files can be in any of the following data formats:
ascii tab-delimited text (.txt)
ascii comma-delimited text (.txt)
ascii merge (comma-delimited text with a header record) (.txt)

If your data base does not store its files in one of these formats, there is still a good chance that you can prepare files for Postage $aver by using the data base's "export" command. If you have the choice of formats to use, ascii tab-delimited text will usually be the fastest. If you do not want to mail to all of the names in your data base, be sure to select only those names you will be mailing to before exporting the file.

Your file may include as many fields as you choose (such as name, address, etc.), but Postage $aver will only look at the zip code, city and state. To identify the zip code, Postage $aver will look for text in one of three formats: #####, #########, or #####-####, where # represents a digit. Postage $aver will mark the first field it finds that is in this format as the zip code field. (If this not the field that contains your zip codes, you will have the opportunity to confirm and change this selection before the file is sorted.)

To identify the state field, Postage $aver will look for a field containing only two letters. Postage $aver will mark the first field it finds that is in this format as the state field. Similarly, it will look for a string of at least three letters to identify the city field.

You can also provide city and state information combined into a single field, in the format "city, st". Postage $aver will identify a field like this as a "city, state" field, and will separate the state from the city when it loads the file.

You do not need to provide city and state information if do not want Postage $aver to check these to make sure they match your zip codes.

To sort a single file, choose that option from Postage $aver's Run menu. Postage $aver will ask you to choose the file to be sorted. When you have made your selection, Postage $aver will identify the format of the file, compute the total number of records in the file, and read the first record. If possible, Postage $aver will automatically determine which field in the file contains the zip code, and, if you have included them, the state abbreviation and city name.

Postage $aver shows which fields it has identified by displaying the name of the field next to the corresponding information from the file. For ascii tab-delimited and ascii comma-delimited files, Postage $aver will show you this information for the first record. For all other types of files, Postage $aver will show you the field list in the files index. Fields that are not found or identified by Postage $aver are shown next to the designation field not found.

You can view any record in your file to make sure that the fields have been properly identified. Use the prev and next buttons in the record viewer to move through your file. (The field list appears as the record before the first data record in your file.)

If the information displayed is correct, click OK. If it is incorrect, you can move the field name to line up with the proper data item by double-clicking on the field name you need to move, then clicking the box in which it should appear. (If there is already a label in the box, you

must first move the label that is there.)

When the fields are properly identified, click OK. Postage $aver will sort the file. If you have selected "Create Output File" on the Preferences window (on the Settings menu), Postage $aver will create output files as explained in the help information for that screen.

Next, Postage $aver will prepare the Bulk Mail Sort Report, and display your printer's print dialog so that you can print or view the report.

To sort more than one file at the same time, choose that option from the Run menu. The process is almost the same as that for sorting a single file, except that after loading each file, Postage $aver will ask whether you want to load another file or begin sorting. (You can also cancel the job at this point.) Once you being sorting, the process is identical, except that if you are creating output files, there will be a separate output file created for each file you have loaded.

To verify one or more files without sorting, choose the appropriate option from the Run menu. This process is identical to that described above, except that the files will not be sorted. The report produced will only include a listing of rejected and questionable zip codes, and no output files will be created. This selection is particularly useful for cleaning up your data base files before actually sorting for bulk mailing.

Adding or Removing Pieces From a Mailing After Running Postage $aver

Sometimes, when you are preparing a mailing, you will see duplicates or incorrect pieces that you might want to delete without re-running your entire Postage $aver report.   Or, you might want to add a piece or two.

You can do this as long as you take the following items into account:

1.)   You can delete pieces from any package as long as the number of pieces in the package does not fall below 10, and the number in the sack does not fall below 125.

2.) You can add pieces to any package as long as the number of pieces to any specific zip code, 3-digit area, scf area or state does not increase to more than 9 in the package or 124 in the sack (unless the whole sack or package was a short package that was already marked for that specific zip code, 3-digit area, etc.).

3.)   Be sure to subtract or add such pieces from or to the total piece count on the front page of the sort report.

4.)   Be sure to subtract or add such pieces from or to the appropriate rate category on the front page of the sort report.   All pieces in a single sack of mail are in the same rate category.   The discount categories for each sack are listed on the sort report next to the sack label.

Changing Postage Rates

Postage rate information cannot be viewed, printed or changed on unregistered copies of Postage $aver. However, postage totals will still be calculated and printed along with the applicable rate on the Bulk Mail Sort Report.

Postage $aver uses two postage rate charts to calculate the postage charges for your mailings. The information on these charts can be changed and printed by choosing the appropriate option on the Rates menu.

The rate charts contain rates for third-class bulk mail only. One chart is for "regular" mailers, the other for approved non-profit "special" mailers. You tell Postage $aver which chart to use by your selection of Regular or Non-Profit on the Mailer Information screen. (See the help information for that screen for more details.)

Regular and non-profit rates each have categories for letter-sized and flat-sized mail, and each have entry discount rate categories.   Rates can be updated by clicking on the rate to be changed and typing the correct value.

Editing USPS Sorting Lists

The sorting lists cannot be viewed, edited or printed using unregistered copies of Postage $aver. You will be unable to maintain the accuracy of the sorting routines as USPS changes occur.

The Sorting Lists menu lets you view, edit and print the basic sorting lists that Postage $aver uses to create and label packages and sacks. These lists are composed from information in the USPS Domestic Mail Manual. ***Making changes to these lists without proper care could result in incorrect sortation, leading to rejection of your bulk mailings by the USPS.***

Import Update File: The simplest way to incorporate sorting changes into Postage $aver is to use an update file provided to registered owners of Postage $aver. When you choose this option from the Sack Labels menu, Postage $aver will automatically update any lists with the information in this file.
For this function to operate properly, the P$Update.txt file must be located in the same directory as Postage $aver. Once the file has been used, its name will be changed automatically to P$date.txt, where "date" is replaced by the month and year that the file was used. If it is necessary to use this file again, the name must be changed back to P$Update.txt to be recognized by Postage $aver as an update file.

Edit Sorting Lists: This function allows you to manually edit the individual sack labels lists and the corresponding three-digit zip code lists. Choosing one of the lists will bring up a window showing the first sack label on the list.   (Some labels require entries on two lines, with the entry on the second line split into a left-justified section and a right-justified section, which will be indicated visually in the window.)

To move through the list, use the "next" and "prev" buttons. (Pressing "prev" from the first label will take you "back" to the last label on the list, and pressing "next" from the last label will take you to the first label.)

To edit a label, make the changes you want to make and then press "OK". This will take you to a list showing you the three-digit zip areas for the label. Add any areas or delete any areas as necessary, then press "OK". Your changes will be recorded.

To change the zip codes without editing the label, press "OK" from the label window without making any changes to the label.

If you are editing the 3-digit zips list, the zip code window will have an additional field for "unique city" zips. This corresponds to the USPS designation of unique cities. To designate a label as a unique city for a certain three-digit area, enter that three-digit area into the unique city field.

If you are editing the state exceptions list, the exception zip code is listed on the second line of the label, rather than in a separate window.

Print Sorting Lists: This option lets you print any sorting list you choose.

Using Postage $aver with Filemaker Pro

Filemaker Pro uses a proprietary format to store its data, and, as such, its files cannot be read directly by Postage $aver. However, it is easy to send files from Filemaker Pro to Postage $aver and back again.

To prepare a Filemaker Pro file to be read by Postage $aver, first *find* the records you want to include in your mailing. Then *export* the records to a new file. (Choose "tab-separated" as your export file type.) That's all there is to it.

If you want to be able to sort your Filemaker Pro file in the same order as Postage $aver's Bulk Mail Sort Report, create four new fields in your Filemaker Pro file as follows:
Sack Number (Number)
Package Number (Number)
Zip Number (Number)
Endorsement Line (Text)

Then, ***without changing*** the group of found records you used when exporting your file, *import* the P$sort1.txt file created by Postage $aver. (You'll find it in the same directory as Postage $aver.) ***Be sure to check "Replace data in current found set" when importing.*** Align your new fields with the fields in the P$sort1.txt file in the order in which they are listed above. (You don't need to import the endorsement line if you don't plan to use it.) Then, import.

(The P$sort1.txt file is only created when you check "Create Output File" on Postage $aver's Preferences window on the Settings menu.)

Now, sort your found records, in ascending order, by Sack Number, Package Number and Zip Number. They will now be in the same order as on the sort report.

Filemaker Pro is a trademark of Claris Corporation.

Update Policy and How to Reach Us

How to reach us:

From Internet, e-world, aol, etc.: 70712.1661@compuserve.com

From Compuserve: 70712,1661

By Phone: 713-669-9919.   If you leave a message, please indicate that you are a registered user, the nature of your question, and when we can reach you if we are not immediately available. Telephone support is NOT available to unregistered users.

By Mail: 7505 Brompton, Houston, TX   77025

Update policy:

We will provide any bug fixes and updates based on new postal regulations at no charge within one year of your registration date.   If you have paid the fee for e-mail updates, you will receive these fixes and updates via e-mail.   If you paid for USPS   updates, you will receive updates via USPS, although we may also notify you by e-mail, if we have your address, in order to speed your receipt of any new information.

We learn of changes to bulk mail requirements through the Domestic Mail Manual and other official USPS sources.   We are not obligated to notify you of any change that is not announced via a revision to the Domestic Mail Manual, although we may notify you of changes prior to such revision.

It is your responsibility to send us any changes to e-mail or USPS addresses.   We will discontinue e-mail notifications if your e-mail is returned "addressee unknown".   We will discontinue USPS notifications if your USPS mail is returned "addressee unknown".

We are not responsible for updating Postage $aver if the USPS makes major changes in the bulk mail system that would, in our judgment, make your Postage $aver version substantially useless for 3rd class bulk mail.

Registering Your Software

When you register, you receive:
 the key to unlock all features of Postage $aver;
 updated files for a full year when the USPS changes sorting details or rates;
 free bug fixes for a year as necessary;
 full technical support via e-mail and telephone;
 a clear conscience.

Registration costs only $35!   There are NO shipping or handling charges if you give us an e-mail address for sending update files.   We will add a $10 shipping and handling charge if you request updates via regular mail.

You can register in the following ways:

1.) **If you are a CompuServe member**, GO SWREG on Compuserve to register automatically.   Your registration fee will be added to your CompuServe bill. We will be notified of your registration within about 24 hours and will send you your registration number promptly.
Register using CompuServe product number 10708 to make sure we register you for the correct version of Postage $aver.

2.) **To register using VISA or Master Card only,** copy the registration form on the next screen into your word processor or e-mail program or print out a hard copy, fill it out, and send it to:

Public Software Library
Product #11752

via e-mail: 71355.470@compuserve.com

via fax: 713-524-6398

via phone: 800-2424-PSL

via snailmail: Box 35705, Houston, TX   77235-5705

Please note that Public Software Library does not know anything about Postage $aver other than how to collect credit card charges for us. *Please don't trouble them with technical questions or otherwise. See How to Reach Us for anything other than registration.*

3.) **To register by check,** print out this page. fill out the registration form on the next screen and send it with your payment to:
L. Scott Hochberg Consulting Services
7505 Brompton
Houston, TX   77025

Your check should be in the amount of $35 for updates by e-mail, $45 for updates by snailmail.
(Texas residents: $37.89 for e-mail, $48.71 for snailmail).

Postage $aver for Windows Registration Form

Name:_____

Company Name:_____

Postal Address:_____

City, State, Zip:_____

Phone:_____

E-Mail Address for Updates:_____

Credit Card Number:_____

Exp. Date:_____

**Signature (for credit card orders): **_____

Postage $aver Version You Currently Have:

_____
(See the About screen for Postage $aver)

**Where did you get your copy of Postage $aver? **_____

Registration Price: $35 for updates by e-mail (Texas residents: $37.89)
** $45 for updates by regular mail (Texas residents: $48.71)**

For credit card orders only, mail to Public Software Library, Box 35705, Houston, TX   77235-5705, or fax to 713-524-6398.

For payment by check or money order, mail to L. Scott Hochberg Consulting Services, 7505 Brompton, Houston, TX   77025.

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