

Postal Center International (PCI) Closures Create Urgent Decisions for Mailers: What You Need to Do Now

Last weeks reported closure announcement of Postal Center International (PCI), the second-largest presort service provider in the United States, creates an immediate challenge for many of the nation's largest mailers. PCI processes more than 2 billion pieces of mail annually, with locations in Florida, Massachusetts, Texas and Indiana, along with newer locations in Georgia and Arizona. Organizations relying on PCI now face significant financial and operational decisions with a compressed timeline. Acting quickly is essential, but so is taking a strategic approach that minimizes disruption, controls costs, and protects ongoing mail operations

1. Protect Any Postage Funds on Account

If PCI is holding funds for your postage, request the return of those funds immediately. Determine exactly how much is being held, document your balances and transactions, and make your request as soon as possible.

2. Don't Let Urgency Lead to a Bad Presort Agreement

Thousands of mailers may be looking for new presort services at the same time. That creates an unusual marketplace where providers could face capacity constraints and mailers may feel pressured to accept whatever terms are available.

Finding a replacement quickly is important as long as it comes with the right rates, service levels and terms.

Pitney Bowes Presort Services is the industry's largest provider, and the elimination of its largest competitor could reduce mailers' negotiating leverage. Organizations should develop a strategy designed to maintain or potentially improve the rates and terms they have today, rather than simply accepting the first replacement option available.

3. Determine How Your Mail Will Be Metered

PCI may have been metering your mail as part of its service. Not every presort provider offers metering, so this needs to be addressed as part of your transition plan.

This may also be the right time to evaluate whether metering should be brought in-house, with a presort provider used primarily for pickup and commingling. Separating these functions can provide greater flexibility when evaluating providers.



4. Look Beyond the Rate

The lowest quoted rate does not necessarily mean the lowest total cost or the best service.

When evaluating a replacement provider, pay particular attention to:

- **Pickup times** and how they compare with your current schedule
- Same-day vs. next-day processing and USPS induction
- Flats capabilities, if applicable including maximum weights accepted
- Where your mail will actually be processed with potential delivery delays created by additional transportation. Also, is mail moved between facilities to get higher densities but with potential delays.
- Provider capacity to handle your volume consistently
- Saturday and holiday processing
- Vendor security protocols and mail certifications

These details can have a significant impact on delivery performance, internal operations and total mailing costs.

Get Independent Help Navigating the Transition

Postal Advocate is offering a support line for organizations impacted by the PCI closure.

We are not a presort service provider, which allows us to approach these decisions independently. Postal Advocate has helped some of the nation's largest mailers optimize their presort service programs, including rates, operational requirements and provider strategies.

If you need help understanding your options, evaluating proposals or determining the right transition strategy, contact customerservice@postaladvocate.com or **888-977-MAIL (6245)**.

The key is to move quickly, but not so quickly that today's emergency creates tomorrow's higher costs or service problems.

Postal Advocate Inc., the nation's leading enterprise mail optimization and spend management firm. Postal Advocate manages the world's largest portfolio of mail equipment, postage, USPS accounts, and outsourced print, mail and presort service providers, helping some of the largest organizations in North America gain visibility and control over their mailing operations. Postal Advocate is nationally recognized as experts on enterprise mailing strategy, postage optimization, mail technology, and outsourced print, mail and presort operations.

