



IN-PLANT PRINTING AND MAILING ASSOCIATION

INSIDEDGE

A Newsletter for In-House Printing and Mailing Professionals

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Cost Cutting Strategies Earn OU Mail Center of the Year Title



Central Mail Services at the University of Oklahoma in Norman has been selected as IPMA's Mail Center of the Year, an annual award created to spotlight the efforts of corporate mail centers for outstanding improvements in the areas of new technology, cost savings and processes.

“While reducing their budget and assets, the University of Oklahoma was able to increase business, re-organize delivery routes and purchase value-added equipment to assist in their increased business,” explains Kevin Field, who judged the competition. “They also have created outreach programs to improve not only mail, but printing and design for their customers.”



“As a service unit, cutting administrative costs seems to be the first, second and third steps during budget cuts,” explains Administrator John Sarantakos. “Finding ways to trim expenses, while continuing to provide fast and efficient service to customers is always challenging. By making sound decisions in 2008, we were able to meet the challenges head on.”

“Education plays a vital role in the ever changing postal industry. Teamwork has allowed us to incorporate those changes to the greatest advantage to the university,” says Beth Gatewood, Assistant Administrator.

Highlights of the team’s many accomplishments include:

- Over 66,000 more pieces of mail were processed in 2008 than 2007 with the average cost per mail piece decreasing by 9 cents.
- To accommodate the University of Oklahoma’s growth rate, 47 mail stops were added or changed. Although staff shrunk through attrition, delivery stops increased. When challenged with the cost of replacing vehicles, they restructured delivery schedules and reduced the vehicle fleet 50% without any noticeable interruption in service. These changes generated an annual savings of over \$38,000.
- By partnering with Intra-Mail Network (IMN), the volume of incoming unsolicited mail has been reduced. Additionally, when a department is sent a large quantity of catalogs, just one is initially delivered with a notice indicating the total number received. The department is given one week to notify mail services about how many they want delivered. Remaining catalogs are recycled. During the first month, over 200 catalogs were recycled including many that were more than 3 inches thick and over 8 pounds.
- To meet 24 hour turnaround goals, an MCS Array high volume printer and a Secap Jet1 tabber were acquired, helping increase volume by 28%.
- Central Services stays up to date on the latest postal changes and requirements through membership on the Board of the Greater Oklahoma Postal Customer Council and increased working relationships with BME and other postal employees.
- Seminars, conducted once a semester, ensure that campus materials are designed to be sent at the most economical rates. The university’s campus

communicators continually request advice, referring designers to Central Mail for consultation prior to production. This has led to a productive partnership with the coaching office for the men's basketball team, helping to ensure printed pieces are designed to be mailed most cost-effectively.

Sarantakos says, "By implementing these changes, the University of Oklahoma has made great improvements in technology, and most importantly in troubled economic times, we have been able to deliver significant cost savings."