Helpful Q&As
Barcoded Account Mail

Contents

Q. Why is Royal Mail adding barcodes to letters and large letters?
A. Printing a barcode help us to count, route and sort the items more efficiently. By being more efficient, we can keep our prices low and upgrade our services.

Q.Does printing a barcode enable customers like me to track an item?
A. No, it does not. It does however help us to improve efficiency and this enables us to pass on cost savings to you.

Q. How much exactly will I save?
A. From 2nd anuary 2020, you can save up to 5 pence on every letter and large letter you send, compared to our standard product. You can find a link to our pricing table on our website: royalmail.com/barcodesavings.

Q. Is there a minimum volume of items I need to send to benefit from the cost saving?
A. No. You will save money even if you only send a single letter.

Q. How do I register to use the barcoded products?
A. To register, visit royalmail.com/barcodesavings and simply log in to your account. If you have two or more accounts you will need to specify how many accounts you have and enter every account numbers.

Q. What are the barcoded product codes?
A. We have communicated that we are withdrawing three legacy products; Business Mail ((STL)), 1C and 2C Account Mail ((BPL)) and Advertising Mail ((CLN). Each of these is being replaced with a barcoded account mail product. The table below shows the product codes for the legacy products and the barcoded account mail products. When you place an on line business accounting sales order you will need to select the UN codes.

Current product		New Account Mail product	
Product name	**Product code**	**Class**	**New product code**
Business Mail	STL	1C	UNA
		2C	UNB
Advertising Mail	CLN	1C	UNC
		2C	UND
1C and 2C Account Mail (non VAT)	BPL	1C	UNG
		2C	UNH

Q. When can I start using the new products?
A. As soon as you have downloaded your artwork and printed it on your envelopes you are good to go. When you access your Online Business Account, simply select the UN product codes and you will be able to take advantage of the cost savings.

Q. Can I overprint the barcode onto my existing envelopes?
A. No, unfortunately you cannot. Our machines are programmed to read particular information on the envelope. The likelihood is that you will be charged twice if you were to do this.

Q. Can I print barcodes on labels instead?
A. We recommend that you print your barcodes directly onto your envelope. With labels, there is a risk of them becoming detached or skewed, which could make it difficult for our machines to read their barcode. If the barcode cannot be read you will be charged at the normal price and will not benefit from the cost saving.

Q. Is there a way I can verify the quality of the barcodes?
A. Yes, send an email an example to our Quality Assurance team: quality.assurance.coordinator@royalmail.com. It is important that you print high quality barcodes on your envelopes as it will make what you send look professional and will enable our machines to read them and for you to benefit from the cost savings.

Q. What happens if I already use a barcode?
A. If you already use a barcode for Response or Advanced products then you do not need to worry – you have an easy to use option with a great price.

Q. Can we include our return address as part of our PPI?
A. No. The 2D barcode does not have this capability.

Q. Can I print new barcoded PPI over the pre-printed non-barcoded PPI envelopes?
A. No. Doing this would make it difficult for our machines to read the barcode and could result in you having to pay twice for sending the same item.
Q. Does my response licence have to be changed as well?
A. No, it does not provided your letters and large letters have the 12 alpha-character licence number with the corresponding barcode.

Q. Can I still use hand stamped barcodes?
A. No. We withdrew handstamp PPIs for use on letters around two years ago.

Q. Can I convert .png to a .jpg or .pdf?
A. We do not recommend printing from a PDF file.

Mail piece requirements

Q. How will I be able to access the artwork for my new barcode?
A. Once the artwork for your new barcode is available we will send you an email containing a link to your artwork generator. Once you have logged in, you can select the artwork you want to download in a choice of two formats. For most customers, downloading the .png file will be sufficient, with the .eps file really being intended for mailing houses and printers that have the capability to use specialist, paid-for software. If you have any questions email BarcodeUnsortedAccountMail@royalmail.com with your account number and we will be happy to help.

Q. What should I do if I have not received artwork to print barcodes on my mail pieces?
A. If you have not received artwork or a link to access your artwork for the unsorted barcode account products within 5 days of the set-up of your account please email your company name, account number, contact details and advise not received artwork generator to BarcodeUnsortedAccountMail@royalmail.com .

Q. Where can the Account barcode envelop be printed?
A. The Account barcode can either be printed with the indicia on the top right of the mail piece or near the address as noted in the Account Barcode User Guide.

Q. What colour envelopes be used for Account Barcode postings where the barcode is printed on the envelope?
A. We recommend white envelopes because they provide a good contrast ratio between the barcode and the envelope that supports high read rates and efficient processing of mail.

Q. Can I put barcoded and non-barcoded items on the same sales order and in the same bag / tray?
A. We do not recommend recording barcoded and non-barcoded items on the same sales order as it increases the likelihood of errors in recording posting details that may result in additional charges. If, however the volume of items with and without a barcode are correctly recorded on a sales order, we would accept this.

Q. Can I continue to use STL for sorted residues / spoils and unsorted OCR postings?
A. Yes for the short term. If you need to use residues please email our team so they can ensure you can still access this service at BarcodeUnsortedAccountMail@royalmail.com.

Q. We rely on a mailing house to send out our customer communications. What do they need to do now following the withdrawal announcement?
A. We recommend that you contact your mailing house and discuss the option to barcode your letters and large letters. It is good opportunity to make sure your items are being sent out using the best value product possible.

Q. What happens if I send mail that is not highly machinable?
A. If some of your mail is not highly machine readable e.g. data quality poor, address not visible or not printed in a recommended font, layout incorrect, barcode not visible or correct you will account mail price will be adjusted to the account price.

Q. I have several accounts, what else do I need to do to register?

A. For each account you will need to provide a different email address and ensure that each email address is associated with a registered business user. This is an important security measure and is necessary to ensure we can process your details. To register additional business users visit: royalmail.com/account-type. Alternatively, if you have multiple accounts, you can of course just use one account for your unsorted barcodes. However in this you will not be able separate out the charges relating to each account. If you would like to discuss individual solutions please contact our dedicated team who will be able to find the best solution for your needs at BarcodeUnsortedAccountMail@royalmail.com.

Q. What options are there for multi account customers?

A.

1: Register, obtain and use a specific barcode for each account. In other words, for each account customers need to have envelopes with a barcode relating to that account printed on it. This solution ensure that all charges raised (sales orders and any adjustment charges) relate solely to the postings of each specific account. This option requires customers to produce envelopes for each account with the relevant barcodes printed on the envelope and these envelopes must be used for postings on the relevant account.

2: Register, obtain and use the same barcode for all accounts. For this solution customers need to set up multiple posting locations (these can be virtual) on their online business account and request our customer support team to sort and subtotal invoices per posting location. This option only requires customers to produce one set of envelopes and customers can use the same envelope for postings from multiple accounts. This option subtotals sales order mailing charges per account and any non-compliance adjustment charges are raised to the prime posting location (i.e. adjustment charges will not be divided per posting location).

3: Register, obtain and use a specific barcode for each account.   In other words, for each account customers must print the relevant account barcode with the address either on the envelope or visible through a window. With this solution, customers can use envelopes with the same old style PPI for all accounts. This solution ensure all charges raised (sales orders and any adjustment charges) relate solely to the postings for each account. This option only requires one set of envelopes to be produced for one account and the same envelopes can be used for postings at multiple locations.

Advanced products

Q. Do I require Account and Advanced products on the same OBA account?
A. No. Only one service can be provided on one account. You can post all your items from 1 letter either by the Account product or the Advanced product. If you require both services you will need separate accounts for each.

Q. Must all Advanced items be fully machinable?
A. No. Advanced items are individually priced based on item machinability.

Q. When should I use a VAT product (e.g. UNA) compared to a non-VAT product e.g. UNGG?

A. It is completely your choice and is based on the level of recoverable VAT you can recover.

Q. In relation to BPL, is the new service still VAT Exempt?

A. Yes. The Account product has a VAT Exempt option available for use via the UNGGand UNG product codes.

Legacy product removal

Q. As I am already posting using the barcoded products, will the legacy products be removed from my account at some point?
A. Yes, they will. In November, we wrote to the thousands of customers who are already posting advising them that their legacy products will be removed from their account at specified times and no later than the end of March 220. Customers that use these products via their shipping solutions will still be able to do so, the withdrawal only impacts account customers posting via on line business account sales orders.

Q. What is the plan for customers like me who are set-up to use the barcoded products but are still posting using the legacy ones?
A. We are now withdrawing the legacy service. If you need to speak to a member of our team about this please email BarcodeUnsortedAccountMail@royalmail.com.

Q. What should I do if I am unable to move onto the barcoded products by the end of March 2020, for example if I have 6 months of stationary stock?
A. Please write to us ASAP at BarcodeUnsortedAccountMail@royalmail.com providing your contact details, company name, account number and reasoning for being unable to use the barcoded products. Please also include the length of time you require to help you move onto the barcoded products and we will work to help you resolve any challenges you may face.

Q. Can I access the barcoded account mail products via my shipping solutions?
A. No, the barcoded products can only be accessed via Online Business Accounting Sales Orders. Shipping solutions are predominantly used for parcels rather than letters and large letters.

Q. My company sends parcels using the STL product code, what does this mean for us?
A. We are only withdrawing legacy letter and large letter products used for sending non-fulfilment items such as general correspondence and invoices. There are 3 options for fulfilment customers: 1. Customers posting fulfilment items via letters, large letters or parcels can continue using the STL and BPL product codes by posting via a shipping solution such as Click and Drop. 2. Customers posting fulfilment items can use one of our dedicated fulfilment products such as Tracked. Please visit our web site or contact us to determine what best meets your needs 3. Continue posting parcels only using the STL and BPL product codes by emailing your customer name, account number, requesting you want to continue to post parcels via Online Business Accounting Sales Orders to BarcodeUnsortedAccountMail@royalmail.com

Q. Can I post International items using the Account Barcode or Advanced envelope stationery containing a barcode?
A. Yes. The OLA and OLS International products can be posted using the Account Barcode or Advanced envelope stationery containing a barcode and should be recorded on OBA Sales Orders via either the OLA or OLS product codes. Other products should continue to use their respective printed postage impression indicia.

Q. Can I post Special Delivery items using the Account Barcode or Advanced envelope stationery containing a barcode?
A. Yes provided the specification for Special Delivery is met.

Q. We use both an OBA and a shipping solution, what does this mean for us?
A. The barcoded account mail product codes will need to be used for recording letter or large letter postings on sales orders. The STL and BPL products will be available for posting fulfilment items via your shipping solutions.

Q. My organisation predominantly sends parcels and only very occasionally sends letters via our account. Can we still send these via STL or BPL on their account?
A. You can either post your letters via your shipping solution or be set up and use the new barcoded product via a sales order. You will still be able to access STL and BPL via your shipping solutions.

Q. I use my shipping solution to send t-shirts and bulky items as a large letter. Is it ok for me to send this a via my shipping solution?
A. Yes. Fulfilment items such as t-shirts and clothes can be sent as a large letter using STL or BPL via a shipping solution. Please check that the dimensions of the item still qualify as a large letter rather than a parcel.

Q. Can I use the new products when sending poly-wrapped items like maga ines?
A. Currently our specification recommends paper but includes the option to send large letter items by polymer and polwrap. Our advice is that if you intend to send polymer or polywrap items you should raise this with your account manager so we can test your items and help you to carry out any redesign that may be necessary.

Q. And what about items in jiffy bags?
A. We ask that customers do not use jiffy bags for sending non-fulfilment items and that will not be changing. Customers wishing to send jiffy items and other Fulfilment items will need to use parcel products such as Royal Mail 24/48 or one of the shipping solutions.

Q. What are the rules for sending rigid and inflexible items?
A. Our machines may not be able to process rigid items such as credit cards if they are not flexible enough. We will not charge you any non-compliance charges if you are actively working with us and have flagged up this risk. You should be aware that if this happens you would pay the standard price and not benefit from the cost saving. Our advice is that if you intend to send rigid items you raise this with your account manager so that we can test your items so we can work with you to carry out any redesign that may be necessary. We will not charge you any non-compliance charges if you are actively working with us and have flagged up this risk.

Adjustment charges explained

Q. When will I see that an adjustment has been made?
A. The adjustment will usually appear on your invoice the following week, though it could be longer depending upon your invoice frequency. The adjustment will always have a Sunday date and relates to mail seen that week. For example an adjustment dated Sunday 20th May will relate to items seen from Monday 14th to Saturday 19th May.

Q. My customer has some questions about adjustments, who should they speak to?
A. Submit your queries via royalmail.com/myaccount and our Finance team will make initial enquiries. If Finance cannot resolve the enquiry they will escalate.

Q. Where can I find details on adjustment charges?
A. Information on adjustment fees can be found online royalmailtechnical.com/adjustments

More information

Q. I have more technical questions, where can I find answers to these?

A. Our User Guide is designed to help customers get ready to start using the new barcode and save money as quickly as possible. You can find it on our website: royalmailtechnical.com/barcodeguide. You can also email our team: BarcodeUnsortedAccountMail@royalmail.com and we will be happy to help.

Contact Details

For more information about barcoding account mail products

visit:

royalmail.com/barcodesavings

or speak to your
Royal Mail account manager

or email:
BarcodeUnsortedAccountMail@royalmail.com