

# Software Distributors Policy Guide

**USPS Web Tools™**

Document Version 2.0 (10/14/04)



## To Our Customers

Thank you for helping the U.S. Postal Service provide new Internet services to our shipping customers. If you require technical support, contact the USPS Internet Customer Care Center (ICCC). This office is manned from 7:00 AM to 11:00 PM EST daily.

E-mail address: [icustomer care@usps.com](mailto:icustomer care@usps.com)

Telephone: 1-800-344-7779 (7:00 AM to 11:00 PM EST daily)

### USPS Customer Commitment

The United States Postal Service fully understands the importance of providing information and service anytime day or night to your Internet and e-commerce customers. For that reason, the USPS is committed to providing 24 x 7 service from our Web Tools servers, 365 days a year.

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# 1.0 Introduction

The USPS Web Tools allow developers of web-based and shrink-wrapped applications access to the on-line services of the United States Postal Service (USPS). They provide easy access to shipping information and services for online retailers who can provide their customers with the functions provided by the USPS from their own web site.

With the proliferation of web sites using the USPS Web Tools, and with the evolution of web site developers servicing the growing Internet community, the distribution of software with USPS Web Tools embedded has become a cottage industry. As such, policies are now necessary for software distributors.

Although all current uses have been considered in developing these policies, every possible scenario and use of the Web Tools cannot be determined. For questions that are not answered by this document, contact the USPS Internet Customer Care Center (ICCC) by e-mail at [icustomercare@usps.com](mailto:icustomercare@usps.com) or by phone at 1-800-344-7779 (7:00 AM to 11:00 PM EST).

A separate user's guide for each Web Tool is available for downloading through the [USPS Web Tools website](#). Although not labeled as such, these guides contain policies and procedures specific to "custom" developers. ("Custom" software is produced by or for a single customer.) Also available at the web tools site documentation on *Five Steps to Becoming a USPS Web Tools Service Provider*.

[The USPS Web Tools web site](#) also contains a FAQ section. This section will be updated as necessary and provides answers to both technical and administrative questions.

**Note:** Future releases are planned that will impact these policies for software distributors.

## 2.0 Policies for Software Distributors

*Violation of these policies and procedures can lead to termination of access to the USPS Web Tools servers for both you and your customers.*

### 2.1 User ID and Password Restrictions

Customers who use your software on a workstation or server that communicates with USPS.com must have their own user ID and password. However, the following **exceptions** apply to the distribution of passwords and IDs for USPS Web Tools:

- Corporate entities may use the identical user ID and password at all workstations or servers owned and operated by its employees.
- Software companies distributing a "shrink-wrapped" product must include the same user ID and password in each package/product shipped. If there are multiple product titles that communicate with the USPS servers, the user ID and password must tie directly to the product title. Customers purchasing software from your company need not individually register with the USPS since your application will be the registered entity.
- Consultants and developers who are integrating the Web Tools for another company may use their own ID and password for testing purposes while in development. When this company's site/application is brought onto the production server however, they must be registered with the USPS under their own unique ID and password. All corporate entities must have a unique ID and password. All unique software packages or branded web sites owned by a company that do not share common back-end architecture must also have a unique ID and password when they are making calls to the USPS Web Tools production server.

It is important to note that you will be held responsible for your customer's adherence to the user ID and password policy contained in each Web Tool user's guide:

*“The user ID and password that you have received is for you or your company to use in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of Use to which you agreed during the registration process. **This user ID and password is not to be shared with others outside your organization, nor is it to be packaged, distributed, or sold to any other person or entity, unless you meet one of the exceptions listed above.**”*

It is **your responsibility** to ensure that your customers do not use your password and user ID in any way which may be unintended by the USPS, as set forth in this or any referenced Web Tools documentation. Should your customer not fall under the above mentioned "exceptions" to the distribution of passwords and IDs for USPS Web Tools, then you must direct them to the [USPS Web Tools web site](#) so that they can register, agree to the Terms and Conditions of Use agreement, and receive their own unique password and user ID.

### 2.2 Distribution/Reuse of Documentation and Sample Code

The documentation and sample code contained in the *Web Tool User Guide* series may be reused and/or distributed to your customers or affiliates to generate awareness, encourage web tool use, or provide ease-of-use.

### 2.3 Help Desk Support

*Software distributors are responsible* for providing support to their customers.

### 2.4 Address Informational Web Tools

These Web Tools can only be used in conjunction with USPS shipping applications. Otherwise, only individual users can register and install this software. For further information, refer to the *Address Informational Web Tools User's Guide*, available from the [Web Tools website](#).

### 2.5 Merchandise Return Permit

A Merchandise Return permit is required for the Electronic Merchandise Return Service Web Tool. Merchandise return service may be established at any post office in the United States and its territories and possessions, or at any U.S. military post office overseas (APO/FPO). It is not available for any foreign country.

You are not required to have a permit. If the Electronic Merchandise Return Service Web Tool is part of your software product, *any customer* who uses the API *must* have a permit.

### 2.6 Delivery Confirmation Barcode Certification

Whether you or your customers use the label returned by the Web tool or you create your own, there is a certification process to be followed before access to send live data is granted. For further information refer to the *Delivery Confirmation Web Tools User Guide*, which can be downloaded from the [USPS Web Tools web site](#).

### 2.7 USPS Corporate Branding Guidelines

The U.S. Postal Service requests that it is referenced and acknowledged as the source of information for all U.S. Postal Service data that has been acquired through the Internet and/or from other sources. However, this is not mandatory. The following guidelines should be followed for those that want to authenticate and/or validate the data displayed from the U.S. Postal Service.

#### Preferred Reference

Use one of the following when the USPS is the only referenced source:

- “Information provided by <http://www.usps.com/>.”

*or*

- use the official USPS corporate logo or USPS product-specific logos.

Digital copies of USPS corporate trademarks/logos are available through the U.S. Postal Service, Public Policy and Communications Department, Washington, D.C. You can request the USPS corporate logo and/or product-specific logos by e-mailing <mailto:ilogo@email.usps.gov>. Requests will be responded to by e-mail within 10 days. We will review your web site, and if appropriate, provide the logo for usage in accordance with these guidelines and the license grant contained in the Terms and Conditions of Use for Internet Shipping Application Program Interfaces (APIs). If your web page is not available over the Internet, please provide a screen shot of the page where the logo will reside.

When requesting logo(s) you must provide the following information:

- Company name.
- URL and page where logo will reside.
- Type of business.
- How and where the logo will be used.
- Contact name.
- Telephone number.
- E-mail address.
- Desired graphic format, e.g., GIF, TIF, JPEG, etc.
- Logo desired:
  - \_\_\_\_ USPS Corporate Eagle logo
  - \_\_\_\_ Priority Mail
  - \_\_\_\_ Express Mail
  - \_\_\_\_ Other (describe)

### Alternative Reference

Use one of the following in text when the USPS is listed with other shipping carriers or web sites:

- United States Postal Service
- U.S. Postal Service
- U.S.P.S. (use period after each initial)

The above alternatives are listed in the order of U.S. Postal Service preference.

### Registered Trademarks

The USPS registered trademarks listed on page i, as well as any logos requested from USPS Public Policy and Communications Department, should not be altered or abbreviated. You can request product-specific logos by e-mailing <mailto:ilogo@email.usps.com>.

## Trademark Ownership and Use

The USPS trademarks listed in the front of this guide and any logos requested from USPS Public Policy and Communications Department should not be altered or abbreviated.

USPS trademarks are trademarks owned solely and exclusively by USPS and may be used only in the form and manner, and with appropriate legends prescribed by USPS. All advertising and other uses of USPS trademarks must include a legend indicating that USPS trademarks are the property of USPS and that they are being used under license from USPS, together with any other legends or marking that may be required by law. Nothing contained in this document shall be deemed to convey any title or ownership interest to any user except for the nonexclusive rights granted under the Terms and Conditions of Use for Internet Shipping Application Program Interfaces and this document.

## 2.8 Policies Summary Matrix

Policy	Description	Applies to SW Distributor	Applies to Customer
User ID and Password Restrictions	In general, <b>any of your customers</b> who use your software on a workstation or server that communicates with USPS.com must have their own user ID and password. Refer to the <i>User ID and Password Restrictions</i> section above for exceptions.	Yes	Yes
Distribution/Reuse of Documentation and Sample Code	Documentation and sample code may be reused and/or distributed.	Yes	Yes
Help Desk Support	SW distributor must provide support.	Yes	No
Address Informational Web Tools	These Web Tools can only be used in conjunction with USPS shipping applications. Otherwise, only individual users can register and install this software.	Yes	Yes
Merchandise Return Permit	Your customer must obtain a permit.	No	Yes
Delivery Confirmation Barcode Certification	The SW distributor must obtain NCSC label certification.	Yes	No
USPS Corporate Branding Guidelines	Use the guidelines provided in this document to authenticate and/or validate the data displayed from the U.S. Postal Service on web sites.	Yes	Yes



## 3.0 Frequently Asked Questions

Although all current uses have been considered in developing these policies, every possible scenario and use of the Web Tools cannot be determined. For questions that are not answered by this document, contact the USPS ICCC by e-mail at [icustomer@usps.com](mailto:icustomer@usps.com) or by phone at 1-800-344-7779 (7:00 AM to 11:00PM EST).

***Violation of these policies and procedures can lead to termination of access to the USPS Web Tools servers for both you and your customers.***

Q1. *My company has several web sites, servers, and hosted sites. Do I need to register each?*

Yes and no. For every corporate entity there must be a unique password and ID. Further, for every unique product, service, or brand within a company that uses a separate architecture to make Web Tools calls to the USPS Web Tools production servers, there must be a unique password and ID associated with that back-end architecture.

However, if your company provides or repackages Web Tools integration as a service to other companies as part your business, you are not required to have your subsequent customers register for unique passwords and IDs. You will be responsible for how these companies use their access to the USPS Web Tools, i.e., ensuring that they do not violate the spirit or letter of the Terms and Conditions of Use of Web Tools to which your company has agreed.

Q2. *My company has several web sites hosted on web-hosting companies' servers. Do I need to register each?*

No. For every web site that is owned and operated by (or for) your company, you should use your company's username and password.

Q3. *My company is developing the Web Tools for a customer that hired us. Do I need to register separately?*

You may find it easier to register under your company's name during development (as the registration information must reflect the name of someone knowledgeable about the USPS Web Tools, should a problem or issue arise). However, when the company using the Web Tool moves into production, it will be necessary that the information held at the ICCC be updated to reflect the true name of the company responsible for use of the Web Tools. For this reason we recommend the use of your customer's information with proper contact persons listed for technical questions and contact from the USPS. Further clarification on this issue may be found in the *User ID and Password Restrictions* section.

Q4. *I am developing shrink-wrapped software. How should I handle the user ID and password requirements?*

Software companies distributing a "shrink-wrapped" product must include the same user ID and password in each package/product shipped. If there are multiple product titles that communicate with the USPS servers, the user ID and

## Frequently Asked Questions

password must tie directly to the product title. Customers purchasing software from your company need not individually register with the USPS since your application will be the registered entity.

*Q5. I am in the process of setting up several web sites on my own server for various entities and would like to include the functionality of the USPS Web Tools over all of the websites. I will be making extensive use of host headers for those web sites, but for now will only be using one static IP address. What defines a site? The IP address or the name? I may use MY site to ensure functionality across all of my customers' sites, but I'd like to make it as simple as defining a virtual directory to all sites on the server.*

Some Web Tools are not available in this manner, i.e., Electronic Merchandise Return (EMR) requires a permit held by the merchant receiving the returned merchandise (all companies using EMR must register themselves directly), and Address Informational Web Tools require a separate agreement and registration. However, your company may provide the remaining Web Tools as a part of your services. You will be responsible for all terms of the Web Tool agreements.

*Q6. I'm a web developer who develops many different web sites for e-commerce. I was reading the terms of use for the Web Tool and it says that if I use the same ID and password multiple times, I will get booted. So does this mean that every new site that I develop, I'm going to have to register that site for a different ID and password?*

You are required to register the ultimate user of your product or service -- the individual company or site responsible for calls to our Web Tools servers. You may wish to use your registration information for initial set-up and testing. However, before your customer uses the USPS Web Tools in a production environment, they must be registered with the ICCC at 1-800-344-7779 and have their own unique ID and password that is used for each Web Tool call. Your customers may not use your password and ID for their Web Tool transactions and their account information must reflect accurate contact names and numbers for problems, changes, Web Tools updates, or other issues that may arise.

*Q7. I am part of a development team and work on the USPS module on my machine. We also have a development server, model office server, and production server. This means a possibility of four different web sites accessing the USPS Web Tools. How do I need to handle this?*

Production machines will access our production address for replies to Web Tools calls, while non-production test calls will use the testing address. This arrangement does not require separate registration for each machine. It does require using a different address for the production calls.

*Q8. How should I address the use of USPS in my software documentation?*

All references to the U.S. Postal Service should follow the guidelines contained in the *USPS Corporate Branding Guidelines* section, above.

*Q9. I would like direction on how I should word the documentation that I will provide my customers. Exactly how should USPS be referenced in regard to my providing a USPS service and not being an affiliation or partner?*

## Frequently Asked Questions

Software developers should not indicate that they have a partnership, alliance, or affiliate relationship with the USPS. You can state, however, that you have met the software developer requirements for the USPS web site.

*Q.10. I provide web-hosting services for a number of clients, many of whom would also like to utilize your services. Since they are all hosted on the same machine, and will be utilizing the same DLL, is it necessary for me to register each one with you? (They all have separate domain names.)*

Yes, as separate businesses each company must register as unique users of Web Tools.

*Exemption:* If the separate business' site is in no way responsible for the direct call to USPS Web Tools servers, they do not have to register. That is, if your company provides a common, shared shopping cart or back-end transaction processor through which each of these companies make the call and transact business. In that case, your company could accept responsibility for the use of these Web Tools and make all calls under your ID and password. See Question 1, above.

*Q11. Since we will not be developing our own applications, but rather will be utilizing a shopping cart-type application for this process, is there some way we can skip these tests, and go "live"?*

No. Since you will be calling Web Tools directly, you will need to contact the ICCC for registration, initial setup, and testing.