PROVISIONAL UNITED STATES

PATENT APPLICATION

FOR

PROVIDING ONE CODE ADDRESS

CORRECTION

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DESCRIPTION

TECHNICAL FIELD

[001] The present invention relates to the field of resolving data. More particularly, the present invention involves methods and systems for providing a corrected delivery address.

INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

[002] The content of the attached Exhibits (A-D) is incorporated by reference into the present specification.

BACKGROUND

[003] Today's consumer receives deliveries of numerous advertisements, promotions, and other correspondence from business entities. Every day various business mailers mail significant amounts of mailpieces to their customers. Unfortunately, for various reasons, not all mail may be delivered. Recipients may, for example, move to another location or leave for extended period of time. In another example, business mailers may have incorrect delivery addresses for some of its customers. Due to the large volumes of business mailings and associated costs, business mailers may wish to keep track of the customers whose delivery address is undeliverable, as well as maintain correct delivery addresses for each of its customers. Unfortunately, a majority of business mailers lack tools and resources for tracking and correcting their customers' delivery addresses.

[004] The United States Postal Service (USPS) is an independent government agency that provides delivery and other services to the public. The USPS is widely recognized as a safe and reliable means for sending and receiving mail and other items.

With the advent and steady growth of electronic mail and electronic commerce, the physical mail stream will increasingly be utilized for sending and receiving packages.

[005] The USPS possesses reliable tools for correcting and updating delivery addresses. For example, the USPS maintains a database identifying valid delivery addresses for customers. When customers relocate or leave for extended periods of time, the USPS generally has a forwarding delivery address. Most business mailers may access such USPS database by asking the USPS to provide them with a notification of undeliverable delivery addresses, for example. In another example, business mailers may also request that the USPS provide them with a corrected valid delivery address for customers who have relocated.

[006] Therefore, the need to efficiently provide corrected delivery address data has become a common need for the USPS and many other organizations. More specifically, efficiently providing valid delivery address data has become a critical service for many delivery system operators and business mailers. In an increasingly competitive environment, meeting and exceeding the expectations of those who receive a service became essential for a service provider such as the USPS.

[007] Today's process for providing corrected delivery addresses to business mailers requires human intervention. Each undeliverable mailpiece has to be handled and processed by a USPS employee. Inefficiencies resulting from manual labor intervention can be very costly and time consuming. As a result, the cost of providing a corrected delivery address may be high. Consequently, fewer business mailers can afford to purchase the service. Eliminating labor intervention may also allow significantly reduced time for processing undeliverable mail. As a result, quality of service may increase, especially for

business mailers mailing time sensitive correspondence. Inaccuracy is another inefficiency associated with manual labor. A process relying on manual labor is always subject to inevitable human errors. Subsequently, at least some amount of mail never reaches its destination due to the human error.

[008] Another disadvantage of the current process is esthetic appearance of the mailpiece. Currently, each business mailer wishing to receive corrected delivery address service has to provide certain information on the face of each mailpiece it intends to mail. Research proves, however, the existence of a direct connection between the amount of data printed on a mailpiece face and customers' response to that mailpiece. Interestingly, according to the studies, a lesser amount of human readable information appearing on the mailpiece face generally results in a higher rate of consumer response. Accordingly, there remains a need for an automated and mechanized process efficiently providing corrected delivery address data to business mailers.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[009] Fig. 1 is an exemplary mailpiece face depicting ACS participant code and keyline.

[010] Fig. 2 is an exemplary mailpiece face depicting ACS participant 4-state barcode.

[011] Fig. 3 is an exemplary flow chart for processing and handling of a undeliverable mailpiece bearing the 4-state barcode.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[012] As well known in the art, business mailers wishing to receive notifications about undeliverable and corrected delivery mail addresses may need to participate in a special program, such as an Address Change Service (ACS) program. Each ACS program participant may receive updated delivery address information for its customers. For example, when a business mailer (an ACS program participant) attempts to mail a mailpiece to a customer who has relocated, the USPS may provide the business mailer with a new delivery address. In addition, if requested, the USPS may forward that mailpiece to the customer's new delivery address. Receipt of an updated delivery address may allow a business mailer to update its own database so that a correct delivery address may be used in the future.

[013] Currently, the USPS requires each registered ACS program participant to list certain information on each mailpiece that the participant wishes to mail. That information may be located, for example, above the human readable delivery address on the mailpiece. Fig. 1 depicts an exemplary mailpiece face 100. The USPS may require an ACS program participant to print its participant identification code on a mailpiece face 100. As shown on Fig. 1, a participant identification code may consist of seven (7) alphabetical characters, for example. A participant code may help the USPS to identify a business mailer that the USPS may need to notify about the change of the customer delivery address. The USPS may also use the participant identification code for other purposes. For example, the USPS may use the participant identification code to keep track of how many mailpieces for that participant were undeliverable. This information may be used later, for example, for billing purposes.

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