

SURVEY SAYS....

Part two of our annual survey reports on industry trends, readers' opinions of the USPS, and more.

By Amanda Armendariz

I always enjoy putting together part two of our annual survey. While I think part one of our survey is remarkably important from the standpoint of reporting the average wages of many industry positions, I always enjoy delving into the results of part two, since it gives such a good picture of how our readers view the USPS and the mailing industry as a whole. One result that pleased me very much this year was the input on the USPS performance. To have only five percent of our respondents rate their performance as "poor"? That is pretty amazing.

But not all is rosy. At the National Postal Forum, the USPS was incredibly proud of its Augmented Reality on mailpieces, and

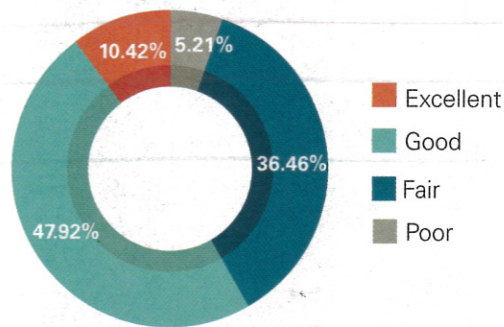
was pushing it accordingly. But our survey responses show that only 10% of folks would definitely push for the use of AR on mailpieces; the other 90% say that they would not, or they are not sure. So it appears that there is, in some sense, a disconnect between what technologies the USPS is developing, and what the mailing industry would actually use.

But overall, I think this year's survey results are some of the best we've seen in a long time. If you have any thoughts on these results, please email me at Amanda.c@rbpub.com or connect with us on Twitter @MailSystemsTech. Until next year!

USPS Trends and Performance

USPS Performance

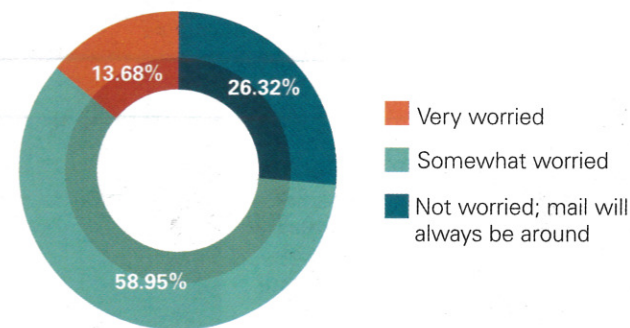
It's an encouraging sign when over half of our respondents rate the USPS service as excellent or good, and even more encouraging that only 5% report it as being poor. That's a fairly hearty endorsement if I've ever seen one!



Do you think the USPS is making the correct moves in changing how it does business to respond to the increase in electronic communications and the economy?



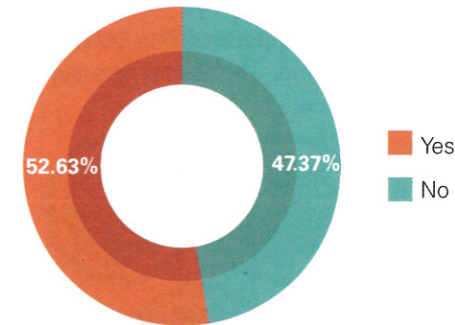
We asked our respondents how worried they are about the USPS not being able to meet its financial obligations if some drastic changes (such as eliminating the pre-funding requirements, etc.) are not made. Here's how they responded.



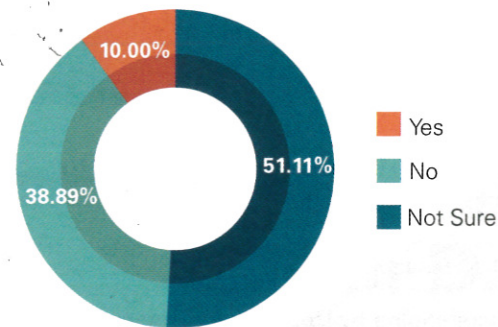
But of course nothing is perfect. Out of the issues that people have with the USPS, the top complaints are regarding:

1. REGULATIONS CONFUSING OR BURDENSOME
2. INCONSISTENCY
3. RELIABILITY
4. COMMUNICATION/INFORMATION; TIMELY DELIVERY; DELIVERY ACCURACY (THREE-WAY TIE)

We asked our respondents if they had heard of Augmented Reality (which is, as the USPS states, "a technology that enables mobile devices to superimpose related, digital content on top of a real-world view.... It essentially adds a digital layer of information on top of real world images".



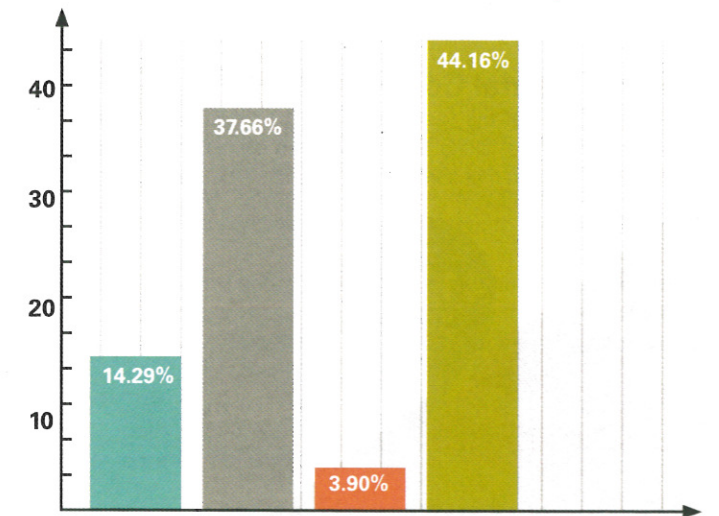
For our respondents who have input on mailpiece design, we asked if they would push for the use of augmented reality on mailpieces. They responded:



Other opinions on the USPS:

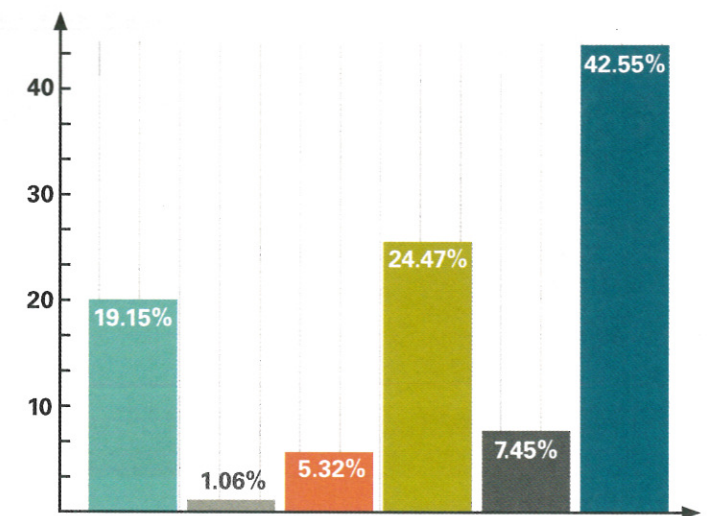
- ▶ The USPS is a necessary business. The operations must be de-politicized and changed for the changing times. If this means 2 or 3 delivery days per week, so be it. We are talking about survival, not union jobs or management make-work.
- ▶ It seems like the USPS is not even educating their own employees fully on all of the changes that have been made in postal regulations, and are doing very little outreach to help third party mailers stay compliant with these changes.
- ▶ Politicians must be able to give the USPS the latitude to reinvent their organization and improve efficiency to remain relevant in today's business environment.
- ▶ The USPS needs to become more of a true business partner for the mailing community and quite making it such a hassle to do mail at an affordable price.

Of those who have heard of augmented reality, this is what they think of it:



- It's great; it's going to really help hard copy mail remain relevant in a digital world.
- Eh, it's kind of interesting, but I think once the novelty is lost, people are going to quit using it; it has no real purpose.
- It's pointless and does nothing to help physical mail.
- I have no opinion on the use of Augmented Reality on mailpieces.

QR Codes were a hot topic just a few years ago, so we decided to ask our respondents if they were still in use, since it seems their usage has declined. Here's what our respondents said:



- We use QR codes the same amount as we ever did.
- We have increased our use of QR codes, and seen positive results.
- We have increased our use of QR codes, but have not seen the results we hoped for.
- We have decreased our use of QR codes.
- We quit using QR codes.
- We have never used QR codes.