

This is a summary of the Postal Service Information Based Indicia Program (IBIP) survey conducted by the Home Office Association of America (HOAA). The survey concluded on May 5, 1997. In addition to collecting data about the survey participants, e.g., names, addresses, etc., the survey also included 16 questions (some multi-part) about aspects of Small Office Home Office (SOHO) computer usage and mailing requirements.

This summary is based on 1,660 unique survey returns.

Survey Highlights

Please Note: Calculations for the percentages shown in this summary are based on the quantity of survey answers for which there are responses. In other words, the number of non-responses for a particular question are not included in the response total, for purposes of calculating the percentages. However, the attached statistical results document does show percentage calculations with and without the non-responses.

Question 1: Survey participants were asked to identify themselves as affiliated with a “home office” if their businesses had less than five employees and a “small office” for five to 20 employees. As a result, 83% of the 1558 participants who responded to the question about their type of business are affiliated with a home office. The remainder of those responding, nearly 17%, are affiliated with a small office.

Question 2: Based on the responses for the type of industry, we provided summary analysis for eight industry categories and one for “other.” The “computer/engineering” category accounted for 36% of the responses; followed by “Other” at 26%; and “business/consulting” at 10%.

Question 3: Based on a manual sample of 660 responses, we conclude all participants responding to the survey do use a computer in their businesses. A manual sampling methodology was used for this question because the data download from the actual survey responses, to the spreadsheet, did not provide results to answer this question.

Question 4: 69% send up to 49 pieces of mail through the USPS each week and an additional 14% send between 50 and 99 pieces each week.

Question 5: 57% indicated they spend up to \$49 on postage each month.

Question 6: 88% of those responding do not have or use a postage meter.

Question 7: Based on the responses to Questions 7a, 7b, and 7c, most respondents use postage stamps. Most (78%) of those responding to Question 7a use postage stamps 76%-100% of the time. Conversely, only 14% of those who use postage meters use the postage meter for 76%-100% of their mailings (Question 7b).

Question 8: 75% use a database to store addresses for correspondence.

Question 9: 55% mail only letters and 35% indicated they mail a mix of letters and packages.

Question 10: 98% indicated they would likely use commercial software products that would enable postage printing directly from their computers. Of these responding affirmatively to the use of such software products, 81% indicated they would use the software products to print postage on both envelopes and labels.

Question 11: 67% indicated they would very likely purchase postage that could be printed directly from their computers through an Internet provider. Only 5% indicated they were not likely to do so.

Question 12: Of those who indicated their companies hand-address any mail, only 17% indicated that more than half of their mail was hand-addressed. Conversely, of those who indicated their companies electronically address mail, 75% indicated that more than half of the mail was electronically addressed.

Question 13: The accuracy of the responses for the type of operating system that we received from the downloaded surveys is very questionable. Perhaps the data may have been corrupted during the data collection or data download. Based on the copies of surveys that were telefaxed to HOAA, this question provided the opportunity for the selection of six choices. A review of the manual submissions revealed the "trend" for operating systems of choice indicated in the manual responses did not agree with the operating systems in the downloaded data. In the downloaded data a very high percentage of responses indicated the operating system at their office would be Macintosh.

Question 14: 88% use ink jet or laser printers.

Question 15: 99% of the respondents' computers have CD-ROM drives.

Question 16: 89% of those responding indicated the convenience of being able to print postage directly from their computers would encourage additional use of USPS Priority Mail or Express Mail services.