

Folded Self-Mailer Reference Material

5/30/2012

This documentation provides summarized information for the revised standards that Folded Self-Mailers (FSM) and specific Unenveloped mailpiece designs must meet to receive automation letter discounts. The revised standards that take effect January 05, 2013 can be found in the Federal Register (FR) Final published Dec 01, 2011. This reference material is divided into sections for ease-of-use. The primary section is titled "Folded Self-Mailer Decision Tree Design Matrix" with other sections to supplement it. This information is only a summarized reference tool; please refer to the FR Final DMM section 201.3.14 for official language to revised FSM standards and 201.3.15 for the specific Unenveloped mailpiece design standards.

Definition - A folded self-mailer is formed of panels created when a single or multiple unbound sheets of paper are folded together and sealed to form a letter-size mailpiece.

General Standards - this section portrays mailpiece design elements applicable to all FSM letter designs.

Recommended Standards - this section portrays elements that are not required, but are recommended to improve handling and/or physical integrity of the mailpiece.

Folded Self-Mailer Decision Tree Design Matrix - the matrix table is a summarized version of specification elements for Folded Self-Mailers (FSM). The 1st column is a list of basic and optional elements of a finished mailpiece. The 2nd column provides the standards for a **Basic FSM** format. The remaining columns identify optional features that may be incorporated into a **Basic FSM** design. The cell where rows and columns intersect portray, where applicable, standard(s) that differ from the **Basic FSM** due to utilization of an optional feature. Where a standard differs from the **Basic FSM** design, the cell background is highlighted light blue; if the standard does not change, it will state "Same as Basic FSM" and the cell background is highlighted yellow. N/A denotes the combination of elements or other feature not applicable to the finished mailpiece.

When a mailpiece contains multiple *optional design elements*, the standards in the rightmost column representing the utilized optional design apply to the mailpiece. ex: FSM has an internal attachment and Die-cutout; paper basis weight is 100lb which is the higher of the two optional elements.

Illustrative Options of a Mailpiece - this section provides illustration examples of variations for finished mailpieces. This list is not intended to portray every potential design for a finished mailpiece, nor is it meant to restrict mailpieces to look exactly like those shown.

Common Fold Methods*

Bi-fold: single sheet folded once in half forming two panels.

Tri-fold: single sheet folded twice forming three panels.

Quarter-fold: single sheet folded at least two times with the second fold at a right angle (perpendicular) to the preceding fold. One sheet of paper quarter-folded produces four panels.

Oblong: mailpiece with fold(s) vertical to length of letter. Final fold must be on lead edge.

* When a folded self-mailer is made of multiple sheets, multiply the number of sheets by the number of panels created when folding a single sheet to determine the number of panels in the finished multi-sheet folded self-mailer. e.g. (3) sheets of paper folded once in half (2 panels) = (6) total panels. Both sides of a panel count as "one and the same" panel.

Paper Basis Weights

Standards for paper are based on Book Grade (Offset, Text) as represented in Exhibit 3.2 located in DMM section 201.3.2

General Standards

Dimension

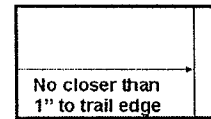
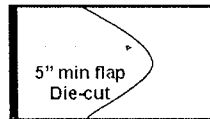
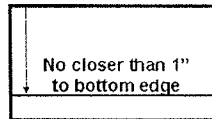
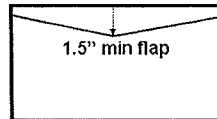
Height: 3.5" min, 6" max
Length: 5" min, 10.5" max

Weight - 3oz max

Flaps – extended portion of the address side panel as the final fold over and secured to non-address side panel. Flaps are used for closure of mailpiece.

- on horizontal folded pieces, external flap must extend from top on non-address side; be a minimum 1.5"L at the longest point, but extend to no closer than 1" from bottom.
- on vertical folded pieces, external flap must extend on non-address side from lead to trail edge; be minimum 5"L at the longest point, but extend no closer than 1" from trail edge.
- die-cut shape external flaps are allowed. Edge along contour must be well sealed to panel using tabs, glue spots or elongated glueline, however a 1/8" continuous glue line to seal along the contour of the die-cut pattern's edge is highly recommended.

Non-address side flaps
As shown: Lead edge is to the left, Trail edge is to the right



Panels - created when sheets of paper are folded; each folded section of a sheet is a separate panel and are equal or nearly equal in size. Both sides of a panel count as "one and the same" panel. Folded Self-Mailer letters have a minimum of two panels.

- when combinations of folding techniques are used, resulting in panels of differing sizes, shorter panels must be internal and covered by a full size panel.
- internal partial panels are counted toward the maximum number of panels permitted by design.
- the final folded panel creates the non-address side of the mailpiece by folding from bottom to top, or lead to trail edge. Panel may be shorter but not exceed 1" from the top or trail edge; however when a (2) tab configuration is applicable, lead and trail placement is required for bottom - top panel design.

2 Panels

Single sheet folded once in half (bifold)



4 Panels

Two nested sheets folded once in half

One sheet folded three times

One sheet quarter-folded; two folds perpendicular



3 Panels

One sheet folded twice (trifold)

