ZIPLINE

A JOURNEY TO EXCELLENCE

2019 VOL. 1

CONTENTS

accuzip.com
800.233.0555

FROM THE CEO

HELLO AGAIN EVERYONE! THANK YOU FOR taking the time out of your day to read the comprehensive zipLINE. Our team takes great pride in creating valuable and interesting articles for your reading pleasure.

I wanted to give you an insight to some new products and services on the horizon for 2019. In addition to the products and services below, we are developing three highly confidential products that we will announce at the inaugural World of AccuZIP User Group Conference in April 2019.

AccuZIP Commingle Mail Service

The AccuZIP Commingle Mail Service is a free tool, seamlessly integrated into the AccuZIP6 products to maximize postage savings and increase visibility of mail among our AccuZIP customer partners. The AccuZIP Commingle Mail Service is powered by the Royal Alliances network, which is fully endorsed by the USPS®. This white glove service will utilize the massive national AccuZIP customer partner network to drive increased revenue and significant cost reductions for each of our customer partners.

AccuZIP customer partners that take advantage of this powerful network will process and prepare their mail with AccuZIP6 as they normally do. Your AccuZIP6 product can upload the Mail.dat® files directly to our secure AccuZIP Commingle Mail Service portal where you can schedule pickup. Now you can relax while our white glove AccuZIP Commingle Mail Service coordinates logistics to pick up and send the mail to a member's Hub location where savings are generated. All of this is achieved while maintaining or exceeding delivery expectations.

As a result of our huge network of Small and Medium-Sized Businesses (SMB) and Small and Medium Enterprise Businesses (SME), AccuZIP customer partners will receive deeper saturations without having to tie up floor space and the resources to manage it. Our AccuZIP Commingle Mail Service, powered by the Royal Alliances network provides a white glove service of pickup and delivery of your mail to the United States Postal Service®.

Mini Mail.dat® Editor

The AccuZIP Mini Mail.dat® Editor has many useful and powerful features, including the ability to change the mailing date and piece weight, drop individual mail pieces or containers, and upload, cancel, or delete *PostalOne!*® jobs, all from inside the AccuZIP6 product.

AccuZIP DQ Cloud Services UI

Increase your revenue and expand your reach to the national level by adding the free AccuZIP DQ Cloud Services UI to your existing website.

The AccuZIP Development Team spent many months creating a comprehensive workflow for List Purchase, EDDM® List Creation and Upload List, including DQ processing, (CASS™ Processing, NCOA^LINK® service, Deceased, Apartment Append, DSF2® service, Advanced COA), Duplicate Detection and Presort. AccuZIP will provide all of the necessary files (CSS, JS, Stripe Payment, Configuration File) free of charge, so you can customize the UX and default values, such as Presort settings as you wish. All of the hard work is already done.

The AccuZIP Development team is working on three highly confidential products that we will announce at the inaugural World of AccuZIP User Group Conference in April 2019 (accuzip.com/support/accuzip-user-group-conference). I will also be making a surprise announcement at the show that you will not hear anywhere else. Space for the inaugural World of AccuZIP User Group Conference has sold out. However, you can email Marketing@accuzip.com if you would like to be put on a wait-list.

Sincerely,

STEVE BELMONTE

CEO, AccuZIP Inc.

PRESIDENT'S
CORNER

DATA ENHANCEMENT — MAKING MAIL BETTER

BY KRISTEN MCKIERNAN

W HEN CLIENTS TRIM MAILING LIST volumes and do more segmentation work, they are expecting greater returns from their mailing projects. No longer standalone efforts, marketing mail is likely to be just one element of a multi-channel strategy. If print service providers can enhance customer data to improve deliverability, remove names unlikely to respond, or lower postage costs, they improve client relationships and encourage repeat business.

Before technology enabled printers to create reasonably priced personalized and targeted communications for their clients, marketers achieved acceptable response levels from direct mail campaigns by distributing the material to giant mailing lists. The graphics and messaging were the same on every mail piece. Marketers knew they were not communicating in the most personal or relevant manner, but they had few affordable options. When the lists were massive, a few bad addresses had little effect on overall campaign performance.

This is no longer the case.

Spray and Pray is Obsolete

Postage rates continue to climb while marketers allocate budgets once heavily oriented toward direct mail to activities and channels that didn't exist ten or twenty years ago. Marketers now spend a good portion of their money on areas such as social marketing or marketing analytics. When marketers include direct mail in their campaigns, they expect to see superior results. Direct mail that generates responses from 1% - 2% of the list are intolerable. Printers who fail to suggest ways to improve the mailed components of multi-channel campaigns will not be running them for long.

Fortunately AccuZIP can help! Addresses are an area where our customer partners can independently help their clients improve their data using AccuZIP's many tools to analyze and correct them. These steps lower project costs and raise deliverability rates. Basic address hygiene, however, is only the first step.

With a bit more effort, AccuZIP customer partners can make their mail even better.

Enhancing the Data

Forward-looking print companies are going beyond the basics of move update and address correction by adding data enhancement techniques to their list of services. With data enhancement, printing companies can create more efficient mailing lists.

- Scrub deceased individuals from mailings (Be sensitive to surviving relatives)

- Append apartment numbers when data is incomplete (Essential for parcel delivery)

- Remove vacant properties (Combat fraud)

- Segment businesses from residential addresses (Customize offers for B2B or B2C)

- Find new addresses for people who did not file change of address notices with the Post Office (Great for old lists or for applications such as collections)

- Identify seasonal addresses like unoccupied summer homes (Stop wasting money sending time-sensitive offers that expire before customers see them)

Enhanced data also benefits print services clients in other ways.

Client Benefits

Most organizations maintain customer data in multiple databases scattered about the enterprise. To leverage the information they've acquired about individual customers or prospects, they must consolidate data from various sources. Postal addresses are excellent for matching data from dissimilar databases. Unlike many other data points a corporation may collect, addresses can be compared against a common outside standard and corrected. The same address correction and data enhancement tools printing companies use as part of their production work-flows can help their clients build highly desirable 360 degree views of their customers.

Companies benefit from combining customer data by improving customer experience at every customer touch-point, whether they involve printed communications or not. Organizations can use more of what they know about customers to target and personalize their future direct mail campaigns even more precisely. Correcting addresses and enhancing the data for client internal data files can create more direct mail work!

AccuZIP offers a complete suite of on-demand data enhancement services for printers. Visit https://www.accuzip.com/des where you can watch a video of the service in action and read about how customer partners are using data enhancement to differentiate themselves from the competition.

Though the tools and technology have improved, much of the mail produced today is relatively unchanged from the way printers did the work twenty years ago. But the move to highly personalized and relevant communications has started. Print companies that expect continued growth and profitability need to understand how to use data to generate better results for their clients. Postal addresses and the data enhancement tools offered by AccuZIP are a great place to start (or continue if you are already doing it today!)

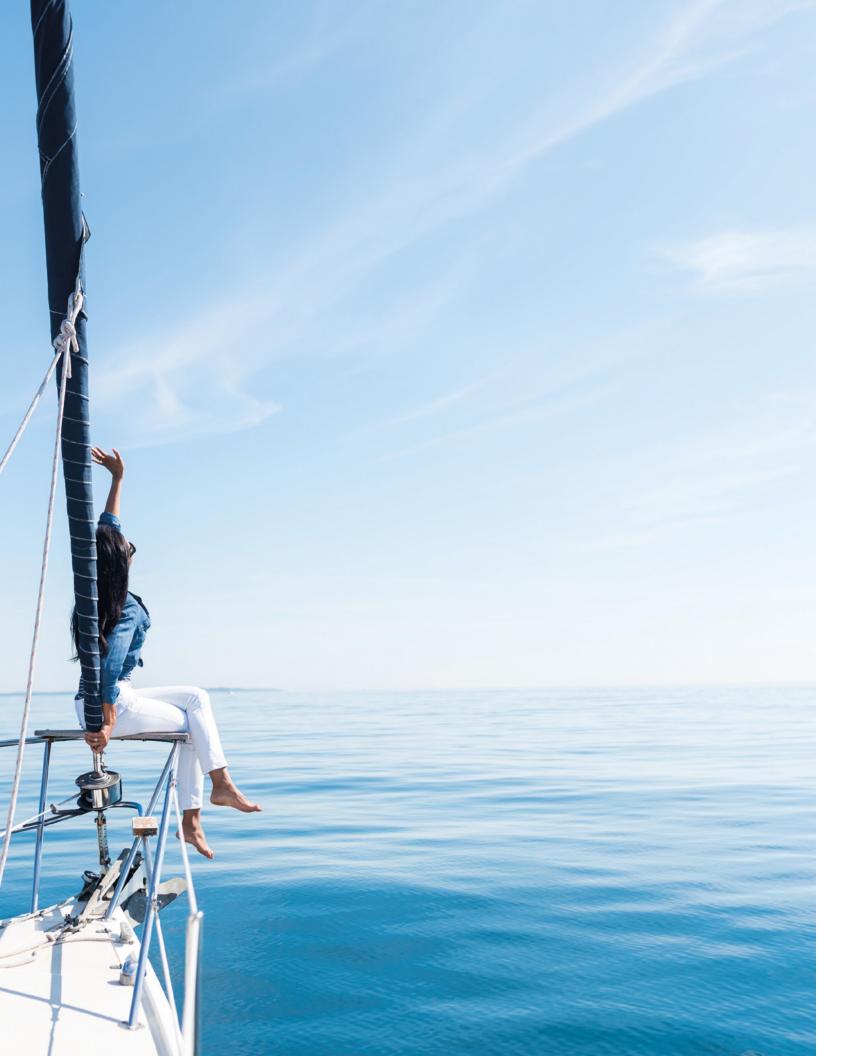Find more data quality tips, tricks and a complete data quality learning center at: bit.ly/dataaccu

Customer Partner Data Accuracy and Updates:

At AccuZIP Inc. we are always committed to providing you with the highest level of service and support by ensuring that our Customer Partner's account data is current and accurate. To add or change contact information please visit: https://www.accuzip.com/contact/update-contact-info/

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or need assistance with managing your account.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP

AT ACCUZIP, INC. WE ARE ALWAYS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING YOU WITH THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF SUPPORT. PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT US WITH ANY QUESTIONS OR NEED FOR ASSISTANCE.

PHONE:

805.461.7300

WEEKDAYS 10AM TO 7PM ET

EMAIL:
SUPPORT@ACCUZIP.COM
CHAT:
ACCUZIP.COM/CHAT

VIEW OTHER SUPPORT OPTIONS AT
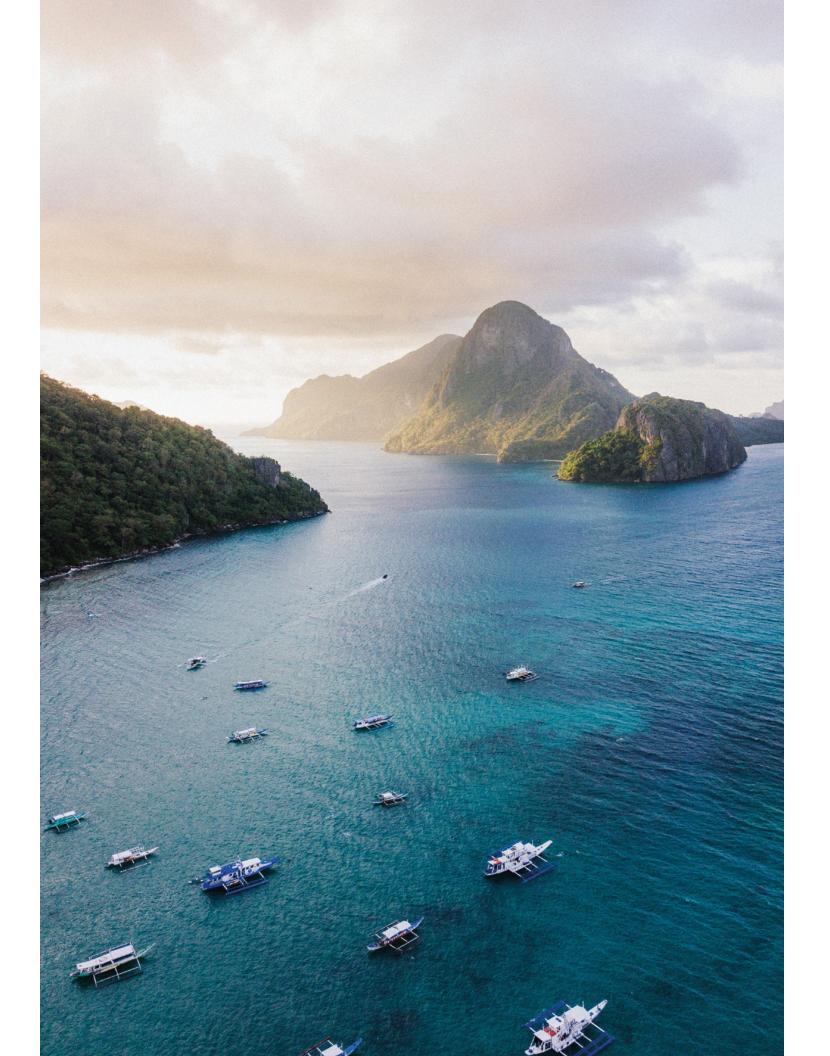WWW.ACCUZIP.COM/SUPPORT

EVENT
SPOTLIGHT

ACCUZIP TO HOST IDEALLIANCE 2019 POTC MEETING

October 16–17th, 2019

AccuZIP is hosting a key industry organization, Idealliance, in October, 2019. Idealliance companies produce more than 60 billion pieces of mail each year and the organization has a unique focus. It engages all segments, including catalog and direct marketers, equipment manufacturers, fulfillment companies, list management companies, logistics and transportation organizations, mail, marketing, and print services providers, mail owners, publishers, and software technology developers to create greater productivity and efficiencies with the U.S. Postal Service®. Idealliance is widely known for its development of Mail.dat® and Mail.XML® specifications and the creation of the MailPro® training certification program.

Idealliance's core mail and postal working group, the Postal Operations & Technologies Council, will be meeting in Houston next year at an event hosted by AccuZIP. Nearly 60 experts from more than 50 companies will come together to collaborate on mail preparation, USPS® customer-facing programs and services, and work-sharing initiatives. Key executives from the U.S. Postal Service will participate. David Steinhardt, President Emeritus of Idealliance and staff lead for Idealliance's mail and postal portfolio, said, "We are grateful to AccuZIP for hosting our October 2019 Postal Operations & Technologies Council meeting. AccuZIP continues its leadership to support collaboration across the industry and with the U.S. Postal Service to improve mail preparation and distribution."

To learn more about Idealliance visit:
www.idealliance.org/about

EVENTS

Periodical Training
Feb 12—14, 2019 | Norman, OK

NPOA 2019 7th Annual Spring Conference
Feb 28—Mar 01, 2019 | San Diego, CA

Alliance Franchise Brands 2019 Convention
Mar 14—15, 2019 | Grapevine, TX

Inaugural World of AccuZIP User Conference
April 07—09, 2019 | League City, TX
AccuZIP Corporate Office

National Postal Forum 2019
May 05—08, 2019 | Indianapolis, IN

2019 FSI International Convention & Vendor Show
July 18—19, 2019 | Orlando, FL

Minuteman Press World Expo
July 31—Aug 03, 2019 | Las Vegas, NV

Idealliance POTC Meeting 2019
AccuZIP will host and sponsor the October 16th—17th , 2019 POTC meeting at the AccuZIP Corporate Office in League City, Texas.

PRINT 19
Oct 03—05 , 2019 | Chicago, IL

To see all past events go to:
www.accuzip.com/events/past-events

11

ACCUZIP
NEWS

ACCUZIP RECEIVES THE PRESTIGIOUS VANGUARD PIONEER AWARD IN THE RED HOT TECHNOLOGY AWARD PROGRAM!
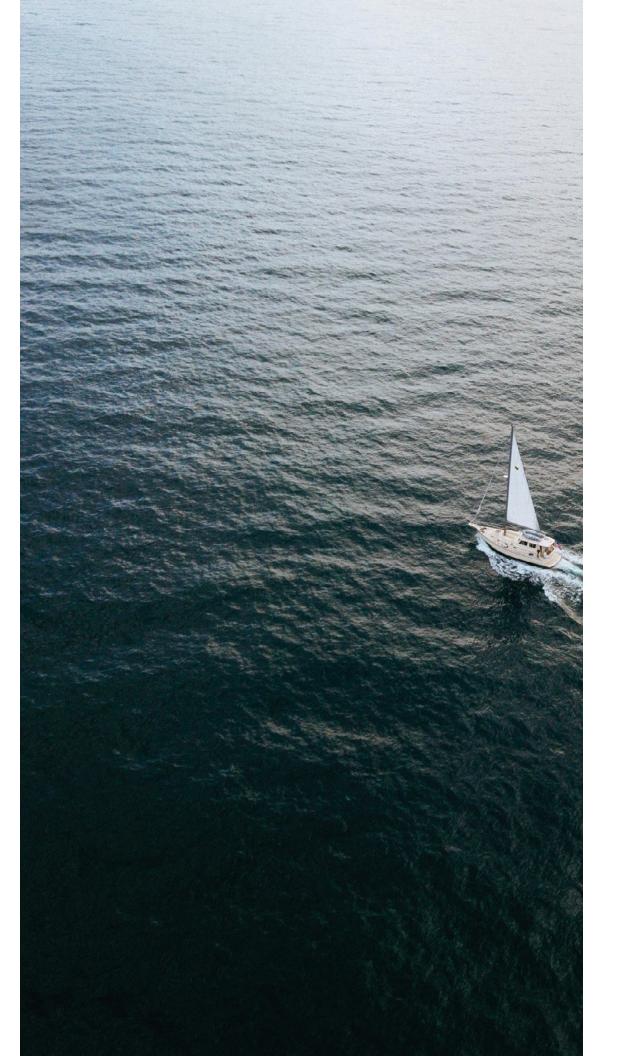
AccuZIP's AccuEngage is just one of two products to gain recognition as a Vanguard Pioneer Award recipient, and only one of nine total recognized products in the entire Vanguard program. This is an additional level of recognition judged on the product's impact as an industry game-changer.

AccuEngage is the first service that assists mailers and marketers in creating campaigns using the USPS® technology, Informed Delivery®, which provides consumers with digital previews of their household mail. By offering training, campaign set-up and Professional Services support, AccuZIP is demystifying and eliminating confusion about this new USPS technology, helping all participants in the mailing industry to pioneer a new marketing tool and ultimately be more successful with their Direct Mail campaigns, resulting in increased revenue and mail volume.

Learn more here: Bit.ly/accuengage

To be recognized for a Pioneer Award, a product must be an entirely new technology or a product not used before in the graphic communication industry.

Learn more here: Bit.ly/accuvan

PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICES

AccuZIP is committed to supporting the professional development and continuing education of all of our AccuZIP team members. When you contact a member of our team, you can be confident that you are working with an expert.

Recent Accomplishments by AccuZIP's Team of Qualified Professionals

- President attended Microsoft Excel Certification Course
- Receptionist attended Administrative Assistants Course
- Typesetter attended Social Media Marketing Course

AccuZIP Developers and Professional Services Group members are always on-hand to answer questions and for advanced support:

bit.ly/accudev

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
accuzip
TEAM MEMBER

THE
ACCUZIP TEAM

At AccuZIP we constantly pursue excellence. However, we also place great value on transparency. Not only to create a positive work environment but also because AccuZIP is committed to bringing you the professionalism and knowledge of a large company with the kindness and accessibility of a small company.

In this edition, get to know our receptionist and administrative assistant, Larissa Barrios, as she shares a little bit about what makes her a unique part of the AccuZIP family.

LARISSA BARRIOS
RECEPTIONIST/
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

If you could be any animal, what and why?

A dolphin. They are incredibly intelligent and are typically not hunted by other predators. I love the ocean and sushi so being able to swim all the time and eat fish all day sounds good to me!

What do you feel most proud of in your life?

When I was twenty two, I moved away from family in Texas to start a new life out in California. I've had my ups and downs, but I love living here on the beautiful central coast with close friends who are like family to me. I wouldn't trade it for anything!

What's a skill you'd like to learn, and why?

Sewing and costume making. I love dressing up as different characters from movies, books, animé, video games, or people from different eras. If I could sew and make props like the pros, I could make any costume I wanted.

What's the best career advice you could give someone?

No matter what field you choose, do something where you love the process, not just the outcome. Success comes from perseverance, and if you love the process, you'll keep at it no matter what obstacle you face.

What's your favorite moment at AccuZIP?

It was during a team meeting with all of the office personnel and our remote techs. Marty, one of the remote techs, has a couple of cats, and one of them jumped in front of his web camera. It was the most stereotypical thing a cat could do. Everyone was in stitches from laughing!

What's your strongest personal quality?

Determination. When I start something, I keep at it until it is completed. Even when something goes wrong, I have to find a way to fix it.

If you could have any super power what would it be and why?

Telekinesis. Being able to move stuff with my mind would be super convenient. I could move heavy objects without needing help, and most importantly, grab things that are on high shelves. No more ladders for me!

What interests or hobbies do you enjoy outside of work?

I am obsessed with stories. I love reading them, writing them, even the history of how stories came to be and the vital roles they play in every culture. Currently I am working on getting short stories published and maybe one day a full length novel.
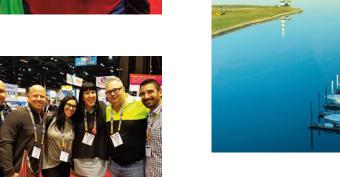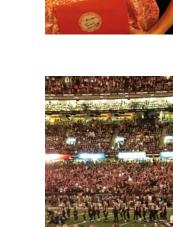
FEATURED
PHOTOS

T H E   A C C U - F A M I L Y

The AccuZIP Texas Team watching a Rams vs. Saints football game.

T H E   A C C U - F A M I L Y

ACCUZIP RECEIVES THE PRESTIGIOUS VANGUARD PIONEER AWARD
IN THE RED HOT TECHNOLOGY AWARD PROGRAM.

Pictured Above: AccuZIP's Eric Lambeth – Technical Support Director

THE ACCU-FAMILY ———

ACCU**GIVES**

At AccuZIP we strive to not only excel in our services and support, but also in being a company that promotes and leads in the community to bring about local change within a greater global perspective for good. Below are some of the highlights from how we have been able to contribute back into the community around us.

HOW WE HELPED:

- Gold Sponsor of Interfaith Caring Ministries' 2018 Festival of Trees

- 1500hp Sponsor of Templeton FFA's Tractor Pull

- Printed Fall Sports Programs for Templeton High School

- Donated to Local Cub Scout™ Troop through their annual CAMP MASTERS Popcorn Fund-raiser

- Donated to North County Christian School's See's Candies 2018 Winter Fundraiser

"'THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY' IS MY MOTTO FOR CHARITABLE GIVING. MOST PEOPLE WOULD BE SURPRISED BY HOW MUCH NEED EXISTS IN THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITY. IF EVERYONE HELPED LOCALLY, WE COULD EVENTUALLY LIVE IN A WORLD IN WHICH CHARITY WOULD BE UNNECESSARY."

– Michele Belmonte, AccuZIP HR Resource Administrator

THE JOURNEY TO
EXCELLENCE

THE IT
PERSPECTIVE

VMWARE HIGH AVAILABILITY: HOW VMWARE WORKS & BEST PRACTICES

BY DAVE BELMONTE

THERE ARE MANY BENEFITS TO CREATING AND running Virtual Machines rather than multiple physical servers, a couple glaring reasons are rack space and power consumption. With a VM host, there is one unit that can hold several VMs creating a highly compressed server rack. A VM Host enables a systems administrator to create and run VMs directly on a single physical machine. Those VMs run simultaneously with the physical machine. Each VM runs its own OS.

The advantages of virtual machines are multiple OS environments can exist simultaneously on the same machine, isolated from each other. A Virtual machine can offer easy maintenance, application provisioning, availability, and convenient recovery. One excellent reason to start using a virtual machine is the ability to create system level snapshots that can be instantly restored on demand. Since the backup is simply a file, the snapshots are taken and transferred very quickly.

With the entire contents of a virtual machine stored on a single file, you can easily transfer that file to another computer and load it up without any issues, as long as you use the same virtualization software, of course.

Virtual Machines allow you to run multiple operating systems from one machine.

For example, VMs are stored as VDI files. Regardless of which host OS you were using, you can copy that VDI file and load it in as a guest OS on another computer running a VM. This creates a clone of your system that you can carry around with you anywhere you go.

Often multiple virtual machines with their own OS's are used in server consolidation, where different services are run in separate virtual environments, but on the same physical machine.

Virtualization brings a number of advantages including centralizing network management, reducing dependency on additional hardware and software, etc. Imagine you want to install a new app that's untested and possibly unstable, or maybe you want to uninstall a bunch of software you've accumulated over the past few months. Or maybe you just want to tweak some system configurations. But in all cases, you're hesitant due to uncertainty. Just take a snapshot before moving ahead. If something does go wrong, you can restore the snapshot and move on as if nothing happened. These backups are like a more comprehensive System Restore, and best of all, they're saved as single files that you can move and store somewhere else like an external drive.

VMs have changed the way a lot of companies do business by providing capabilities physical systems could not. When transitioning to a virtual environment, you should take full advantage of all the efficiencies and capabilities it offers. Companies should completely virtualize their data center in order to reap the benefits of virtualization. There is far less overhead, with less space, less power consumption, faster and more efficient backups, and faster deployment.

ADVICE FROM THE INSIDE

BUSINESS/COURTESY REPLY MAIL IN YOUR OPERATIONS ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

BY DONNA SUE TACKETT

LEARNING THE SPECIFICATIONS OF reply Mail seems to be something we only tackle when a customer decides to add a Reply Mail Piece to a project. If you have not yet had the experience of sorting through the DMM® specifications on Reply Mail, hopefully this will help you navigate the types and rates when the time comes.

The days of just putting an address on an envelope or postcard with the "Place Stamp Here" request are fading. This type of mail is known to USPS® as Courtesy Reply Mail. USPS now prefers that all CRM bear a FIM and Intelligent Mail® Barcode along with the address and "Place Stamp Here" message if included in a presort mailed at Automation Rates. You can create CRM and BRM on the Business Customer Gateway with the appropriate FIM and Intelligent Mail Barcode. AccuZIP has a Tech Note available on request with an outline of those steps.

Business Reply Mail® is the next step up from Courtesy Reply Mail™. This is the Mail Reply piece where the Mail Owner agrees to pay the postage for USPS to deliver that piece back to them. A BRM permit is required and must be printed on the mail piece to ensure USPS collects postage upon return. There are several levels or rate structures of Business Reply Mail. All include the appropriate First-Class Rate (.47 or .485 for a First Class one ounce letter) with the additional return fee based on the BRM rate structure you have chosen.

Basic BRM, along with the annual permit fee, has a postage rate of .47+.84 for a total of $1.31 per piece for a one ounce letter. High Volume BRM has an additional account maintenance fee of $690.00 per year with a return cost of .47+.098 for a total of $0.568 per piece for a one ounce letter. You would need to expect a return of more than 930 pieces of mail to warrant paying the High Volume fee of $690.00 (1.31 - .568 = .742 the difference in Basic and High Volume rates). Taking that difference .742 x 930 = $690.06 would equal the amount of the High Volume maintenance fee. After the initial 930 pieces are processed, the High Volume BRM piece is a much better price break at .568 per piece for a one ounce letter versus the $1.31 of Basic BRM.

QBRM™ (Qualified Business Reply Mail) is the next step up in the BRM rate chart. QBRM has both Basic and High Volume rates. A USPS authorization must be obtained before mailing at QBRM rates. QBRM rate pieces also require USPS approval of preproduction samples of the QBRM piece. During the authorization process, a proper ZIP+4 is assigned to the mailer for each price category of QBRM to be returned. One for card priced pieces, one for letter-size pieces weighing 1 ounce or less, and one for letter-size pieces weighing 1 ounce up to 2 ounces. Basic QRBM rates are .485 + .068 =.553 per piece for a one ounce letter. For High Volume QRBM, there is a Quarterly Fee of $2,350.00 and does require an advanced deposit account for paying postage. USPS does offer a significantly lower rate of .485 + .013 = .498 per piece for a one ounce letter. High Volume QBRM is best suited for mailers with a return volume of approximately 42,727 pieces or more quarterly or 170,909 pieces or more annually.

Taking all into consideration, it is best to have a detailed conversation with your customer when planning a project that will include a Reply Mail piece. How many times will they be including a Reply Mail piece in the coming year? What volume of the Reply Mail cards or envelopes mailed out do they expect to be returned to the mail stream? Would including a CRM piece be as effective as a BRM in getting a response from the addressee? Since QBRM does require a preproduction sample, is it viable to print and store enough pieces of the approved sample to use throughout the year or the quarter that the QBRM fee is based on? Printing larger quantities can mean lower printing costs and much lower postage fees on QBRM.

PLACES TO JOURNEY

PINING FOR CAMBRIA
BY LARISSA BARRIOS

I T'S A QUIET MORNING, THE FOG FROM THE OCEAN still rolling in, hiding the trunks of the evergreen trees. The wind smells of salt and pine as it sweeps across the ragged coast and up over the hills beyond where sheep and cows graze. Seagulls cry out over the crash of waves. No you're not in Ireland, but the Central Coast town of Cambria, California.

Nestled among the pines, Cambria took on many names throughout the years such as Santa Rosa, Roseville, San Simeon and Slabtown, after the slab wood construction of the buildings. On January 10, 1870, the town was formally named Cambria by a local committee. In the late 1800's, Cambria became the second largest town in San Luis Obispo County, thriving off industries like lumber, cattle ranches, orchard farming, and cinnabar mining. Throughout the 1920's the town continued to flourish. (cambriachamber.org/history.php)

During this time, William Randolph Hearst began his lifelong dream of creating a castle akin to those he saw and loved across Europe. Hearst spared no expense in its construction. He even had a cathedral ceiling taken apart and transported to the castle where it was reassembled. The castle boasts a magnificent estate of 165 rooms, and 127 acres of gardens, terraces, pools, and walkways. In 1958, the castle became a California State Park, where it gives both day and night tours daily. (cambriachamber.org/hearst-castle.php) It's a bizarre feeling, walking down those gilded halls where celebrities of a bygone era once partied in lavish attire. If you listen closely, you can faintly hear laughter, the clink of fine china, and the croon of a gramophone from one of those infamous parties.

> " "WHILE THE MOONSTONES ARE ELUSIVE, YOU'LL STILL ENJOY THE BEAUTY OF THE BEACH, RIDDLED WITH MULTI-COLORED ROCKS, SEASHELLS, AND THE WIDE SWEEPING VIEW OF A SEEMINGLY ENDLESS OCEAN. "

While an entire day could be devoted to just exploring Hearst Castle, there is plenty to do and see in Cambria. Moonstone Beach is a favorite spot for both tourists and locals. People are often found with their heads bent down to the ground, foraging for moonstone, jade, and other precious stones that wash up on the shore. While the moonstones are elusive, you'll still enjoy the beauty of the beach, riddled with multicolored rocks, seashells, and the wide sweeping view of a seemingly endless ocean. If you're lucky, you may even catch some sea otters or dolphins that frequently come close to the coastline to eat or play.

For more wildlife to observe, no spot is better, and more unique, than the Piedras Blancas Elephant Seal Rookery located just north of Cambria. Categorized as the Northern Elephant Seal, they are the largest seals in the northern hemisphere, bested only by their southern relatives. Their numbers vary month to month, but the largest gatherings occur late January when births occur, early May when the females and juveniles molt, and late October when the juveniles and older males come to rest. (elephantseal.org) Visitors are kept a safe distance away, looking down the beach over a cliff where you can watch the pups play along the shore, or simply marvel at their massive size while they bask under the sun.

If it's shopping you're craving, head back into downtown Cambria, where you will find dozens of unique stores. Local artists sell handmade jewelry, pottery fired with bright cobalt, amethyst, or sea green, scenic paintings of the ocean or pine trees, and various artwork made from driftwood and seashells scavenged from the coastline. There are plenty of souvenir shops as well to take back a little bit of Cambria with you.

When it comes to food, Cambria offers just about a little bit of everything. For seafood, the Sea Chest Oyster Bar and restaurant offers delectable fish fare. Sit at the oyster bar and you can chat with the chefs as they prepare your meal right in front of you. Craving Mexican? Medusa's butter-nut squash enchiladas will have you melting into your seat. If it's fine dining you're seeking, try The Black Cat Bistro, featuring American cuisine with a French flair. And if you're a lover of pies, you can't do much better than the famous Lynn's. Residing in a stand alone brick building, Lynn's offers a wide variety of pies both savory and sweet along with brownies, cookies, and muffins. You can eat there in the restaurant or buy a frozen-ready-to-bake version to take back home. (cambriachamber.org/food-restaurants.php)

Cambria offers its visitors an array of treasures, but nothing can top its sunsets. Park your car off the side of the road with a clear view of the ocean. If you find a path, make your way down to the beach or just find a good rock to sit on. When the sun creeps down to meet the glistening sea, the sky will turn from azure blue to tangerine orange and in that moment, you'll know true beauty.

JOURNEY

PRODUCT
SPOTLIGHT

THE POWER OF TRACKING YOUR MAIL: WHY ACCUTRACE HELPS YOU SUCCEED

BY ERIC LAMBETH

WHEN I ASK ACCUZIP CUSTOMERS and prospective subscribers if they currently track the mail they prepare and deliver to the post office, the biggest reason why they don't track mail is because their clients never ask for it.

Perhaps they don't request it because they don't know what they could be getting.

When people think of mail tracking, most think in terms of tracking a package through FEDEX or UPS, or even following the tracking path from origin to destination that is provided by the USPS®. If you're sending marketing mail, it doesn't make a lot of sense to make sure a specific person receives an advertising piece, and it makes even less sense for a mail recipient to complain because they didn't receive their advertisement. But when it comes to Intelligent Mail® Barcode tracking and the information you receive from the AccuTrace Intelligent Mail Barcode tracking service, the value goes way beyond the ability to hunt down a missing mail piece.
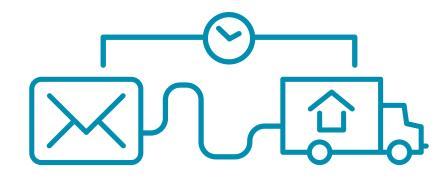
Sure, you can use AccuTrace to look up a specific address in a mailing and find out where and when it was scanned and when it received its final (Out For Delivery) scan. But there's a bigger picture AccuTrace provides.

First, it's important to understand how AccuTrace works.

Your mail pieces hit the mail stream and along the way their Intelligent Barcodes get scanned as they pass through automation equipment. Embedded in the barcode is a 15 digit combination of a unique serial number and the Mailer ID identifies the mail owner and a specific piece. When you authorize scans for your Mailer ID to be sent to AccuTrace, the AccuTrace service is able to differentiate your mail jobs from other companies' jobs, and determine which of your jobs the mail piece belongs to. Scans by the USPS take place 24/7, and this raw data is sent to AccuTrace, which is then filtered into corresponding jobs. The end result: When you log into your personal AccuTrace portal, you'll see each of the mailings you've uploaded, and for each mailing you'll receive updated, specific scan information. Mailings are uploaded into AccuTrace automatically through the AccuZIP6 program right after the Intelligent Mail barcodes are written to your presort's data.

When you log into AccuTrace and select a job, you won't just receive a list of each record in the mailing and its scan data. AccuTrace, instead, filters the data into easy-to-understand, valuable reports that tell the story about the mailing's journey through the mail stream.

And this is where your clients can get the most value. On a job-by-job basis, you and your client can tell, at a glance, when pieces started initially getting scanned. Now you know exactly when the mail has hit the mail stream, which was previously a guess. On the initial screen when you first select a job, you'll see a bar graph labeled Results By First Scan Date. The bar graph represents the dates of these scans and the number of pieces that received their first scans on these dates.

On the same screen, you'll also see the Out For Delivery Scans graph. The last scan a mail piece will receive before being delivered to its intended mailbox is the Out For Delivery scan. Like the Results by First Scan Date bar graph, the Out For Delivery report will also show the dates of the scans and the number of pieces receiving this special scan on each day.

Now you know when mail has entered its journey and when that journey ended. Now you know when to expect people to start reading that mail. And these reports are filtered even further. When you have a mail start date and an end date, now you have information on how long it took to get from your origin to its destination. AccuTrace filters this information into various reports. You can get a results by State, County, NDC, and so forth. Many of these reports will include a column that tells you how many days it took the mail to reach each area of the country.

The intelligence is growing. Not only do you now have information on when this mail hit the mail stream and how long it took to reach its destination, you can use this information to predict how long mail will take to reach destinations in future mailings. Use this information in First Class and Standard (Marketing Mail) mailings alike. This is especially helpful for political mailings, mailings that advertise upcoming events, and those that advertise time-sensitive offers.

If, by looking at past jobs, you could predict how long it would take your mailings to be delivered, wouldn't that be valuable when it comes to deciding the cut-off date for dropping a mailing? And if a client's strategy includes a call to action when the mail hits, isn't there more confidence in those follow-ups when you know the mail has been delivered? This is where AccuTrace has its greatest worth.

The times of seeding your mailings to help predict when mail will arrive has become as outdated as the strategy of dancing to produce rain. With this increasingly-improving IM Barcode tracking technology (for instance: AccuTrace will now predict when your mail will arrive before the Out For Delivery scans have hit), providing this valuable service to your clients and using it for your own mailings will benefit each and every mailing when there's a solid marketing strategy in place.

THE TYPESETTER'S
TOOLBOX

CONTRAST:
WHY IT WORKS AND HOW TO DO IT WELL

BY DYLAN WYKE

F REQUENTLY WHEN PICKING OUT PAINT FOR A remodel or a project, it can be hard to tell the difference between those two similar shades like aquamarine blue and light teal. Okay, cool, but what does this have to do with design? Well this conflict of colors is occurring because there is no contrast. Your mind and eyes can't tell what is what because they are just too dang similar. This can be solved by using contrast.

Contrast is crucial to design because it allows the brain and eyes to separate different pieces of information and categorize them better. If you have a postcard that is all just different shades of blue and the same text, everything will blend together. When you create contrast between different elements it allows for the mind to be able to distinguish different elements from another.
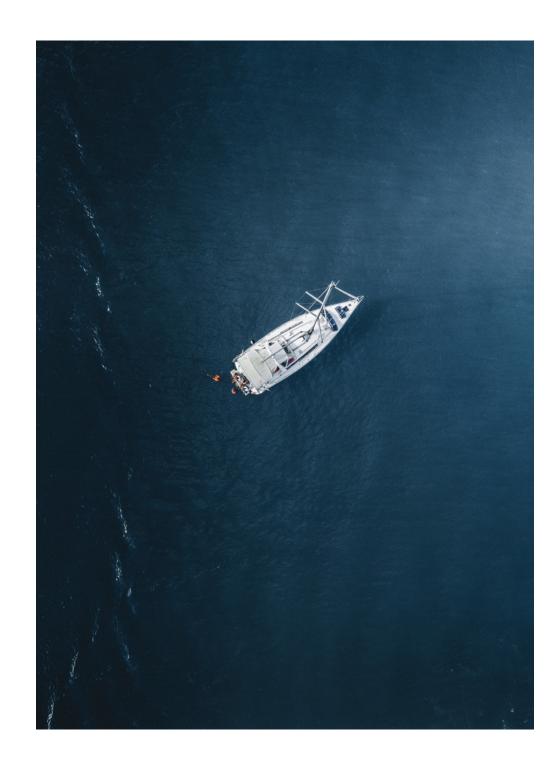
Another, yet similar way contrast can help your designs, is by allowing for a visual hierarchy. A visual hierarchy is like a chain of command for important information. It allows what needs to be seen first to stand out and speak to the consumer.

Contrast can occur between any two elements of design and contrast can take place anywhere within (or even outside) a design. Everything from text, to photos, to white space (information-less space), to even the environment surrounding an advertising piece can create contrast between any elements within a piece. Think about the image to the right of this text and how it interacts with the white space around it, or the thin text contrasted against the heavy text of this article's title.

However, too much contrast is not always a good thing. Even though your mind wants to be able to tell what it is reading, it also wants to feel that all of the visual information it is receiving is still connected somehow. For example, going back to this article's title, the two pieces of the title are two different fonts, two different colors, and thus have two different weights, yet they still feel connected. This is achieved in this specific case by using two sans serif (without typeface projections) fonts. Even though these two pieces of text are very different, they still feel similar. Of course, this type of connection will change for every circumstance, but in this case for this magazine's voice that's what worked. PROTIP: Just because two elements are complimentary colors doesn't mean they connect. Instead try grabbing a color from a nearby image.

While effective, contrast alone does not create a good design. It is just one piece of the greater flow and feel that is design. I recommend reading my article in the previous zipLINE for some more tips.

SUPPORTING YOUR
BUSINESS

ACCUTICKETS - THE NEW SUPPORT TOOL
BY MATHEW LITTLE

WHEN IT COMES TO TECHNICAL Support, AccuZIP strives to consistently provide top of the line support. We are dedicated to prioritizing our support, as we are aware of the vital role supporting our products plays to our customers. To make this level of service possible, we want to ensure our employees are provided with the best tools available for assisting our customers as quickly and efficiently as possible. The tool at the center of any support department is the support ticket logging system. It's not only how we detail every interaction, it's also the lifeline to our support department as a whole.

A good ticket logging system should not just show simple information about how we assisted a customer—it should also provide valuable insight about how we can continue to improve upon the support we offer. From both a support and a development mindset, we need to be increasingly aware of the areas where improvements can be made, and how the improvements we do make affect our customers. Without this level of detail, our products and support would fall short. This is why we chose to develop our own logging system, AccuTickets.

AccuTickets was developed with a priority on speed and data retrieval. We wanted to arm our support personnel with a tool custom-fit to meet their daily needs. While there are plenty of other ticket logging systems available, most are not customizable enough to truly give us the precise application that we're looking for. Each one has an inherent design aspect that forces you to follow their standards of what a ticket should consist of, and what metrics you're able to track. By building a system from the ground up, we were able to flip that aspect and use the feedback from our support personnel to design an application around how we personally would like to use it.

With an application that we've now built in-house, we're in complete control of what we log, how we log it, and what information we can retrieve. One of the main benefits of creating a custom application is streamlining repetitive actions. With our old licensed system, submitting, searching, and pulling up ticket history took far too long, with too many clicks to achieve. These processes (which are repeated daily many, many times), are now substantially quicker and easier. This minimizes the distractions of our support staff trying to work around an inflexible ticketing system, and allows them to direct more of their attention to helping our customers.

Building upon this new system, our goal is to make the job of our support staff easier, to in turn give you an even better support experience. With the foundation of the AccuTickets system complete, the sky's the limit for what tools we can provide for our employees. We can continually implement new features whenever necessary to provide support tools custom built for AccuZIP. Not just for logging purposes, but for any support information that we can use to assist our customers. Whether that's server statuses, account information, or AccuTrace scans details.

While AccuTickets is an application that is only used by our employees, we hope that our customers will ultimately reap the benefits of our transition to this new tool. At AccuZIP, our focus will remain on the support we provide for our products. Through steps like this, our goal is to continually improve upon the support we provide today and move towards providing an even better experience for our customers.

"FROM BOTH A SUPPORT AND A DEVELOPMENT MINDSET, WE NEED TO BE INCREASINGLY AWARE OF THE AREAS WHERE IMPROVEMENTS CAN BE MADE, AND HOW THE IMPROVEMENTS WE DO MAKE AFFECT OUR CUSTOMERS."
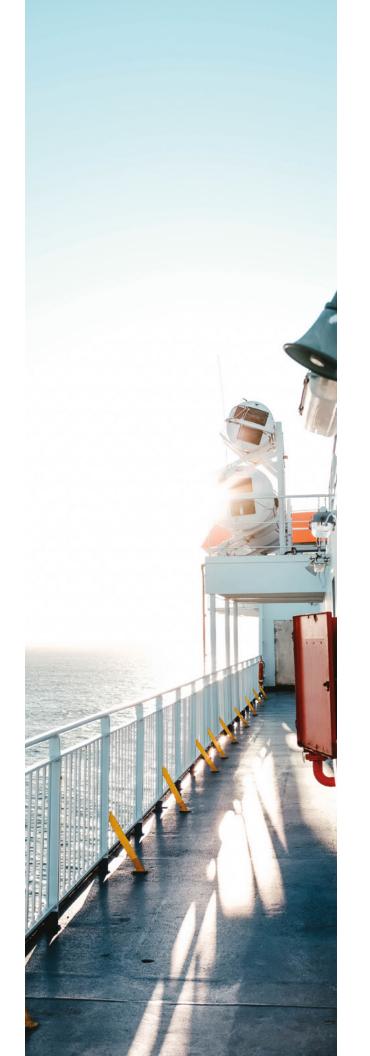
WORKPLACE
WELLNESS

THE IMPORTANCE OF MINDFULNESS AND MANAGING STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE

BY KELSEY HAZELTON

OFTEN, YOU MAY FIND yourself buried with work continuing to pile up and mounting stress as items continue to be added to your never ending to do list. Have you ever found yourself tidying up your workspace to leave for the day and wondered, "Where has my day gone? What did I even get done today?" This is not uncommon in our fast-paced and ever evolving Print Industry. This is also a strong sign that you are stressed and overwhelmed. Here are some helpful tips and tricks I have learned that you can practice to help you become in control of your time and productivity both at home and work.

I attended a workshop that was put on by Fred Pryor Seminars entitled "Strategies to help the Overwhelmed." There are times I have found myself chatting online with someone, on the phone with someone else and also writing a note about someone else on my notepad. This was indeed a sign of being overwhelmed. At the start of class my thoughts drifted to the ten other items on my to do list at the office that I could have been doing instead of sitting in the seminar, yet I knew I was where I needed to be. The instructor helped us understand that by looking at our day in little chunks of time, planning what fills those time blocks and prioritizing what is most urgent, we will find ourselves accomplishing more. Since the seminar, I have started practicing blocking my time, checking off my to do list, and prioritizing. By the end of the day, I felt way more prepared to tackle topics on my to do list one at a time and only focusing on that task until it was complete. The instructor shared that staying focused until a task is complete can take an eighth of the time than getting distracted before the task is complete. I learned that it can take as long as twenty minutes to get back to the task at hand when you allow yourself to be distracted by others or tasks that pop up. Of course some are urgent and do need our attention from time to time too. He then proceeded to explain that by setting goals and taking steps one at a time, we will achieve our goals and

complete more tasks. The presenter shared a quote with me that has stuck with me since the course, "The journey of 1,000 miles starts with one step." -Leo Tzu

At AccuZIP, we recently did an in office workshop on Mindfulness and how being mindful in reaction to life's stressors can help you increase productivity and boost our well-being at work and at home. According to the World Health Organization, chronic stress is the health epidemic of the 21st century. The STOP Technique was taught to us during our Mindfulness workshop. If we stop, analyze what is stressing us, ask ourselves how it makes us feel, take time to breathe deep, observe what is surrounding us and then proceed in a positive manner, we can reduce stress and impulse reactions to stressful situations. This allows us to be fully present in our moment of decision making and gives us the clear mind to prioritize how to proceed.

Again, if you are like me, you may find yourself lost in a sea of stress or piles of work that seem never ending. Since learning the STOP Technique, along with making myself a to do list and prioritizing my time, I find I am making my way through the to do list much faster and able to accomplish more in my workday so that I am not taking my work home with me or have it on my mind when I leave the office. By leaving work at work, taking each obstacle as it comes and being fully present, I have been able to live more in every moment of every day. Taking the time to walk on the beach, visit with family or friends and take care of myself helps me to re-enter my focus, recharge, and then in turn come back to the office and help others!

In review, Block your day into increments of time, make yourself a to do list with your tasks, then prioritize your to do list into the blocks of time within your day. Don't forget to take time to STOP when stressful situations arise. This will help you be the most productive, positive, and mindful you. You will find yourself truly living a better you and more able to enjoy your time in every moment and in all you do each day. I will leave you with one of my favorite quotes, "Breathe. Let go. And remind yourself that this very moment is the only one you know you have for sure." – Oprah Winfrey

THE
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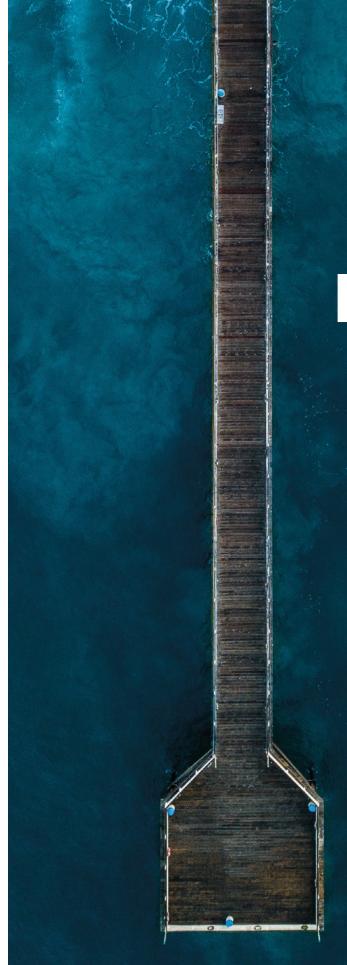
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