



RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Cultivating the Postal Service's Digital Channels

White Paper Support · USPS Office of Inspector General · Research and Insights Solutions Center

RFI 6HQOIG-26-A-0008 · Submitted to Farzad Afrasiabi, Contracting Officer · August 2026

We didn't just propose the research. We started it, and the evidence base is running now, before award.

Meridian
HSG BENCHMARKING
INSTRUMENT

Command center

Foreign posts

Domestic competitors

Capability matrix

UX friction register

Opportunity register

Sizing sandbox

usps-oig-digital.housestrategiesgroup.com/platform

LIVE

ENGAGEMENT

RFI 6HQOIG-26-A-0008 · preliminary evidence base

Captured Aug 2026

Evaluator guide

TASKS 1 + 2 · THE SOW'S COMMON-VS-RARE QUESTION, COMPUTED

Capability matrix

The SOW asks which digital offerings are common and which reflect emerging trends. Here that is a computed fact: each foreign-post row shows how many of the fifteen operators provide the capability. Toggle to the domestic set for the fifteen-capability comparison against UPS, FedEx, Amazon, the intermediary layer, and regional carriers.

Foreign posts (15) Domestic field (6)

Offered Partial / pilot None found Discontinued Unverified

CAPABILITY	R. MAIL	DP DHL	LA POSTE	AUSPOST	JAPAN	SWISS	POSTE IT.	POSTNL	CORREOS	CANADA	AN POST	POSTNORD	SINGPOST	NZ POST	AUSTRIA	OFFER RATE
Digital stamp / postage code																9/15
Incoming-mail preview (Informed Delivery analog) RARE																3/15
Digital mailbox / vault RARE																3/15



See the research running before you award

A foreign-post capability matrix, a domestic competitor matrix, a scored UX friction register for revenue-generating tasks, and a legally screened revenue-opportunity register with transparent sizing. Preliminary open-source findings, captured August 2026; nothing for OIG to buy, install, or authorize.

usps-oig-digital.housestrategiesgroup.com

SUBMITTED BY

House Strategies Group,
LLC
Tampa, FL ·
Washington, DC

PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT

Jelani House, Managing Director
(434) 981-5295 ·
jelani.house@housestrategiesgroup.com

IDENTIFIERS

UEI EAE1MJHMN2Z1 · CAGE
7W4Y5
EIN 47-5283120 · NAICS 541990

RESPONSES DUE

August 14, 2026
3:00 PM EDT

SBA 8(a) Certified

Small Disadvantaged Business

38 years Senior Foreign Service on the benchmark team

Signed past performance, rated Exceptional

No USPS, USPS OIG, or nonpublic data appears in this response or on the companion instrument; all findings shown are preliminary results of open-source review, with sources recorded. HSG offers its socioeconomic status as supplier diversity information only, recognizing the Postal Service's exemption under 39 U.S.C. 410.



HOUSE STRATEGIES GROUP

RESEARCH & ADVISORY · BENCHMARKING ·
DIGITAL CHANNEL ANALYSIS

Response to RFI 6HQOIG-26-A-0008
Due August 14, 2026, 3:00 PM EDT

Cultivating the Postal Service's Digital Channels: White Paper Support

Response to the USPS Office of Inspector General, Research and Insights Solutions Center
Submitted to Farzad Afrasiabi, Contracting Officer (fafrasiabi@uspsoig.gov) and
contracts@uspsoig.gov · August 2026

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY, RELEASABLE TO GOVERNMENT AGENCIES FOR EVALUATION PURPOSES ONLY. This caption appears on every page. No USPS, USPS OIG, or nonpublic data appears in this response or on the companion instrument.

THE RESEARCH IS ALREADY RUNNING · BUILT BEFORE THE BID

Open Meridian: a working preview of all four research notes



Fifteen foreign posts profiled against UPU statistics, six domestic profiles, a combined capability matrix that computes the SOW's common-versus-emerging distinction, a severity-scored UX friction register for revenue-generating tasks, and a revenue-opportunity register in which every idea carries a legal-feasibility rating. Preliminary open-source findings, captured August 2026, every load-bearing fact source-labeled.

Open the instrument usps-oig-digital.housestrategiesgroup.com

The Research directorate is asking a question nobody has forced to a conclusion: usps.com, the USPS Mobile App, Informed Delivery, Click-N-Ship, and Label Broker together constitute the largest digital audience in American shipping, and the least monetized one. Rather than tell the OIG we are qualified to study that, we started the study. This response summarizes who we are (Item A) and demonstrates the technical capability (Item B) with findings, not adjectives.

A.1 Company profile, business size, and points of contact

RFI ITEM 1 OF 6

House Strategies Group, LLC (HSG) is an SBA 8(a) certified research and management consulting firm formed in Florida in 2015, with offices in Tampa, Florida and Washington, DC. Our practice concentrates on rigorous, evidence-first analysis for public-sector decision-makers: comparative benchmarking, market and transaction research, organizational assessment, and the design and operation of digital analytical products. The firm builds and runs its own portfolio of live web platforms for government-facing engagements, which means the digital-channel analysis this SOW requires is work we do as practitioners, not only as reviewers.

BUSINESS SIZE	Small business. 2024 gross receipts \$284,283 (Form 1120-S). Fewer than ten personnel: a core team of full-time staff supported by a named senior consulting bench. We bid only what we can staff with named people.
CUSTOMERS	USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (through prime Rumik Consultancy LLC); Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of the Navy, and HUD (through prime Emax Financial & Real Estate Advisory Services); and municipal, county, and judicial-branch clients in classification and compensation studies.
IDENTIFIERS	UEI EAE1MJHMN2Z1 · CAGE 7W4Y5 · EIN 47-5283120 · NAICS 541990, 541611, 541612, 541618 · SAM registration active
PRIMARY POC	Jelani House , Managing Director and Principal Consultant · (434) 981-5295 · jelani.house@housestrategiesgroup.com 10525 Mistflower Lane, Tampa, FL 33647 · www.housestrategiesgroup.com
ALTERNATE POC	Maurice House , Founder and Chief Executive Officer · (813) 991-1157 · correspondence via the primary POC mailbox above

A.2 GWAC / GSA Schedule status

RFI ITEM 2 OF 6

HSG's GSA Multiple Award Schedule offer is in process and not yet awarded; we hold no GWAC today. As the RFI notes, a GWAC is not required for award, and HSG contracts directly under USPS Supplying Principles and Practices. We note for completeness that the Postal Service's procurement independence under 39 U.S.C. 410 means HSG's 8(a) certification is offered as supplier-diversity information only, not as a claim to preference.

B.1 Technical capability for the services described in the SOW RFI ITEM 3 OF 6

Including whether the required capabilities exist in-house or would be subcontracted or teamed.

All required capabilities are in-house. HSG is not proposing subcontractors or teaming partners for this scope. A white-paper research engagement at this size is best served by two senior researchers who do the work themselves; both are named in Item B.2 context and on the companion instrument, with in-house surge research support as needed. What follows maps our capability to each SOW task, evidenced by the preliminary research we completed before submitting this response.

TASK 1 · BENCHMARKING AGAINST FOREIGN POSTAL OPERATORS

We have already profiled fifteen posts (Royal Mail, Deutsche Post DHL, La Poste, Australia Post, Japan Post, Swiss Post, Poste Italiane, PostNL, Correos, Canada Post, An Post, PostNord, Singapore Post, New Zealand Post, Austrian Post) across the SOW's exact dimensions: postal services offered digitally, non-postal commercial services, non-postal government services, and how each post monetizes its channel, anchored by the UPU's 2025 survey of 153 operators so

that “common versus emerging” is a computed fact rather than an impression. Early findings the OIG can already interrogate on the instrument:

- Consumer digital mailboxes fail without a mandate or a sender-pays model: Germany, Canada, and Australia all shut theirs down; Denmark’s mandatory Digital Post succeeded so completely that the country delivered its last letter on December 30, 2025. Informed Delivery is already the largest offering of its kind in the world, in a category only 22 percent of posts have entered at all.
- Three pricing postures exist for digital postage codes: premium (An Post charges 54 percent above the paper stamp), parity (Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Scandinavia), and discount to force channel shift (New Zealand prices online service 30 percent below the counter). USPS has never had to choose a posture, because it has no equivalent product.
- Postal digital-identity plays survive only when anchored to a national scheme (Poste Italiane holds roughly 72 percent of Italy’s SPID identities; La Poste runs the only top-assurance identity for FranceConnect+), while Australia Post’s standalone Digital iD was discontinued in May 2026.
- Across all fifteen posts: no consumer app subscription fees and no in-app advertising, anywhere. Monetization runs through product sales, paid service terms, sender-pays e-delivery, government reimbursement, business-to-business identity fees, and collectible premiums.

Our international benchmarking lead, Maurice House, spent 38 years with USDA’s Foreign Agricultural Service, retiring from the Senior Foreign Service after a career, including service as Minister-Counselor and Agricultural Attaché, spent analyzing foreign markets and institutions from inside them. Comparative institutional analysis across national systems is the core discipline of Task 1, and it is the discipline he practiced for four decades on behalf of the U.S. government.

TASK 2 · BENCHMARKING AGAINST DOMESTIC COMPETITORS

Our domestic benchmark covers the SOW’s named set (Amazon, UPS, FedEx) plus the two layers a carrier-only comparison misses: the third-party postage platforms where a large share of small-business label purchase actually happens, and the regional carriers redefining recipient experience. Findings already on the instrument:

- usps.com is the most-visited shipping site in the world, drawing roughly twice the monthly visits of ups.com or fedex.com, and the USPS Mobile App is the best-rated of the three national carriers’ apps on iOS (4.8 stars across 1.7 million ratings). The audience is not the problem.
- The monetization layer is: UPS sells delivery control as a \$19.99-per-year subscription; FedEx sells it per transaction; Amazon monetizes delivery excellence through its \$139-per-year membership bundle; USPS prices every equivalent moment at zero.
- UPS grew its Digital Access Program, embedded discounted rates inside Shopify, Square, and the ShipStation family, from roughly \$150 million to more than \$4 billion in annual revenue by 2025. USPS sits in the same channel as an unbranded rate card, and the intermediaries have begun taxing USPS spend directly (one major API platform added a 3 percent fee on all USPS postage effective June 2026).

- Per the SOW, our comparison catalogs revenue-stream types rather than amounts: subscription, per-transaction convenience fees, embedded wholesale, retail attach, merchant-paid consumer convenience, bundle economics, workflow software-as-a-service, and advertising, and maps which of the eight USPS uses today (effectively one).

TASK 3 · USER EXPERIENCE OF REVENUE-GENERATING TASKS

The SOW asks for a broad heuristic review, explicitly not usability testing and not a Section 508 assessment. Our method: complete each revenue-generating task end to end (buy stamps, print a Click-N-Ship label, file a change of address, renew a PO Box, enroll in Informed Delivery) on desktop web, mobile web, and the USPS Mobile App; complete the same tasks on competitor channels; and score every friction point against Nielsen’s heuristics and published Baymard Institute checkout benchmarks (70.22 percent average cart abandonment; forced account creation alone accounts for 18 percent of checkout abandonment). Twelve findings are already documented and severity-scored on the instrument, including the single sharpest exhibit in the study: a free third-party website sells USPS’s own postage with deeper discounts and a simpler flow than usps.com, and the online change-of-address channel charges \$1.25 for identity verification while the retail counter performs the same task free. We will budget this task under the SOW’s 20 percent cap; our plan holds it at 18 percent.

TASK 4 · REVENUE-GENERATION OPPORTUNITIES

The SOW requires the Supplier to consider the Postal Service’s status as a government agency when evaluating revenue streams. We treat that instruction as a first-class analytical dimension, not a caveat. Every opportunity in our register carries a legal-feasibility rating grounded in the statute and doctrine that actually govern the question: the 39 U.S.C. 404(e) bar on new nonpostal services and the PRC’s mail-nexus doctrine (Orders 154 and 721; *USPS v. PRC*, 599 F.3d 705); the grandfathered nonpostal services (the change-of-address advertising program alone earned \$51.9 million net in FY2011); the 39 U.S.C. 3641 market-test authority (Every Door Direct Mail went from market test to a roughly \$100 million permanent product, the playbook for any priced digital feature); and the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022’s new 39 U.S.C. chapter 37 authority for reimbursed government services, under which zero agreements exist four years after enactment. Our preliminary conclusion, which the white paper can test: the binding constraint on digital revenue is not the law. The highest-value moves, pricing Informed Delivery campaigns that USPS today gives mailers free, a premium package-management tier, a unified small-business hub, are legally available today or through a market test, while the genuinely blocked ideas are the ones whose pilots already failed on demand, and the note will say so plainly with the evidence cited. Every revenue estimate ships with its assumptions exposed; the instrument’s sizing sandbox lets OIG staff move every assumption and watch the number respond.

TASKS 5 AND 6 · MEETINGS AND WHITE PAPER REVIEW

Biweekly working sessions fit how we already deliver: short evidence-first reviews against the live instrument, so OIG staff see findings as they land rather than at deliverable dates. For the white paper review, HSG writes for oversight audiences whose work is consumed by Congress and the public record; we review for sourcing integrity, hedging honesty, and clarity, and we deliver comments within the SOW’s one-week meeting window.

Schedule and format commitment. Kickoff within one week of an estimated October 1, 2026 award; draft research notes shared for comment from week seven; all four notes delivered by the estimated January 4, 2027 date, each five single-spaced pages or fewer in Microsoft Word with the underlying matrices as attachments, which the SOW permits beyond the page limit; note-review meetings inside two weeks; white paper review by March 1, 2027.

B.2 Contracts under which HSG has performed similar services

RFI ITEM 4 OF 6

Up to three, with agency, contract number, reference contact, dates, and description.

1 • USDA APHIS International Workforce Standardization

comparative research under a federal prime

CLIENT AND VEHICLE: USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, through prime Rumik Consultancy LLC, prime contract 12639521D0029. HSG as senior consulting subcontractor, June 2022 to present, approximately \$225,000.

REFERENCE: Sheetal Patel, President, Rumik Consultancy LLC · (469) 951-1423 · miki.patel@rumikconsultancy.com

RELEVANCE: Structured comparative analysis across national contexts under a federal prime: current-state and gap analyses, standardization of practices across countries and institutional regimes, and documentation built to survive agency review. The discipline of Task 1, benchmarking one institution's practices against external reference classes with a defensible evidence trail, is the discipline this engagement runs on.

Rated Exceptional in all six evaluation areas on a signed past performance questionnaire dated April 7, 2026, which credits HSG with "translating complex field realities into practical HR documentation and standardized workforce solutions."

2 • HUD Office of Asset Sales advisory support

market research for federal decision-makers

CLIENT AND VEHICLE: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Asset Sales, multi-year analytical and transaction-support engagements performed by HSG principals through prime advisory contractors, 2006 to 2025.

REFERENCE: John Lucey, Director, Office of Asset Sales · (202) 402-3927

RELEVANCE: Market analysis, buyer-side research, and documentation supporting billions of dollars in federal loan sales, consumed by federal executives and the public record. The same skill Task 2 and Task 4 require: turning market evidence into findings an agency can publish and defend.

Rated Exceptional in all six evaluation areas on a signed past performance questionnaire: "one of the best people I've worked with in this field."

3 · Emax Financial & Real Estate Advisory engagements

analytical support across federal clients

CLIENT AND VEHICLE: Emax Financial & Real Estate Advisory Services (prime), supporting engagements for HUD, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Department of the Navy; HSG principals as analytical and research support across multiple task orders.

REFERENCE: Donald McGuire, President, Emax Financial & Real Estate Advisory Services (contact details furnished with the signed questionnaire on request)

RELEVANCE: Sustained research and analysis production inside federal delivery schedules, including deliverables reviewed by multiple agency stakeholders, the operating rhythm of the SOW's biweekly cadence and fixed note deadlines.

Rated Exceptional overall on a signed past performance questionnaire.

All three questionnaires are on file and available to the Contracting Officer on request. Where engagements ran through prime contractors, we say so plainly above.

B.3 Information helpful for the future proposal solicitation

RFI ITEM 5 OF 6

Offered from the research already completed, in the spirit of improving the eventual RFP rather than advantaging any bidder:

- **Specify who locks the benchmark set.** Fifteen-post coverage is achievable inside this budget; the RFP will produce more comparable bids if it either names the foreign-post set (posts of comparable scale or universal service obligation) or explicitly asks offerors to propose one for OIG concurrence at kickoff.
- **State the data-access assumption.** USPS discloses no channel-level revenue anywhere public: ten years of Form 10-K filings report by product class only, and Click-N-Ship does not appear in the FY2025 filing. Research questions 1 through 3 therefore run entirely on OIG-internal data. Task 4 revenue estimates will be materially stronger if the RFP states whether relevant outputs of that internal analysis will be shared with the Supplier during performance.
- **Define Task 3 channel coverage.** Confirming whether the review includes the separate Informed Delivery app and the mobile web experience, alongside usps.com desktop and the USPS Mobile App, will keep offerors' Task 3 budgets comparable under the 20 percent cap.
- **Set the estimate format.** Order-of-magnitude ranges with stated assumptions, rather than point estimates, match both the public-proxy data reality and the OIG's publication standards; saying so in the RFP will prevent false-precision bids.
- **Name the format reference.** Identifying one or two recent RISC white papers as the editorial reference for the research notes will reduce rework in the Task 6 window.

B.4 Other information relevant to understanding HSG’s capabilities

RFI ITEM 6 OF 6

15 + 6

Foreign posts and domestic profiles already built, source-labeled

12

UX friction findings documented and severity-scored pre-bid

11

Revenue opportunities screened for legal feasibility, two honestly out

3rd

Compliant HSG response to this office in 2026, each on time and format-exact

We already work in the OIG’s canon. Our research base cites eighteen OIG products by report number, from RARC-WP-16-014 on foreign postal digital innovation to RISC-WP-26-001 on expanded government services, the May 2026 paper this white paper digitally extends. The research notes will read as continuations of the OIG’s own literature, not visitors to it.

Practitioner vantage point. HSG designs, ships, and operates live web platforms, including the companion instrument accompanying this response. The UX and monetization analysis comes from a team that builds checkout flows and instruments conversion funnels, not only benchmarks them.

Evidence standard. Every matrix cell carries its source and capture date; facts we could not confirm against a primary source are flagged unverified rather than asserted. That standard is visible on the instrument now and is the standard the deliverable notes would be held to.

Right-sized and durable. Two senior researchers, no pyramid, virtual or in-person per SOW 3.e, sized to the published not-to-exceed ceiling. The instrument remains available to the OIG through the engagement as a living evidence base at no additional cost.

We appreciate the Research directorate’s consideration and welcome the opportunity to support a white paper this consequential to the Postal Service’s financial future. The evidence base is open for your review today at usps-oig-digital.housestrategiesgroup.com.