Postal proposal not harmful to business

By Frederick Kaefer
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There has been a great deal of interest in the United States Postal Service's announcement to eliminate Saturday mail. The news, just before Valentine's Day, might trouble some people who relish personal cards and letters from those that care about not being delivered on weekends. But what impact, if any, will it have on local businesses?

Businesses have many communication options, and the suitability of alternative options depends on the category of business communication. In corresponding with customers and business partners, many companies utilize the Internet and email. In today's business world, it is commonplace for customers to email questions and even have interactive chat sessions with company representatives, enabling them to get answers to their questions almost immediately.

A second category of communication which is a top priority for business is customer orders and payments. Companies encourage their customers to order products and make reservations for services online in order to reduce the demand on individuals answering company phones. Customers often prefer online ordering, as they can avoid being put on hold and often are able to complete the ordering process faster. Businesses also see numerous benefits, including faster processing of payments and environmental benefits due to the reduction in paper used.

A category of communication that is absolutely critical for business is the shipment of products used in and produced by their operations. This category of communications cannot be supplanted by electronic communications. Fortunately, there will not be an impact to businesses in this category, since part of the USPS announcement stipulated that package delivery on Saturdays will not be eliminated.

Examining the different categories of business communication, the announced plan by the USPS to eliminate Saturday delivery of mail should have little impact on local businesses.