

Using the Country Chapters

When you manage a database for a single country, input, deduplication, merge-purge and output are all relatively simple matters. There are limited issues involving languages spoken, address format, post office required layouts and so on which allow you to build up an expertise to allow the maximum to be extracted from the data.

When you start working with international data, the problems are multiplied many fold. There are over 240 countries and territories in the world where around 115 different address formats are used and 6 000 different languages are spoken. Your approach to managing and outputting this data will make the difference between success and failure in your database marketing activities.

In this edition of *The Global Source-book for Address Data Management*, 242 countries and territories are covered to a greater or lesser extent. Each chapter contains data from a number of different sources brought together to enable you to get the most out of your international address data.

The information provided, the way it is laid out, and the reasons for inclusion, are detailed below.

Date and time formats

This section gives general information about most popular date formats (in terms of order that the data is written) and time notation (12- or 24-hour notation).

General formatting information

Information which has been updated since the previous edition of the *Global Source Book* is shown highlighted in yellow.

Because each language has its own alphabetical ordering (refer to the chapter *Diacritical Marks*), all listings have been provided listed according to the English alphabet to create the minimum of confusion. Accented letters are treated as their unaccented equivalents. So, for example, *Ü* is treated as *U* and not as *UE* as it would be in German. The German *ß* is treated as *ss*. Punctuation and casing have been ignored in list ordering.

Where formats are shown, the information between square brackets ([]) should be written exactly as shown, whilst information between braces ({}) occurs in some but not all cases. So, for example,

postal code[]Settlement name{[Cédex]}

means that there is an obligatory space between the postal code and the settlement name, and that the settlement name may, in some addresses, be followed by a space and the word *Cédex*.

A 9 is used to indicate a numeric character, an A is used to indicate a letter.

If the word in the format is in upper case, the information should be printed in upper case. If the first letter of the first word only is in upper case, the first letter of the text must have an upper case initial letter. Correspondingly, a lower case first letter in a format means a lower case first letter in the text. So, for example,

number[,]thoroughfare type[]Thoroughfare name
SETTLEMENT

may equate to

17, rue de Paris
LILLE

When common abbreviations are given, they are given only in a single form. Readers should bear in mind that they may appear in a number of formats (with or without punctuation, for example), and remember this when using the abbreviations provided.



Listings, such as of thoroughfare types, are often the same across a number of countries, especially where the same language is spoken. In these cases, the lists are usually not repeated but you are referred to the chapter containing the complete listings. Even where this is not the case, referring to the chapter of a country where the same language is spoken and a great deal of information is provided may often solve any problems that you may have with a country where less information is available.

Country name

The country chapters are sorted and entitled according to their (common) English name. This, of course, is often not how the inhabitants of the country themselves name their country **nor does it always follow the official ISO short name forms**. Where this differs, it is written below the English name. This additionally aids recognition when you come across this name, especially when encoding countries.

Areas of conflict

Below the country name there may be a little extra information about the country. This is often the case when there is a conflict situation in the country. Any conflict will, self-evidently, affect mail deliveries to a greater or lesser extent. The information provided is

accurate at the time of going to press, but naturally the situation will change over time. To keep abreast of these situations you must naturally follow current affairs for the country or countries concerned.

Official name

The official name may or may not be the one used when addressing mail to that country. This depends largely on the country from which the mail is being posted and the country concerned. The official name is provided in English and one or more of the country's languages to aid recognition.

Area, population, capital, currency, international telephone access code

For mailing purposes, this data is not required. This book, however, aims to make life easier for the manager of international addresses by providing the maximum amount of information in a single source. The area, population, capital city, currency and international telephone access code are therefore included in these chapters. The letters in upper case in brackets after the currency name indicates the ISO 4217 standard currency code for this currency.

Country codes

The ISO 3166 codes for this country or territory are listed in the order *alpha-2 code*, *alpha-3 code*, *numeric code*. Also listed are the car nationality plate codes and the Internet country codes (i.e. the code used in an internet address to indicate the country of origin, such as the *nl* in <http://www.grcdi.nl> . This is invariably the same as the ISO 3166 alpha 2 code with the exception of *uk*, used. instead of *gb* for the United Kingdom.

Languages

Mystifyingly, language has always been a poor relation in database marketing. Companies spend enormous amounts of money building, populating and cleaning address databases and then dramatically reduce the effectiveness of their marketing or sales efforts by mailing either in English or in another language which is not the mother language of the recipient. This has the effect not only of reducing the number of effective hits that your mailing has because a number of recipients will not understand, or understand enough of, the mailing, but it can be a great cause of irritation for the recipients. Language has very strong cultural and nationalistic ties for many people, and people will go to great lengths to preserve and use languages. Moves towards political union, such as in Europe, has strengthened rather than weakened this effect as language becomes the most tangible form of cultural identity and national pride as borders fall. Being aware of, and using the languages concerned will not only increase the effectiveness of the mail but will also increase the level of regard the recipients will have for your company.

In each chapter, language use is listed. Listings are limited to indigenous languages except where imported languages have been in use for so long that their usage has become indigenous. Where available, geographical spread of a language is also provided to allow better targeting. More detailed information is provided for industrialized countries where the level of direct mailing is highest. Different language groups have

different expectations. The Frisians of The Netherlands, for example, expect to receive mailings only in Dutch. Though mailing to Frisianspeakers in Frisian may increase the response, mailing in Dutch is unlikely to have a detrimental effect. On the other hand, mailing in French to Flemish-speakers in Belgium could, depending on the nature of the mailing, reduce response very dramatically indeed and result in extremely bad feelings towards your company by the recipients. Where available, these expectations are outlined in the text.

Many of the languages have several names. Unless there is a common English name for the language, a local-language version has been used. For further information about the languages, their names and their distributions, you can do no better than to refer to *Ethnologue - Languages of the World* edited by Barbara Grimes. Please refer to the bibliography for further information. In some cases, the percentage of speakers of languages adds up to more than 100%. This is due to rounding and to the numbers of people who are multilingual.

For the attention of

This section provides the correct form to be used on an envelope in front of the contact name, where "for the attention of" or "Attention:" might be used in English.

Forms of address / Personal names

This section contains information which is of importance when using forms of address or for changing upper-case names into the correct mixed-case format. In some cases it also gives naming conventions which can alter in different countries, provinces or language areas for married women and children.

Company names

This section provides, where relevant, the layout of the company name in terms of the company *nature* and the company *name*. The company *nature* is the word or words in the complete name which indicate the activity of the company, for example Baker, Stationer, Printer and so on. The *name*, on the other hand, indicates the unique part of the company name, often the name of a person, an abbreviation and so on.

Company types

Company type refers to a word or abbreviation indicating the legal status of the company, for example Ltd, SA, PLC, etc. It is useful to be able to recognize these so that they can be given a consistent form and put into the correct position within the complete company name or moved into a separate field where desirable.

Addresses / Address format / Example address format

This section is very important for ensuring that address data can be stored consistently and that it can be output in the correct format. An incorrect, ugly or culturally insensitive address format can mean the difference between the envelope being opened or disposed of. Some countries have built strict and extensive rules dictating address format to allow postal discounts and speedy delivery. Others have few rules if any. Where the rules are clear, these are outlined in the section *Address format*. Where the rules are unclear or

unknown, an *Example address format* is provided to give at least an indication of formatting.

In these sections, the words *street address* refer to the part of the address which contains the thoroughfare *type*, the thoroughfare *name* and the building number. The term *thoroughfare* is used to indicate the thoroughfare name and type together. So, in the example:

12 Green Street

the *12* is the building number, *Green* is the thoroughfare name, and *Street* is the thoroughfare type. The thoroughfare in this case is *Green Street*.

In the address formats, country names positions are not provided except where they are written in any position other than on the last line of the address. The format of the country name is often dependent on the country from which the mail is being sent.

Building indicators / Thoroughfare types

Lists of building indicators and commonly occurring thoroughfare types and their abbreviations are provided to allow recognition of this address element so that its format can be corrected, the strings within it made consistent, and, if desired, its components moved to different fields.

Please refer to <http://www.grcdi.nl/addresses.htm> for availability of full lists.

Other elements commonly found in address databases

This section contains lists of nouns, adjectives and prepositions which will be found in company names and addresses. These are provided to aid recognition of these parts of addresses which are common yet often inconsistently written. Recognition of prepositions is also important when changing from upper to mixed case as most prepositions should retain a lower-case first letter.

Post office box

This section provides the word used for post office box in the appropriate local language(s). In some countries recognition of the post office box number is essential as street addresses and mailing addresses (post office box numbers) have different postal codes. Mailings should not be sent with both the mailing address and the street address included as in these cases the post office may attempt to deliver to one of the addresses only, and, should the postal code refer to the other address, the mailing will be returned as undeliverable. A mailing (e.g. post office box) address is formatted in the same way as a street address, but the post office box information replaces all information pertaining to street lines and smaller units (e.g. building names, sub-building names and so on) in the address block. For example:

Dhr J. Janssen
Kerkstraat 192-hs [street address, building number and sub-building indicator]
1058 AF AMSTERDAM

might become

Dhr J. Janssen
Postbus 19223 [post office box information]
1000 AA AMSTERDAM

In a small number of cases a post office box number in an address will point to a street address, and may include building and/or sub-building information. Unfortunately, the situation is not always constant within a single postal authority area. You should allow yourself to be guided by the information that the addressee has been provided when using a mailing address.

Postal codes

This section is important in that it provides the formatting rules for the postal codes of the country concerned, and gives in some cases non-valid characters and the ranges of postal codes which are *not* used, thus allowing basic computer checks for invalid formats and postal codes. Furthermore, the postal codes of the regions where minority indigenous languages are spoken are provided to allow output, if necessary, in these languages for these areas.

Place names

This section gives writing conventions, where necessary, to allow settlement names to be given consistency in your database. Furthermore, corresponding place names are given both in the indigenous languages (endonym(s)), where appropriate, and other globally-spoken languages (exonyms). Response to marketing actions will improve if the correct local-language version (endonym) of the settlement name is used (corresponding to the language of the recipient). The inclusion of place names in other major languages is to ensure that data from databases built outside the country concerned (and therefore perhaps containing the non-autochthonal settlement names (exonyms)) can be altered to give the endonym to aid database consistency, and to enable output to be made in the language of the recipient.

Administrative districts

Where these are used in address output, they are listed. In other countries they may also be listed to allow recognition and removal from addresses as required.

Telephone numbers

Where telephone numbers have a given format for the whole of a particular country, this information is provided to allow basic checking of accuracy within a database. Where one area code exists for all numbers within a country, this information is also provided. This information is, however, temporal in nature and subject to change. This information usually applies to fixed landline numbers and not to mobile or special numbers, which may differ in format.