

# Tips for Preparing CARD DATA

Without data, a card is just a piece of plastic with a fancy design. Whether the application is a gift card, membership card, or direct mail card, it is **THE DATA** that makes the card valuable and useable. Here at CPS Cards, we manage and process over 50,000 data files each year, which makes us experts at this stuff! However, we understand that it can become a bit confusing for customers who are not familiar with the data preparation and submission process. That's why we have gathered some tips to help you successfully prepare and submit your data, ensuring accuracy and on-time delivery of your cards.

## 1 IT'S ALL IN THE (FILE) NAME

When naming files, use words that easily identify what is included in the file. By using keywords in your file name, it helps our data experts easily identify files whenever working with multiple files.

## 2 ZIP IT UP

When you have multiple files for one program, zip all files into just one zip file, instead of creating a zip file for each. This saves time and prevents opportunities for errors.

### HELLO

My name is

EXAMPLE FILE NAME:

Platinum\_Batch002\_PO846529.txt

**Platinum** = Platinum members  
**Batch002** = Batch number  
**PO846529** = Purchase Order Number

| RECORD LAYOUT                 |                        |        |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|--------|
| FIELD DELIMITER: ~            | RECORD DELIMITER: CRLF |        |
| FIELD NAME                    | START POS              | LENGTH |
| Sequence#                     | 1                      | 8      |
| Name                          | 10                     | 28     |
| Reply Date                    | 39                     | 11     |
| Finder#                       | 51                     | 12     |
| Pallet# OR Blank for Comingle | 64                     | 9      |

## 3 LEGEND HAS IT

When submitting your data, include a legend that maps each field to the correct column of data. This will help to ensure accuracy from the start and is especially helpful if your data contains extra fields that are not being used on the card.

## 4 SPACE IS LIMITED

Check the number of characters in your fields to ensure that they will fit within the allotted space on the card. If your data contains too many characters, it will truncate the data. If you have a customer with an extremely long name, you may want to consider using just the first initial instead of the entire full first name. Also, consider your card artwork - you wouldn't want to print data on top of other words already printed within the design of the card.

## 5 CRACK THE (BAR) CODE

There are dozens of 1D and 2D barcodes. If your card includes a barcode, specify the type when submitting your data. This will help to ensure that the barcode printed will be accurate and work with your card reader.


## 6 OUT OF CHARACTER

Only include characters that are recognized by our equipment. Illegal characters can result in a black space on your card, or, more likely, halt our production equipment entirely. Letters, numbers and most keyboard characters are acceptable.


## 7 WHAT THE FONT

While embossing is limited to only a few fonts (OCR & Simplex), thermal and DOD inkjet printing offer many more options. If you choose to use a custom font (one outside of basic true type fonts), be sure to submit it along with your data to prevent a delay in processing.


### COMMON BARCODES




Code 39




(ITF) Interleaved 2 of 5




UPC



Code 128



QR Code



Data Matrix Code

WHEN IN DOUBT...  
Your Customer Account Manager is always available to help answer questions you may have about your data.