

Supplementary features of franking machines

1. The meter or base of a modern franking machine is likely to have at least some supplementary features in addition to those common to all machines; some are found only on top-end machines. Typical supplementary features are listed below.
2. Virtually all machines include at least one slogan block to allow a company to print a slogan or logo alongside the postal frank. Ink-jet printing allows various slogans to be quickly and easily programmed into the machine's memory.
3. Machines may allow a departmental code to be recorded, so that postal charges can be attributed to that account. Machines may also record batch totals, and provide warning if a high postage value has been set. Some machines can be connected to a PC, so that the data they generate can be transferred in real time to an accounting package. Alternatively, the machine may provide a printout of information on usage.
4. An automatic envelope feeder may be attached to the base allowing envelopes to be fed automatically from a hopper through the franking mechanism, rather than being fed by hand. This is useful when dealing with high volumes of post.
5. If the franking machine is handling large batches of post, a conveyer/stacker may be used to collect and stack franked mail tidily.
6. It is often necessary to weigh items to determine the correct postage rate. Scales can be used to weigh items separately, and the correct postage rate can be set on the franker manually. Most franking machines have scale interfaces that allow the correct postage rate to be set automatically. Some machines can be used with dynamic weighing scales, which sit between an auto feeder and the franking machine, to automate the weighing activity.
7. A franking machine can also be placed in line with an automatic mail-folding and inserting machine, although this activity might be handled as a separate stage. Where such machines do not seal envelopes, a sealer may be attached to the franking base to moisten gummed envelopes and stick them down.