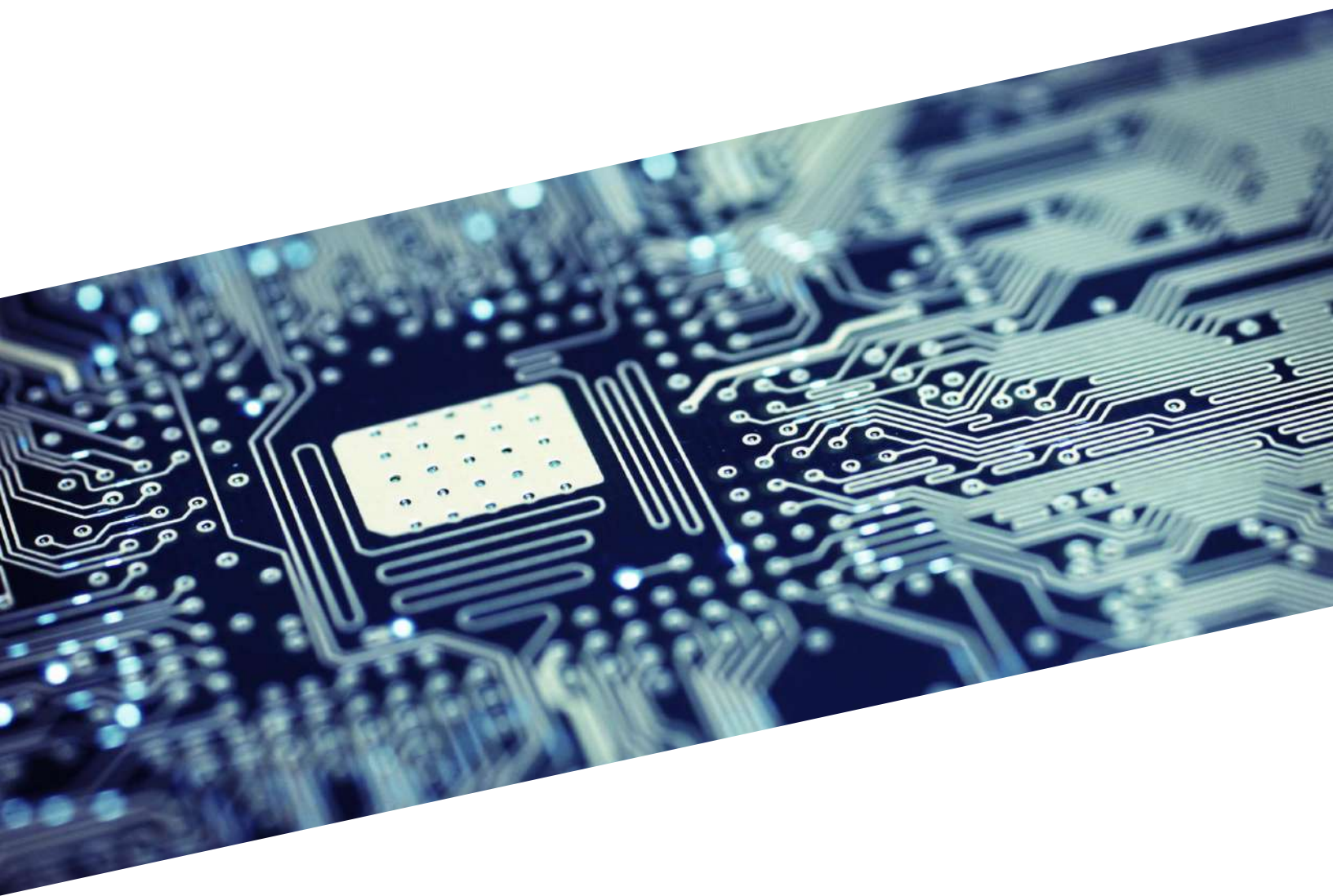




The Value of Shipping APIs



FOR INQUIRIES, CONTACT SUPPORT@EASYPOST.COM
417 MONTGOMERY STREET, 5TH FLOOR, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, 94104



Introduction

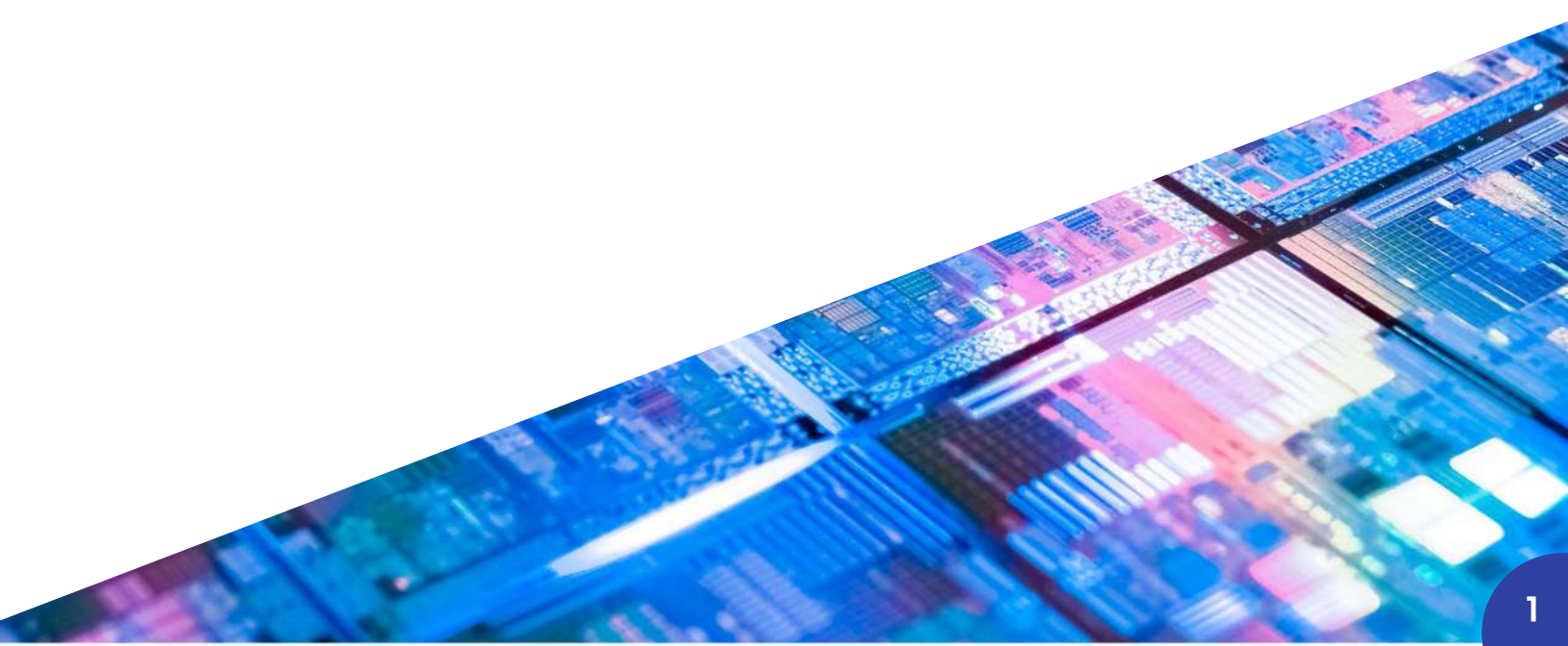
Ever since the Penny Black was first pressed, businesses have struggled with postage. Even with all the technological advances in the last century, purchasing and buying postage can be a pain for many businesses. Today, most businesses are faced with two painful options to print postage: they can either manually enter information to print postage for each package, or they can try to integrate directly with carriers and their outdated endpoints.

Since it isn't scalable to manually enter shipping information to print every single label you need, and it's extremely expensive and time-consuming to build an integration with outdated XML/SOAP endpoints, these two options underpin the inefficiency that plagues most business operations.

If we live in an age where we can store our boarding passes on our smartphones, it should be just as convenient and easy to purchase and print a shipping label.

This is where Shipping APIs come in. APIs like ours introduce efficiencies and automation that fix many of the pain points that come with business postage. Shipping APIs like EasyPost represent a bridge solution for businesses. The main focus is to get a connection to the carrier so postage automation becomes possible. Once a business is able to connect digitally with a carrier, they can build all kinds of automation to streamline the entire shipping process.

Developers are still required to build the integration, but our endpoints are more up-to-date and have much more documentation and client libraries available to expedite the integration process. Shipping APIs remove the technological barriers that prevent some companies from connecting with carriers. We do this by removing the cost of directly connecting to carriers and providing ways to automate multiple parts of your shipping operations.





The Cost of Directly Connecting to Carriers

It all comes down to core competencies. The reason why most companies (unless you're Amazon) outsource their package delivery is because carriers are so much better at maintaining the logistical impossibility of accurately juggling hundreds of thousands of moving packages per day.

Technology, however, is not a core competency for most carriers.

Most carrier endpoints are built on SOAP/XML architecture. The problem with SOAP/XML is that it's outdated and doesn't inherently play nice with most eCommerce businesses. Because it's outdated, it's tough to find developers that can build an integration with it. To make matters worse, most carriers lack the documentation and client libraries that developers need to expedite the integration process.

Shipping APIs like ours take on the burden of building integrations with such outdated endpoints. Since we specialize in this kind of technology, it's much easier for us to build reliable and robust carrier integrations. It's also much easier for us to build an API that plays much nicer with today's eCommerce technology stacks. For instance, EasyPost supports six different programming languages, including Ruby, Python, C#, and Java. We also provide client libraries and documentation that help expedite the integration process. And since the API is our main product, our support is much more responsive and effective.

As it stands, Shipping APIs like EasyPost provide streamlined service that provide a quick, easy, and reliable connection to carriers.



The Quality of Integration Matters

It's also important to consider the quality of the integration you have with the carrier. It's one thing to connect with FedEx, but it's another proposition entirely to build the functionality you need to run an efficient shipping operation.

Again, it comes down to core competency. Neither eCommerce businesses nor carriers are built to handle the intricacies of shipping integrations. A major source of pain for eCommerce operations is the lack of efficiency in their technology. Just because a business can print labels from a carrier, it doesn't mean that the process is efficient. Most direct integrations with carriers lack the automation and ancillary functionality required to truly streamline your shipping operation. The reason behind this is two-fold: there are few developers that can code around these outdated endpoints, and there are even less developers that can build good functionality from these endpoints.

Think of it this way: if you need to build a house, you'd obviously go to a contractor. But if you want to build the house that works best for you, you'd go to the best contractors you can afford.

Since Shipping APIs like EasyPost have experienced and specialized developers that can build around carrier endpoints, it's much easier for us to build good functionality around those endpoints.

It's common to see features like real-time tracking, address verification, and rate lookups from Shipping APIs. You can also build automation around these APIs, which allows you to directly port shipping information from your eCommerce platform to the API. From there, the API populates the information and creates a label for you to purchase and print. The entire process takes seconds, can be customized to fit certain shipping rules (such as service level and dimensional preferences), and can be done singularly or in batches.

Such functionality is only possible if the carrier integrations are done well. Going back to our house analogy, you can really only build an amazing house if the foundation is solid. And given the inherent difficulty in dealing with outdated carrier endpoints, you'll want to rely on specialists that can navigate those difficulties to provide you with good operations technology.





Conclusion

In short, Shipping APIs can help streamline business operations by removing the inherent pain of purchasing postage, automating key parts of the shipping process, and keep technology costs down. Shipping is such a crucial part of your business operations, so finding any way to introduce efficiency to your shipping operation can only strengthen your business.

Of course, Shipping APIs aren't the only alternative for businesses. It's possible to gather enough in-house resources to build an integration that functions just as well as a Shipping API. Still, even if you have enough money and time to spend on building that integration, there isn't a guarantee that it will work as well as a Shipping API. Especially when APIs such as EasyPost have a proven track record of providing critical shipping functionality to businesses of all shapes and sizes.





Support & Resources

Account Executive

Jillian Voege

jillian@easypost.com

Sign Up for a Free EasyPost Account

<https://www.easypost.com/signup>

Getting Started Guide

<https://www.easypost.com/getting-started>

Full Reference API

<https://www.easypost.com/docs/api>

EasyPost Business Library

<https://www.easypost.com/business-library>