Understanding XML Address Validation Street Level Services

With the Address Validation Street Level API, you can assist your customers by ensuring that addresses they provide are accurate. You can also use the API to determine if an address is a commercial or residential address. The tool can help you reduce costly returns, provide better service to your customers, and more accurately determine shipping costs.

Address Validation

The Address Validation Street Level API can check addresses against the United States Postal Service database of valid addresses in the US and Puerto Rico. If an address is not valid according to this database, the web service can optionally provide a list of valid addresses that might correspond to the intended address.

Figure 1 shows how client applications use address validation services. The process begins when the client sends an AddressValidationRequest message to UPS API Services. UPS replies to this request with an AddressValidationResponse message.

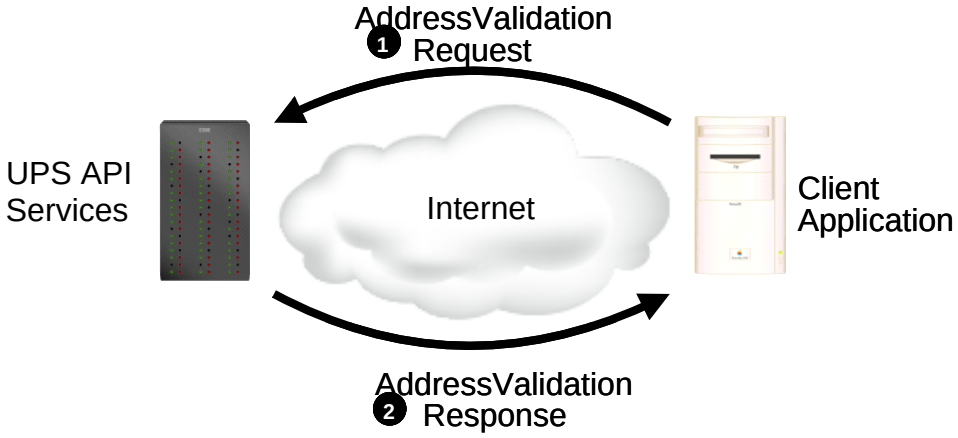

Figure 1. Address Validation Requires a Single Request-Response Exchange

Client applications can request either a general validation of a city, state, and zip code, or a validation of specific, street-level address. The RegionalRequestIndicator in the request determines which type of validation the application desires.

Client applications also indicate the maximum number of candidate addresses they wish to receive in the response. UPS returns candidate addresses only if the address that the client provides is not valid. Candidate addresses are valid addresses that might correspond to the requested address. If a client does not wish to receive candidate addresses, it can specify zero (0) for this value.

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Address Classification

The Address Validation Street Level API can also determine whether a given address is a residential or commercial address. Address classification uses the same request/response exchange as address validation. In fact, classification and validation can be combined in a single request.

For address classification, UPS determines whether an address is a residence or a commercial location. For address classification requests, it is important that the client include all information available about the address including, for example, a contact name or "attention to" value. Such information is important for accurate results, as many locations include both commercial and residential entities (such as a deli on the ground floor of an apartment building).

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