



COLAs Online eNews

September 2007

Greetings!

We want to hear from you! Let your voice be heard by emailing your questions about COLAs Online, feedback on this newsletter and most importantly telling us what you want to see us address in future issues. We have lots of ideas but we really want to use you as a resource so we are sure to cover the issues that are most important to you. Share your thoughts and let us know how we can better support you by emailing us at COLAsONLINEeNEWS@ttb.gov.

Announcements

TTB is going to Houston, Texas! We will be hosting both an industry seminar and a COLAs Online workshop there in September. The industry seminar is on Tuesday, September 11, 2007 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The seminar will provide you with an overview of TTB regulations and updates on hot TTB topics. We will then host a half-day COLAs Online workshop on Wednesday, September 12, 2007 from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. where you will receive hands-on instruction in using COLAs Online. There are still spaces available for these events. Don't miss out on this great opportunity to meet some of our dedicated employees as well as to gain more knowledge about TTB regulations and to get hands-on training using COLAs Online. Don't delay sign up today!

You may view the [agenda](#) and [register](#) to attend the full day seminar at TTB.gov.

To view the COLAs Online workshop agenda and registration form click [here](#).

NOTE: we have cancelled the afternoon workshop.

What Does it Mean?

We use the term **COLA** a lot but not everyone knows what it means. At TTB a **COLA** isn't a refreshing carbonated beverage or a cost of living adjustment! It is actually an acronym for **Certificate of Label Approval**. We use **COLA** to refer generically to all three different types of certificates we issue on TTB Form 5100.31, Application for and Certification/Exemption of Label/Bottle Approval. The three types of certificates covered by the term **COLA** are 1) label approval, 2) exemption from label approval, and 3) distinctive liquor bottle approval. **COLA** applies to both paper and electronic certificates. Here's a bit of trivia for you: when we first began developing COLAs Online we called it eCOLA, but then we thought better of that as it sounded a bit too much like something you could catch like E. coli or Ebola!

You Aren't the Only One Who Asked Us...

I use an Apple computer and wonder if you can explain why I experience problems using

COLAs Online.

COLAs Online is designed to run on PCs with Microsoft Windows 2000 and XP operating systems running Internet Explorer versions 6 or 7. Although it may function properly on earlier versions of the Microsoft operating systems and Internet Explorer, we have limited capacity and resources to verify that it functions properly on the older technology or to address problems encountered. Macintosh (Mac) platforms are not currently supported, but may be used. We hear from some Mac users that they experience difficulties when using COLAs Online and from others who do not.

While we are very sympathetic to the plight of Mac users who do experience difficulties with COLAs Online, unfortunately we are unable to devote resources to support the Mac platform. This is a business decision supported by market research which indicates that approximately 97 percent of the current computer market is PCs.

If you are an Apple owner you can reduce the likelihood of experiencing difficulties with COLAs Online by using Microsoft Internet Explorer 6 or 7 as your web browser.

Tip of the Month

To avoid getting your eApps sent back to you for correction be sure to crop out any “white space” or “extraneous text” surrounding the depiction of the labels in your image files.

As you know, TTB regulations contain very specific requirements regarding the legibility and type size of mandatory label information. As part of the COLA application review process, TTB examines each label for compliance with these requirements.

In Step 3 of the COLAs Online process you must upload files containing images of each label that will be used on the container and supply the dimension, in inches, of the actual labels as they will appear on the container. When a TTB label specialist reviews your eApp, COLAs Online takes the dimensions you specified and applies them to the image file and displays the labels in their actual size so that all the mandatory label information can be evaluated for legibility and type size requirements.

If the image file you supply contains anything, such as a printer's masthead, printer's hash marks, measurements, or white space surrounding the actual picture of the label, then the label viewed by the label specialist will appear smaller than the actual label because COLAs Online will apply the dimensions you supplied to the outer edge of the white space (which is the actual outer edge of the image). The more white space there is around the label, the smaller your label will appear. If there is any extraneous white space around the label in the image file then the label specialist cannot accurately evaluate your labels for type size and legibility requirements and thus will return it to you for correction.

Not sure if your image file contains any white space? You can easily check by using one of these two methods. The first is to open your image file in any photo editing software, such as Adobe Photoshop. You will immediately see if there is white space or extraneous printer's text around the picture of the label. You may then use the editing functions of this software to crop out everything but the picture of the label. You can use the second method if you are already in

COLAs Online by clicking on your image file after you have uploaded it to COLAs Online in Step 3. Place the cursor to the right of the image but not on the image, and right click your mouse. Then click on “select all” and this will highlight the entire image, including any white space around the label. If there is white space around the label, use your image editing software to crop it out and then upload the new file. If your label has irregular or curved edges it may not be possible to remove all the white space, so in that case please remove as much as you can from the top, bottom, right and left sides of the label so that the dimensions you supply for the label will be as close as possible to those of the image in the file.

If you use an outside vendor or graphic artist to create your labels then please ask them to crop the images before they send them to you so you can save time when applying to get your labels approved by TTB.

How do I...

make changes to an e-application in COLAs Online?

You just hit the *submit* button when suddenly you realize that you made a mistake and want to make a change to your e-application. Once you submit an eApp to TTB it goes into a queue awaiting review by a label specialist. While the eApp is waiting to be reviewed you cannot make any changes to it. Your only choice at this time is withdraw the eApp and resubmit a new e-application with any changes that you want to make. The only time you may make changes to a submitted eApp is if it is sent back to you for correction by a TTB label specialist and is in the “Needs Correction” status.

Be sure to conduct a thorough review of your eApp and labels as the last step before you hit the *submit* button to help avoid having to withdraw an eApp.

System News

We recently learned of a system issue about which we want to alert you. As you may know, when we return an eApp to you for correction, you have 15 days in which to make the corrections and return the application to us in a *Corrected* status. If you do not return the eApp within 15 days, COLAs Online automatically rejects the application and you must resubmit a new application if you still desire to seek approval of the labels. When this type of rejection occurs the system *should* send an email to the address we have on file for the submitter notifying of the rejection, however, at this time that email is not being sent. We are working to correct this problem, but in the interim you will not receive email notification when COLAs Online automatically rejects your application if you do not make requested corrections within 15 days. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause you.

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Questions or comments? E-mail us at COLAsONLINEeNews@ttb.gov

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