



Symmetry Determines Proper Tax Withholding Using Rooftop Geocoding



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– JON BOHNERT, Executive VP
SYMMETRY

Determination of payroll withholding taxes is an incredibly complex process in the United States. Some states collect no taxes, while other states offer thousands of tax deductions even down to the municipal and school district level. Simply put, calculating the various payroll tax deductions based on location requires extreme accuracy.

Case in point – Symmetry’s Payroll Point®. The solution helps employers determine the proper withholding tax settings based on an employee’s residence or work address.

“Payroll Point started as a concept to help large employers pinpoint the right payroll taxes for new and existing employees,” said Jon Bohnert, executive vice president of Symmetry. “There was no technology solution available to make this a simple process. Human resources or payroll departments often had to visit multiple government websites to obtain what was hopefully the correct tax information and set it up within the payroll system. This was an enormous pain point.”

Symmetry needed an address verification solution that would verify, correct and standardize residence

and business addresses in order to ensure address accuracy when determining the proper withholding tax settings.

Bohnert and his team were utilizing Google and Bing search engine functions to geocode their clients’ addresses. That process proved to be tedious and time-consuming. It also didn’t provide the most critical function Symmetry needed – the most accurate location of an address. For example, when entering an address point to Google or Bing – the search results would sometimes only represent the surrounding area, but not the precise location – a vague estimate, given the fact that pinpointing an address is vital to determining specific tax jurisdiction territories.

It was obvious to Bohnert that Symmetry needed to add another power tool under its belt – a geocoding solution that would isolate a street address right to the location’s actual rooftop.

“Because Payroll Point is zeroing in on withholding tax jurisdictions, we often find large factories, big box retailers and office complexes straddling jurisdictional boundaries,” Bohnert said. “This can be a problem when it comes to withholding taxes.”

GEOCODER OBJECT WITH GEPOINTS

Symmetry discovered Melissa – a leading data quality solutions provider – for its GeoCoder Object with GeoPoints solution, as well as its Data Quality Suite of APIs.

GeoCoder incorporates multi-sourced GeoPoints technology to offer unparalleled geolocation information on 95 percent of U.S. addresses for improved rooftop accuracy. GeoPoints assigns precise latitude and longitude coordinates based on the 11-digit (ZIP+4+2) delivery point of more than 121,827,000 addresses in the U.S.

The Data Quality Suite from Melissa consists of programming tools enabling organizations to customize their own real-time or batch data verification routines, which includes verifying street and email addresses, correcting phone numbers, and parsing/genderizing contact names.

BETTER DATA, BETTER INSIGHTS

"After being underwhelmed with Google and Bing, we found Melissa's Data Quality Suite and GeoPoints solutions," Bohnert said. "The implementation was straightforward. It took our development team about three months to fully integrate. It probably would have been less time, but we were going from a single, and inaccurate, Bing geocoding solution, to a more complex – albeit more accurate – Melissa geocoding solution."

Geocoding to the rooftop level was the key for Symmetry. Rooftop geocoding allows Symmetry to append latitude/longitude coordinates to the 11-digit level of the address or parcel. This higher level of accuracy provides a distinct set of coordinates for every valid address – giving Symmetry the actual, physical location of the address, right to the building or property's rooftop.

Melissa's geocoding solutions use spatial data incorporated from multiple data providers – a process called conflation – to deliver the most accurate geopoints available with more matches and fewer false positives.

"After trying other geocoding vendors with poor results, we discovered Melissa. It was a terrific find. The accuracy is unmatched and the support is outstanding," Bohnert said.

Bohnert and his team were also able to glean more insights into their address data with the help of "error" or "results" codes – a four-character code that indicates why something is "off" about an address. These codes are generated by Melissa's data quality solutions.

For example, an error code will indicate if an invalid ZIP Code™ was entered or not found, or if the required combination of an address, city, state, ZIP Code is missing. The codes will also indicate if the address has already been verified.

This additional insight into the company's address data proved advantageous for Symmetry and its clients. "With Melissa, we had dozens of error codes, which ultimately became a feature upgrade for Payroll Point," Bohnert said. "Our customers now have more and better data when it comes to problem addresses."

Bohnert added, "For Symmetry, there are many advantages to the Data Quality Suite and GeoPoints. First and foremost, we've experienced significant improvement to rooftop accuracy. Because it is housed on our servers, reliability has improved and latency issues have been virtually eliminated. More and better accuracy codes, improved support – overall, this gives us the ability to offer our own customers a significantly better product."

About Symmetry:

Symmetry Software, based in Scottsdale, Arizona, is a payroll software applications firm specializing in payroll withholding tax solutions for the Internet and corporate intranets. Every week, millions of paychecks are issued using Symmetry Software products.

About Melissa:

Since 1985, Melissa has specialized in global intelligence solutions to help organizations unlock accurate data for a more compelling customer view. Our breadth of data and flexible API technology integrates with numerous third-party platforms, so it works for you and makes sense for your business. More than 10,000 clients worldwide in key industries like insurance, finance, healthcare, retail, education, and government, rely on Melissa for full spectrum data quality and identity verification software, including data profiling, cleansing, matching, and enhancement services, to gain critical insight and drive meaningful customer relationships.

For more information or free product trials, visit www.Melissa.com or call 1-800-MELISSA (635-4772).