

Top story

Small business succeeds on the international stage

International trade and cooperation bring prosperity to small businesses, which are twice as likely to succeed as their purely domestic counterparts, according to a study conducted by DHL Express and IHS.



The study comprised macro-economic analysis and a survey of 410 directors of small and medium-sized businesses. It covered the G7 and BRICM (Brazil, Russia, India, China and Mexico) economies.

Among the companies surveyed, 26% of those trading internationally significantly outperformed their markets while only 13% of companies operating domestically achieved the same level of success.

BRICM businesses emphasised the positive influence of logistics on their international operations. According to DHL, this suggested they relied more on efficient transportation and customs processes to overcome infrastructure obstacles, seeing logistics services as a competitive differentiator.

The companies' biggest concerns about international trade were the lack of available information on foreign markets, high customs duties, and difficulty in establishing contacts with foreign partners and an overseas customer base.

“International trade and cooperation bring prosperity to small businesses”



■ CANADA POST GOES MOBILE WITH EPOST DIGITAL MAILBOX ■ USPS CUSTOMERS SHOW THEIR TRUST ■ DHL EXPRESS MODERNISES ITS US AIR FLEET ■ FEDEX OFFERS NEW DEEP-FROZEN TRANSIT SOLUTION ■ PENSION CHARGE BRINGS FOURTH-QUARTER LOSS FOR UPS ■ FEDEX PACKAGE MONITORING WINS INNOVATION AWARD

Americas

Canada Post goes mobile with epost digital mailbox

Canada Post has released a mobile application for its epost digital mailbox and has signed up Horizon, the second electricity provider in Ontario to participate.



Epost aggregates household bills from participating businesses, allowing consumers to make online payments and store their bills using a single username and password. The mobile application is available on all platforms.

Horizon provides electricity and related services to 237,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers in Hamilton and St Catharines, Ontario.

USPS customers show their trust

The United States Postal Service has been ranked as the fourth most trusted company in the Ponemon Institute's Most Trusted Companies for Privacy Study.

The survey covers 704 organisations indicating customer views on how their information is kept safe and secure.

In the same survey, the Postal Service was named as the Most Trusted Government Agency for the seventh year in a row.



DHL Express modernises its US air fleet

DHL Express is modernising its fleet of subcontracted aircraft on domestic routes in the United States.

Air Transport Services Group has deployed three B767-200s and Air Transport International is due to start operating a B757-200F from March. The new aircraft are replacing older and smaller B727Fs operated by other subsidiaries Air Transport International and Capital Cargo International Airlines, which stopped flying in December 2012.

The fleet carries international shipments between DHL's air hub in Cincinnati and inland destinations and to and from international airports in New York and Los Angeles.

Atlas Air is operating five B767-200 freighters for DHL on domestic US routes under a contract that started in March 2012.



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FedEx offers new deep-frozen transit solution

FedEx has enhanced its end-to-end services for deep-frozen pharmaceutical and healthcare products with the introduction of CryoPort Express Dry Shipper, a container using liquid nitrogen dry vapour to maintain temperatures below -150°C for up to ten days.

CryoPort Express provides an alternative to dry ice as a cooling agent, removing the need to re-ice shipments and train personnel in the handling of hazardous materials.

FedEx provides customers with pre-conditioned containers and collects them for refurbishing once the delivery is completed. It provides advanced monitoring of shipments, intervening if necessary during transit.

Pension charge brings fourth-quarter loss for UPS

UPS returned a fourth-quarter operating loss of US\$2.78bn (€2.07bn) owing to a US\$3bn (€2.2bn) non-cash, after-tax charge for its pension and post-retirement benefit plans.

The company's adjusted operating profit was US\$2.05bn (€1.53bn) for the quarter, slightly above the adjusted profit of US\$2.02bn (€1.51bn) in the fourth quarter of the previous year. Revenue was US\$14.57bn (€10.86bn) compared with US\$14.17bn (€10.56bn) in 2011.



UPS delivered 18.8m pieces during the quarter, a 2.9% increase on the previous year. It said consumer spending during the end-of-year holiday period was slightly below expectations but nonetheless accounted for 500m packages.

The United States domestic package business produced a US\$1.38bn (€1.03bn) adjusted operating profit on revenue of US\$8.93bn (€6.66bn). Revenue grew year-on-year by 3% while revenue per piece increased by 1.7%. The company said the business-to-consumer market had taken advantage of UPS My Choice, a flexible delivery service with almost 2.5m consumer subscribers.

In the international package market, UPS made an adjusted operating profit of US\$499m (€372.1m) compared with an adjusted figure of US\$505m (€376.6m) in the previous fourth quarter. Revenue was US\$3.20bn (€2.39bn) compared with US\$3.15bn (€2.35bn).

The company said it was optimistic of returning to international operating profit growth now the distraction of its hoped-for takeover of TNT Express was out of the way. It announced formally the withdrawal of its offer on 30 January after the European Commission issued its decision prohibiting the purchase of TNT.

Chief executive Scott Davis said the very large team working on the TNT transaction was now coming back to international operations and would enable the company to improve yield.

IN BRIEF

UPS extends its healthcare network

UPS has extended its healthcare distribution network to five more North American markets: Burlington, Ontario; Louisville, Kentucky; Mira Loma, California; Atlanta, Georgia, and Reno, Nevada. The company has added almost 800,000ft² (74,300m²) to its global network of 37 dedicated healthcare facilities.



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IN BRIEF

UPS and its employees support charity

The UPS Foundation donated more than US\$97.5m (€72.6m) in charitable giving in 2012, including US\$55m (€41) to United Way, a community-based charity promoting education, financial stability and health. Volunteer UPS employees worldwide gave more than 1.8m hours to charitable work.

UPS's supply chain and freight division achieved an adjusted operating profit of US\$172m (€128.3m) compared with US\$199m (€148.4m) and revenue of US\$2.44bn (€1.82bn) compared with US\$2.34bn (€1.74bn).

UPS said it anticipated full-year diluted earnings per share 6-12% above 2012 adjusted results. Scott Davis said 2013 would continue to see slower growth although there were signs that Europe was more stable.

FedEx package monitoring wins innovation award

FedEx's SenseAware package monitoring system has won the company the Supply Chain Integrity Innovator of the Year award at the Cool Chain Logistics conference.

SenseAware combines a GPS sensor device and an internet-based collaboration platform to provide near real-time information on packages during their journey from shipment to delivery. The service is designed for high-value, critical shipments.

SenseAware was launched in the United States in 2009 and has recently expanded to other international markets.



Asia Pacific

Japan Post and JAL offer international food service

Japan Post and Japan Airlines (JAL) are to roll out their Cool EMS service to Taiwan and Singapore for a 12-month trial lasting from 01 April 2013 to 31 March 2014.

Cool EMS is a business-to-consumer service that responds to demand in Asia for fresh Japanese food and culinary ingredients. It will provide overnight delivery to major cities via Japan Post's international speed post service using JAL's temperature-controlled containers.

The service is expected to extend to frozen products and more destinations in Asia such as Hong Kong, Shanghai and South Korea.

NZ Post subsidiary sells pallet-load carrier

New Zealand Post Group subsidiary Express Couriers Ltd is selling its Roadstar freight business to Transport Investments in order to focus on its core, express parcels business.

The sale is effective from 01 March. Roadstar specialises in delivering stock to retailers by the pallet load.

Parcel lockers come to Israel

Flying Cargo Express, FedEx licensee in Israel, is installing parcel collection lockers in a partnership with ByBox, the United Kingdom manufacturer and operator of electronic parcel lockers.

The lockers will be operational from April at petrol stations, shopping centres and universities across the country. Consumer parcels will be available for collection 24 hours a day and recipients will be notified by text message.

ByBox operates a network of more than 1,500 locations in the UK, France, Ireland and the Benelux countries.

FedEx Trade Networks expands to Thailand

FedEx Trade Networks is opening an office in Bangkok, bringing the number of its locations in Asia Pacific to 17.

The freight forwarding company said the market in Thailand grew by 2.3% in 2011 to US\$2.03bn (€1.51bn).

FedEx Trade Networks is also expanding its international direct-priority OceanSM service to Thailand. This service offers ocean transport and delivery to United States ports from Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, Europe and now Thailand.

The service includes customs brokerage and final delivery for less-than-container load and full-container load shipments with online visibility.



■ DPD DEVELOPS ITS CONSUMER SERVICES ■ ROYAL MAIL ADVISES ON INTERNATIONAL E-COMMERCE ■ POSTNL SUPPORTS ONLINE MOVE BY DIY RETAILERS ■ SWISS POST LAUNCHES ELECTRONIC PATIENT RECORD SYSTEM ■ GLS TO RAISE GERMAN RATES FOR BUSINESSES FROM APRIL ■ ITELLA ANNOUNCES CUSTOMER FOR ITS NEW LOGISTICS CENTRE ■ SWISS POST LAUNCHES POSTCARD MAILING APP ■ POSTNORD BUYS SECOND NORWEGIAN FISH CARRIER ■ ROAD TRAINS SAVE COSTS FOR TNT EXPRESS

Europe

DPD develops its consumer services

DPD continues to develop its consumer delivery services with the launch of a web application for use on mobile devices in Germany, and Saturday delivery in the Netherlands.

The mobile website is compatible with all platforms and is accessed via mobile internet browsers at www.mobile.dpd.de. It offers parcel tracking and will locate the Parcel Shop closest to the mobile user, displaying the fastest route to the shop.

The launch of Saturday delivery in the Netherlands is being extended to personal and business addresses. On Saturdays, DPD already delivers parcels to pick-up points in Albert Heijn stores for Bol.com and parts to Gazelle bicycle dealers.

The company said that 70% of e-commerce shoppers wanted Saturday and evening delivery.

Royal Mail advises on international e-commerce

Royal Mail has developed a website for small and medium-sized e-commerce operators giving information and advice on selling online internationally. The website also includes case studies outlining real experiences of online retailers.

A survey conducted by Royal Mail found that 65% of e-commerce operators already selling internationally were confident of sales growth in 2013; 30% were planning to develop websites with domain addresses in other countries and 27% planned to conduct targeted direct mail campaigns abroad.

PostNL supports online move by DIY retailers

PostNL has won a contract to deliver e-commerce orders for do-it-yourself (DIY) retailers Gamma and Karwei in a new contract with holding company Intergamma.

The two retail chains in the Netherlands and Belgium will open their webshops this summer. The contract with PostNL provides for delivery of 1.5m orders a year including large shipments such as dishwashers and paint packed on pallets.

Online orders will be delivered direct to consumers and to collection points in the 379 Gamma and Karwei stores. Large items will be delivered via PostNL's Extra@home service which includes optional installation and returns.



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Swiss Post launches electronic patient record system

Swiss Post's technical solution for electronic patient records, vivates, is being extended throughout the canton of Geneva this year following a successful pilot project in four municipalities. The solution was developed by the Swiss Post group unit Swiss Post Solutions together with the canton of Geneva.



The canton of Ticino will start using the vivates patient record system and will begin a pilot project for oncology this spring. Other cantons are also showing interest in Swiss Post's solution.

An e-health strategy drawn up by the Swiss confederation and cantons provides for all residents to have access to their personal electronic record by 2015. A federal law is being prepared to establish the implementation framework for the strategy.

Swiss Post's vivates electronic patient record allows cantons to implement the 'eHealth Strategy Switzerland' regionally. It is the only pilot in Switzerland that has been certified as fully compliant with the strategy. The pilot is also affiliated with the European Union's European Patients Smart Open Services (epSOS) project.

To support its technical vivates platform, Swiss Post is offering patients ways to obtain secure access to their electronic record via its SuisseID, Carte Patient and Plus health insurance card.

GLS to raise German rates for businesses from April

European parcels operator GLS has announced it will raise its rates for business customers in Germany by 5.8% on average from 01 April.

The increase covers both domestic and international shipments but not consumers, whose rates at Parcel Shops and online will remain the same.

GLS chief executive Rico Back said cost increases could no longer be offset through increased efficiency. The company follows DPD which has announced a 6% average rate rise in Germany and trans-o-flex which will increase rates by 5.5%.

Itella announces customer for its new logistics centre

Itella Logistics has announced that hardware and interior decoration retailer Rautakesko will use warehousing services at a new Itella Logistics centre in Pennala whose construction is almost complete.

Rautakesko will account for a total of 77,000m² at the Itella centre, 45,000m² for its Finnish logistics in sections already completed and the rest in sections due to be completed by June. The company stressed the importance of centralising its warehousing functions.

Itella Logistics said its Pennala centre was providing added-value services such as product assembly, labelling and repackaging. In spring, space will be available for safe storage and handling of hazardous products.

IN BRIEF

Itella Information out of Romania

Itella Information has closed its operations in Bucharest, Romania, having failed to secure enough business in three-and-a-half years of operation.



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Swiss Post launches postcard mailing app

Swiss Post has launched PostCard Creator, an application aimed at direct mailers seeking a simple, one-stop solution.

The online application provides postcard templates including direct response cards, voucher cards, creative designs and flyers that can be personalised with the mailer's own text and image or an image from the PostCard Creator database.

Once the postcard design and content is created, mailers can upload their recipient address data and select franking; Swiss Post sends the card or mailing on the nominated day.

The PostCard Creator merges two former applications, Direct Factory and SwissPostCard.

PostNord buys second Norwegian fish carrier

PostNord has finalised the acquisition of Byrknes Auto assets, which will be added to its logistics business.

Byrknes is one of Norway's biggest temperature-controlled transport operators specialising in fish and groceries. Byrknes and Harlem Transport, an earlier acquisition, provide PostNord with a stronger position in Norwegian fish and grocery logistics.



Road trains save costs for TNT Express

TNT Express has split line-haul routes between Helsingborg, Sweden, and Arnhem, Netherlands and Hannover, Germany in order to operate road trains between Helsingborg and the port of Puttgarden in Germany.



The road trains comprise a tractor and trailer plus a box trailer and are permitted on roads in Scandinavia where vehicles can be up to 25.5m long. TNT said it would save costs by replacing three conventional trucks with road trains to cover the 200km journey.

Drivers from Arnhem and Hannover now remain in Puttgarden swapping trailers and box trailers with road trains coming from Helsingborg before returning to their home base. Previously, these drivers made the entire, 13-hour journey.



Market Flash




Issue 459 | 12 February 2013

About this publication

IPC Market Flash is a fortnightly newsletter providing a comprehensive look at new developments emerging in the international postal marketplace. It is published by the Markets and Communications department of the International Post Corporation.

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