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TNT to Set Up Standard Parcels Service

TNT says it plans to set up a standard parcels business in Europe and will launch a lower-priced express product for large customers.

Announcing the plans at the company's second quarter press conference, chief executive officer Peter Bakker said TNT wanted to put more focus on the parcels sector in response to down-trading by customers from premium air services to slower and cheaper road services.

A new parcels unit will bring together the TNT Post parcel service, TNT Post Pakketserve, TNT Innight in Germany, parts of TNT Express and third-party partners. It will compete mainly with Groupe La Poste's DPD and Royal Mail Group's GLS.

TNT values the European standard parcels market at EUR 20 billion: EUR 14 billion from the business-to-business sector and EUR 6 billion from business to consumers.

The new Direct Express service will pick up from high-volume customers and transport consignments directly to the relevant TNT domestic distribution hub for local delivery. The operation will bypass the traditional hub-to-hub legs of the TNT Express journey.

Europe

Deutsche Post DHL Reports Second Quarter Results

Cost cutting and stabilised earnings helped Deutsche Post DHL to keep all corporate divisions profitable in the second quarter, before non-recurring effects.

Earnings fell by 37.8 percent compared with the previous second quarter, owing to the global economic downturn, the company said. Revenue dropped by 17.7 percent to EUR 11.1 billion, and reported earnings before interest and tax (EBIT) were EUR 109 million compared with EUR 366 million last year.

The company said there was still no clear view of economic development. "Though economic conditions haven't worsened - with new business bustling and our strong market position in Asia - we are not yet seeing any substantial improvement," said Frank Appel, chief executive officer.

Net income after minorities dropped to EUR 66 million in the second quarter from EUR 231 million in the same period last year. Free cash flow increased to EUR 839 million from EUR 285 million owing to lower investments, a reduction in working capital and the sale of Deutsche Bank shares.

The mail division saw its revenue decline 6.7 percent in the second quarter to EUR 3.21 billion. Measures being taken include cost reduction and a broader product portfolio. Underlying EBIT fell 38 percent to EUR 171 million, owing to higher wages and a EUR 15 million bad debt following the insolvency of the mail order and department store company, Arcandor.

The collapse of Arcandor also affected the supply chain division, which suffered bad debt losses of EUR 12 million and a EUR 13 million asset reduction. The division achieved an underlying EBIT of EUR 16 million compared with EUR 64 million in the second quarter last year.

The express division reduced costs faster than planned to offset lower volumes to a large degree. Underlying EBIT in the second quarter at EUR 65 million matched the previous year, although revenue dropped by 28.6 percent to EUR 2.51 billion.

The global forwarding and freight division won significant new business in the life science, fashion, high tech and automotive sectors. However, demand declined overall and in particular in the technology and engineering sectors. Underlying EBIT was EUR 79 million compared with EUR 103 million and revenue was down 27 percent to EUR 2.57 billion.

The company said it expects to achieve an underlying group EBIT of EUR 1.2 billion in the full year.

TNT Revenue and Profits Down

TNT saw its reported revenue drop by ten percent year-on-year to EUR 2.53 billion in the second quarter.

Reported earnings before interest and tax (EBIT) were down 45 percent on the same period last year at EUR 178 million. Underlying operating income of EUR 89 million compared with EUR153 million in the second quarter of 2008. The underlying figures are at constant currency. For express, they exclude the impact of a EUR 34 million restructuring provision, the Easter impact on revenues and EBIT, and for mail, net one-offs and book gains.

Chief executive officer Peter Bakker said trading conditions continued tough and TNT management had responded by again cutting costs significantly. "Our focus on cash has resulted in a strong free cash flow over the first six months this year," he said.

Reported express revenue was EUR 1.45 billion, a drop of 15.5 percent on the 2008 second quarter. Reported EBIT was 81 percent lower at EUR 29 million. Mr Bakker said the decline in express volume appeared to be bottoming out but warned that production lines could stop longer than usual over the summer holiday, having a resulting impact on volume.

The mail division revenue was stable at EUR 1.02 billion but EBIT was 13.3 percent lower year-on-year at EUR 150 million. Volume in the Netherlands was six percent lower, excluding one-off mailings. The division also suffered from higher pension and one-off costs.

Following the vote by postal workers to reject the collective labour agreement for TNT Post, the company launched restructuring plans while continuing to aim for renewed discussions with the unions.

Financial Services Boost Poste Italiane

Insurance and financial services drove revenue growth at Poste Italiane in the first half-year to give the company a 7.2 percent increase in operating profit year-on-year at EUR 805 million. Consolidated group net profit was EUR 468 million, a EUR 16 million increase on the same period last year.

Total revenue was up by 11.4 percent on the first half of 2008 at EUR 9.4 billion. Insurance services saw 18.6 percent growth while financial services revenue rose by 8.6 percent. Postal services, however, saw revenue reduce by five percent.

Chief executive officer Massimo Sarmi said that new services and growth in web banking had facilitated a further rise in BancoPosta current accounts which now total 5.5 million. The company has issued five million prepaid Postpay cards, representing growth of 10.5 percent and has grown its PosteMobile payment services to more than one million customers in just over a year.

PostFinance Sees Half-Year Profit Rise

Swiss Post's PostFinance acquired 65,000 new customers and 136,000 new accounts in the first half of 2009. Profit after tax for the first six months was about CHF 200 million, 28 percent more than in the first half last year.

PostFinance said that its low-risk investment policy had kept writedowns to CHF 36.4 million. It said risk could be spread more broadly by expanding its service range to include mortgages and loans offered in its own name. That would require a change in the law for which Swiss Post has lobbied consistently.

Swiss Post will publish group half-year results later in August.

La Poste to Be a Limited Company

The French Government has approved a plan to convert Groupe La Poste into a limited company, which will enable it to inject EUR 2.7 billion in capital while keeping the postal operator in 100 percent state ownership. A draft law is due to be presented to the French Parliament in October.

The EUR 2.7 billion capital increase will come from EUR 1.2 billion contributed by the government and EUR 1.5 billion from the state-owned Caisse des Dépôts. La Poste's current status as a public organisation precludes such a capital increase.

The additional funds will be used to finance strategic growth and modernisation. "Full EU postal market opening on January 1, 2011 will lead to the emergence of 'powerful' international postal operators while the traditional mail market needs to adapt to the internet and digitalisation," said French Industry Minister Christian Estrosi.

The draft law sets out La Poste's universal service obligation: to deliver six days a week, maintain quality at affordable prices and operate 17,000 postal outlets across the country. It will be the universal service provider for the next 15 years.

Austrian Post Objects to Draft Postal Law

Austrian Post objects to a new postal law that would require the post to be ready for full market opening in January 2011.

A universal service fund will compensate Austrian Post for the cost of providing the universal service and a collective pay agreement covering the whole sector will ensure that all operators apply the same employment terms.

Austrian Post claims that the draft law will make it difficult to provide the universal service. It says it will have to pay the biggest contribution to the universal service fund and bear the cost of replacing closed mailboxes in apartment blocks.

"The government proposal for the postal market law favours foreign postal groups entering the Austrian market," said Austrian Post's chief executive officer Rudolf Jettmar. The company said the likes of Deutsche Post DHL, TNT, Royal Mail and La Poste would cherry-pick by offering services only in highly populated areas.

The draft law requires Austrian Post to maintain at least 1,650 postal retail outlets, 150 more than at present. It will require all licensed postal operators, including Austrian Post, to pay into the universal service fund and honour a collective pay agreement.

All licensed operators will have access to the large number of collective mailboxes which are currently accessible only to Austrian Post.

SPI Enhances its Cooperation with Hermes

Swiss Post has consolidated its partnership with the Italian subsidiary of Hermes Logistik and will deliver Hermes' consumer parcels from Germany in Switzerland and Liechtenstein.

Swiss Post International (SPI) has taken over a logistics centre in Turin to secure a north Italian base and strengthen its strategic partnership with Hermes Porta a Porta. SPI operates cross-border mail and logistics under the brand Swiss Post Porta a Porta, while Hermes Porta a Porta operates business-to-consumer parcel distribution.

Under the cooperation agreement between SPI and Hermes, Swiss Post will support the extension of Hermes' international parcel service for private customers and small businesses in Germany.

SPI will deliver parcels up to 20 kg in Switzerland and Liechtenstein, the addition of which brings Hermes' network to 24 European countries.

The Hermes service will include an online customs declaration, forwarded electronically to customs authorities and, for business customers, a commercial invoice on the parcel together with the shipping label.

Royal Mail Frustrated by Union Action

Royal Mail suffered from a series of strikes around England the week beginning August 10 as the Communication Workers Union (CWU) called its members to vote in favour of national industrial action.

Royal Mail called repeatedly for the CWU to abandon further strike action and embrace modernization. It said the union's behaviour was incomprehensible. The CWU had agreed a time-table for a new programme of talks on the final phase 4 of the 2007 pay and modernization agreement but refused to engage with the process.

Despite repeated localized industrial action, Royal Mail managed to meet its quality of service targets in the five weeks to mid July. Performance for first class letters was 93.9 percent compared with a target of 93 percent; preliminary figures indicated that second class letters met the 98.5 percent target.

Royal Mail operations director Paul Tolhurst said contingency plans to ease the impact of strike action for customers had been effective.

DHL Wins Europe-wide Logistics Contract

DHL Supply Chain Management has begun operating a new, multi-year contract to perform logistics services for the J.W. Ostendorf (JWO) group of paint and lacquer manufacturing companies. It is running a distribution centre in Coesfeld, Germany, and is supplying JWO products to retailers in more than tenty European countries.

DHL is introducing new systems and technologies for inventory management, track and trace and continuous optimization of orders and shipments. It will conduct regular vendor appraisals to ensure the best customer support.

One objective of DHL and JWO is to expand the distribution centre into a multi-user operation providing consolidated deliveries for a variety of manufacturers.

Royal Mail Launches Online Money Transfer

Royal Mail has launched an online international money transfer service charging zero commission and offering to fix exchange rates for up to a year.

Post Office Overseas Property Money Transfer is aimed primarily at individuals with property abroad who need to pay mortgages and bills or bring money back to the UK after a property sale. Royal Mail is also targeting the regular payments market for pensions, salaries or school fees and one-off payments for events such as weddings abroad.

Correios Invests in New Sorting Centre

CTT Correios of Portugal is to construct a new EUR 12.5 million sorting centre in Maia, northern Portugal to handle 1.5 million items a day.

The centre, built to meet energy efficiency and environmental criteria, is due to open in November 2010.

Survey Shows Parcel Revenue Decline

A study by the French transport ministry has revealed that prices and revenues for express and parcel services in the country are dropping more rapidly than shipment volumes.

In the first three months of this year, standard parcel revenue declined by 8.3 percent compared with the previous quarter, while volume dropped by 7.7 percent. In the domestic express market, volume dropped by 5.9 percent while revenue declined by 10.2 percent.

Export revenue from intra-EU standard parcels dropped by 14.9 percent on tonnage down by 14.8 percent. Express export revenue dropped a dramatic 17.3 percent while the number of shipments declined by only 1.4 percent.

The quarterly survey covers 18 operators accounting for 75 percent of the French parcels and express market.

Business Post to Rename as UK Mail Group

UK mail and parcels company Business Post will change its name in October to UK Mail Group in order to align the company with its major brand.

The company has been moving towards the UK Mail brand since it launched a postal service in 2002 in competition with Royal Mail. Its parcels and courier businesses now largely operate as UK Mail as well.

Chairman Peter Kane announced the name change to share-holders at the company's annual general meeting. In the year to March 2009, the company increased its operating profits by 14.5 percent to GBP 16.6 million.

City Link Reduces its Operating Loss

UK parcels operator City Link reduced its half-year operating loss to GBP 7 million, 75 percent less than in the same period last year, despite a 12.6 percent drop in revenue to GBP 167.1 million.

The company has reduced costs, with the delivery fleet cut by a third in the past year and the workforce reduced by 22 percent. It plans to rationalise its network to 74 depots by the end of 2010; it has already cut seven of the original 97 and will close nine more by the end of this year.

The parent company, Rentokil Initial, announced that City Link managing director Petar Cvetkovic will leave the company in September and will be replaced by Stuart Godman, currently sales and marketing director.

Royal Mail Appoints Non-Exec Director

Royal Mail Holdings has appointed Paul Murray as a non-executive director and chairman of the Audit and Risk Committee.

Mr. Murray, 47, was group finance director at broadcasting company Carlton Communications and at oil and gas exploration business, Lasmo. Currently, he is a non-executive member of the Thomson media and telecoms technology group board and a non-executive director of Knowledge Peers and Tangent Commu-nications.

DPD Russia Extends Services

DPD Russia has launched a next day before 10.00 hours service and extended AVIA EXPRESS, its priority air parcel and freight service.

The guaranteed before 10.00 hours service is available on more than 1,000 domestic routes. AVIA EXPRESS has increased its domestic destinations from 25 to 40, delivering in one to two days via partnerships with Russian airlines.

Italy's Bartolini Opens Seven Depots

Italian express operator Bartolini has opened seven 2,000 to 3,000sq metre depots equipped with automated parcel sorting.

Three depots in northern Italy are located in the Milan, Perugia and Livorno areas while four depots in southern Italy are in Calabria, the Salerno area and Sicily.

Aramex Boosts Profits and Wins Contract

Middle East logistics operator Aramex has increased its second quarter net profits by 30 percent year-on-year despite a ten percent drop in revenue to AED 485 million. Operating profit rose by 23 percent to AED 58.9 million.

The company has won a contract with Vodaphone Malta to provide integrated logistics services including network logistics, retail distribution, express and freight shipping and inventory management.

>>In Brief - Europe

Kipp Heads DHL Global Mail
Thomas Kipp is the new chief executive officer of DHL Global Mail, the group's international mail business. Previously, Mr. Kipp was responsible for Global Mail Europe.

Ukraine Develops its Postal Law
The Ukraine intends to amend its postal law to include a new pricing mechanism and regulatory oversight. Ukrainian Post is to implement an economic programme for the development of its services between now and 2013.

DHL Oslo Installs New Sorting System
DHL Norway has begun operating a new automatic parcel sorting system at its Oslo terminal. The Vanderlande Industries system has capacity to handle 5,000 parcels an hour.

Night Star Achieves First Half Growth
German operator Night Star Express claims it achieved single-digit growth in the first half of 2009, owing to rising demand for value-added after sales logistics and cost savings.

CitySprint Strengthens its Network
UK express company CitySprint has purchased Jaguar Couriers for an undisclosed sum to strengthen its position in the Midlands region of England.

GO! Claims Volume Increase
German express company GO! Express & Logistics says it increased volume by about ten percent in the first half of the year to 3.1 million shipments. The company does not release revenue figures.

Americas

USPS Losses Mount in Third Quarter

The United States Postal Service (USPS) ended its third quarter to the end of June with a net loss of USD 2.4 billion and a cumulative nine-month loss of 4.7 billion. The Postal Service said it expected a full fiscal year net loss of more than USD 7 billion, despite achieving cost reductions of more than USD 6 billion.

The third quarter loss included a non-cash adjustment that increased workers compensation expense by USD 807 million. Total operating expenses were USD 18.7 billion, 1.5 percent lower than last year. Operating revenue was USD 16.3 billion, nine percent less than the same period in 2008.

Mail volume was 41.6 billion pieces, down by seven billion pieces, or 14.3 percent. Cumulatively, in the first three quarters, mail volume is almost 20 billion pieces lower than in the first nine months last year.

The Postal Service is focusing its cost reduction on matching work hours to reduced volume and gaining other savings from consolidating excess capacity in mail processing and transportation networks. It has frozen executive salaries at 2008 levels and this year launched an initiative to reduce the cost of more than 500 existing contracts.

Postmaster General John Potter said fiscal stability would require continued cost control and further review of pre-funding of retiree health benefits, introduced in the 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act.

"It also will require that the Postal Service gain flexibility within the law to move toward five-day delivery, to adjust our network as needed, to develop new products the market demands, and to work with our unions to meet the challenges ahead," said Mr. Potter.

JFK Facility Gains Second IPC Certificate

The United States Postal Service's international mail facility at New York's John F. Kennedy Airport has earned its second consecutive IPC Certificate of Excellence in the management of international mail processing operations.

"Back-to-back certification demonstrates the Postal Service's commitment to service in New York and across the entire organization," said Pranab Shah, global business vice president and managing director.

UPS Reports Lower Volume and Profits

UPS has reported a second quarter operating profit of USD 895 million compared with USD 1.45 billion in the same period last year.

Revenue was 16.7 percent down at USD 10.83 billion compared with USD 13 billion. Margin was 8.3 percent compared with 11.2 percent.

Chief executive officer Scott Davis said the company remained financially strong despite the impact of global economic conditions. In the first six months of 2009, free cash flow increased by USD 195 million. UPS continues to invest in growth opportunities.

Third quarter revenue from the domestic package business was USD 6.79 billion compared with USD 7.71 billion and operating profit was USD 48 million compared with USD 90 million. Daily volume declined by 4.6 percent.

International package revenue was USD 2.25 billion compared with 2.95 billion in the quarter. Operating profit was USD 29 million compared with USD 41 million. Daily export volume was 7.3 percent down, or five percent without the impact of a later Easter this year.

Supply chain and freight revenue was USD 1.79 billion compared with USD 2.34 billion and operating profit was USD 13 million compared with USD 15 million. The revenue reduction resulted from both reduced fuel surcharges and lower volume.

UPS said economic conditions continued difficult. It expects the business environment to be similar in the third quarter.

DHL Plans to Renegotiate with ABX Air

DHL Express will terminate its current US domestic airlift contract with ABX Air in August next year when the initial term expires and is aiming to negotiate a new contract on better terms.

ABX Air operates domestic flights for DHL Express on a schedule that has been cut severely in recent months since DHL withdrew from the US domestic market and closed its Wilmington, Ohio hub in July.

ABX Air's parent company is ATSG. Its president, Joe Hete, agreed that the relationship with DHL should be restructured. He hoped ABX Air would remain DHL's principal air network provider and said that a new agreement with DHL would require a restructured collective bargaining deal with ABX Air pilots.

Thousands of jobs have been lost at Wilmington, mostly at ABX Air. DHL has moved its US hub back to its former base at Cincinnati.

AT&T to Enhance DHL Network Services

Deutsche Post DHL is improving its telecommunications in the United States in order to gain more cost efficiency and a next generation platform that will enhance its network services over the next five years.

It has signed a five-year agreement with AT&T to provide telecommunications services to its businesses in the US and Puerto Rico. A key objective will be for AT&T to lead transformation of Deutsche Post DHL's Internet Protocol network services across the US.

Within the scope of the agreement are wider-area network services, local-area network and wireless services, mobile voice and data services and network security and service management.

DHL Fined for Shipping to Embargo Countries

DHL has agreed to pay a fine of USD 9.4 million to resolve allegations by the US Government that it made illegal shipments to Iran, Sudan and Syria in violation of US embargoes.

The Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control alleged that DHL made more than 300 shipments to Iran and Sudan between August 2002 and March 2007 in violation of its rules. It claimed also that DHL failed to keep the records required.

In addition to the fine, DHL will hire an expert on US export controls, laws and sanctions regulations for an external audit of its transactions to Iran, Sudan and Syria between March 2007 and December 2009. Annual audits will be conducted in 2010 and 2011 to assess compliance.

DHL spokesman Jonathan Baker said DHL services Iran, Sudan and Syria because it ships everywhere the law allows. "US law permits DHL Express to transport documents and informational material to these countries and we intend to continue doing so," he said.

Mr. Baker said there had been no suggestion that DHL had either knowingly or intentionally violated export control regulations, nor had the government alleged that DHL had transported strategically sensitive shipments to the three countries.

FedEx Expands International Economy Service

FedEx Express is increasing greatly the number of countries served by its international economy express and freight services. It has also announced a multi-year agreement with OfficeMax.

FedEx International Economy will deliver US export shipments in more than 90 countries and territories and FedEx International Economy Freight will deliver in more than 50. The guaranteed services deliver door-to-door in two to five business days, offering online tracking and customs clearance.

The agreement with OfficeMax provides drop-off and collection facilities for domestic express and ground packages at 900-plus Office Max retail locations.

>>In Brief - Americas

New Hub for FedEx Ground
FedEx Ground has opened a USD 90 million distribution hub in Perrysburg Township, Ohio, to replace its Toledo operation as part of its US national network capacity expansion. The hub can process up to 22,500 small packages an hour, rising to 45,000 in the future.

UPS Standard for Less Urgent Packages
UPS is introducing an economy ground service for small packages shipped from Mexico to the United States. UPS Standard is designed for less urgent business packages.

Asia-Pacific

Australia Post to Raise Letter Rate

Australia Post is proposing to increase its basic postage rate for only the third time in 18 years.

It has asked the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission for a rise of five cents from early 2010 to cover increasing costs resulting from an expanding delivery network.

Group Manager Letters, Allan Robinson, said there would be an additional 2.5 million new delivery points in the next ten years. He said that even with the increase, the reserved letter service would not cover its full cost.

UPS Asian Hub Gains On-Site Clearance

China's Shenzhen Customs is to offer its full range of services at the USD 180 million UPS intra-Asian hub due to be operational in the first quarter of 2010.

Under a memorandum of understanding (MOU), the customs authority will provide round-the-clock customs clearance for international cargo and express shipments and will set up a bonded warehouse.

The partners will jointly develop a risk management system to increase the efficiency of customs clearance processes while ensuring rigorous supervision, UPS said in a statement.

The MOU also enables express cross-border clearance at the Hong Kong/Shenzhen highway port for UPS vehicles travelling to and from the hub. UPS said this facility would reduce travelling time and costs when connecting with the Hong Kong airport.

Welcoming the MOU, the deputy director general of Shenzhen Customs provincial HQ, Shi Fushen, said: "As the UPS hub will play a significant role in the economic development of the region, we believe it will also boost the development of Shenzhen's air freight industry. We fully support UPS's development in Shenzhen."

Blue Dart Sees Revenue and Profit Drop

Blue Dart, the Indian express operator owned 81 percent by DHL Express, saw revenue drop sharply by 15 percent to INR 2.07 billion in the second quarter to the end of June.

Operating profits before exceptional items dropped 49 percent to INR 162 million and net profits declined by 44 percent to INR 114 million.

During the quarter, however, the company continued to expand its network by opening a new service centre in Gujarat, western India, to serve key industries in the area including banking and insurance.

India Post Expands its Air Network

India Post is adding two more leased Air India freighter aircraft to its night domestic mail network as part of its modernisation programme.

Since the beginning of July, a total of three freighters have been operating on scheduled routes: Mumbai-Nagpur-Mumbai, Bangalore-Chennai-Nagpur-Chennai-Bangalore and Kolkata-Delhi-Nagpur-Delhi-Kolkata.

G3AP Keeps SingPost Results Stable

Singapore Post kept its profits and revenue stable in its first quarter to end June, thanks in large part to the first time consolidation of G3AP, the international mail operation.

Revenue was up 0.7 percent at SGD 121.8 million but operating profit fell 2.2 percent to SGD 47.9 million.

Mail revenue declined by 7.2 percent to SGD 85.9 million, but the consolidation of G3AP saw logistics revenue increase by 90.7 percent to SGD 34.4 million.

SingPost chief executive Wilson Tan said the operating environment remained challenging. Operating expenses rose by 5.5 percent in the quarter.

In April this year, SingPost acquired the remaining 50 percent stake in an associate company, G3 Worldwide Aspac (G3AP), through a share swap agreement. At the same time, it exited from G3 Worldwide Mail (G3/Spring Global Mail), a joint venture with TNT and Royal Mail.

Japan Post and ANA to Part

Japan Post is believed to be planning a withdrawal from its air cargo joint venture with All Nippon Airways (ANA) owing to disappointing volumes.

Disposal of Japan Post's 33.3 percent stake in ANA and JP Express to ANA would allow the airline to take full control of its freighter operations and international express business.

ANA is restructuring its air cargo operation and is building up its own international express business through the merger of its two holdings, OCS and All Express (Allex). The new company will operate as a regional integrator.

DHL to Pick Up and Deliver Redbox

DHL Express has formed a partnership with Malaysia-based discount airline Air Asia for a parcel delivery business branded Redbox.

DHL will collect parcels from shippers and airports for delivery while Air Asia will transport them on its domestic routes. The first service will run between the greater Kuala Lumpur area and the eastern Malaysian states of Sarawak and Sabah.

Redbox is for parcels from 5 to 25 kg. It will provide two to three-day delivery and will offer private customers access to the service via drop-off at Mail Boxes Etc outlets in Malaysia.

UPS Appointed Shipping Partner for DHgate

UPS has teamed up with Chinese e-commerce platform DHgate to offer buyers and sellers a 70 percent reduction on the list price of its services.

As the recommended shipping partner for DHgate, UPS is offering exclusive discounts and is linking its IT systems with those of DHgate.

DHgate markets products from 400,000 Chinese wholesalers and manufacturers. It claims to offer ten million products at wholesale prices and has three million buyers worldwide.

>>In Brief - Asia-Pacific

DHL Wins Best Practice Awards
DHL has won five awards in the Frost & Sullivan Asia Pacific Transportation and Logistics Awards, including two regional best practice awards: Manufacturing Logistics Service Provider of the Year and Green Logistics Service Provider of the Year.

FedEx Freight Forwarder Expands its Network
The FedEx air and ocean freight forwarding subsidiary, FedEx Trade Networks, is opening offices in Singapore, Taiwan and four towns in China: Qingdao, Beijing, Guangzhou and Shenzhen. Global expansion plans include Latin America, where a new office has opened in São Paulo, Brazil.

TNT's New Manila Hub Opens
TNT has opened a depot north of the Philippine capital, Manila, to increase its infrastructure and connectivity in the Pampanga region, particularly the special economic zones of Subic and Clark.

TNT Upgrades in Vietnam
TNT has officially opened its 3,000 sq metre remodelled international and domestic operations centre in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. In Singapore, TNT reports a 14 percent rise in its customer base since the opening last year of its enlarged country depot and customer contact centre.

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