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Feature story

USPS sets out the green business case

The United States Postal Service believes there is a business case for going green. Speaking about the business case for going green US Postmaster General Patrick R. Donahoe said the Postal Service's 400 cross-functional Lean Green Teams of employees were helping the organisation achieve its vision: to be a sustainability leader through a culture of conservation and sustainable business practices.

Donahoe made his comments at a roundtable organised by the International Post Corporation during the COP 17 climate conference in Durban, South Africa last December. He said the financial savings and new revenue generated by sustainable activity at the Postal Service told 'a powerful story' and made the business case for sustainability.



These comments were further substantiated in February this year, when the Postal Service announced that its environmental measures had saved more than US\$34m (€26m) and generated US\$24m (€18m) in 2011.

Green action during the year included reduction in the use of energy, water, consumables and petroleum fuel, and less waste sent to landfills. By recycling 215,000 tons of material, the Postal Service saved US\$14m (€11m) in landfill fees while yielding US\$24m (€18m) in extra revenue.

In 2011 the Postal Service reported an 8% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions compared with a baseline of financial year 2008. That achievement was rewarded with a Climate Registry Gold Status Recognition, the first to be awarded to any US company or federal agency.

The Postal Service's sustainability performance goals include: reducing facility energy use by 30% by 2015; reducing petroleum usage for vehicles by 20% by 2015; increasing alternative fuel use by 10% each year up to 2015; and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by 2020.

More Lean Green Teams are due to be deployed across the US in 2012 to help the Postal Service achieve its sustainability goals.



Americas

UPS gains recognition for its green credentials

The UPS corporate headquarters complex has gained Gold Status certification from Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), as well as Energy Star certification. The company as a whole also achieved the top place in the consumer shipping sector of the Climate Counts scorecard in 2011 for the third year in a row.

The corporate headquarters is the first UPS building to be assessed for LEED and Energy Star certification. The company now plans to assess all new and some existing facilities.

UPS said the Energy Star award certified that its headquarters uses less energy, is less expensive to operate and generates fewer greenhouse gas emissions than most similar buildings in the United States. To qualify for an Energy Star rating, a building must score 75 or more on the US Environmental Protection Agency's energy performance scale of 1-100.

The Climate Counts scorecard ranks the world's largest companies according to 22 criteria, focusing on measuring and reducing climate impact, corporate support for public policy initiatives on climate change, and openness and transparency in reporting. The Climate Counts organisation evaluates company performance and issues a shopping guide for consumers.

In addition to achieving first place in the consumer shipping sector of the scorecard, UPS gained 11th place across all industries.

FedEx joins Aviation Green Alliance

FedEx Corp has become a founding member of the Aviation Green Alliance set up by the Lindbergh Foundation to support and encourage those in the aviation industry committed to addressing environmental issues.

The Aviation Green Alliance helps its members to share strategies, information, progress and ideas related to the aviation industry's environmental challenges.



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Australia Post supports recycling programme

Australia Post is selling pens made from recycled printer cartridges which are collected in many of its retail outlets, demonstrating to consumers one of the green outputs from participation in the Cartridges 4 Planet Ark programme.

The Enviroliner felt-tip pen on sale in postal outlets is more than 95% made from recycled plastics and inks with one cartridge producing two pens. Other toner cartridges are returned to their manufacturers for re-manufacturing or component recovery.

Since 2003, when Australia Post first installed recycling boxes in its outlets, postal customers have deposited 3.3m cartridges.

Australia Post is also making it easy for consumers to recycle old mobile phones by providing MobileMuster Reply Paid satchels in retail outlets. Old mobile phone batteries can be made into new ones while small amounts of gold and silver in circuit boards can be used to make jewellery.



DHL's GoGreen goes global with Standard Chartered Bank

Standard Chartered Bank's businesses in nine Asian countries are using DHL's GoGreen carbon-neutral service for their international courier services.

Standard Chartered last year adopted GoGreen globally, signing a worldwide contract to make 95% of its international courier shipments carbon neutral. The contract is already implemented in China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand. Japan and the Philippines are due to adopt GoGreen in the next phase of a staged worldwide introduction.

The GoGreen service is based on carbon offsetting. The emissions generated by transporting GoGreen shipments are converted into certified carbon management programmes including biomass and hydropower plants in India and Brazil, and a wind farm in China.

DHL said it had regional GoGreen contracts with several banks but Standard Chartered Bank was its first global account.





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No more 'pro clima' surcharge for Swiss domestic letters

Swiss Post is to offset CO₂ emissions from the transport of all addressed domestic letters from 1 April this year without making a surcharge to its customers.

Since 2009 Swiss Post has been offering customers the choice of a carbon-neutral service for letters, parcels and goods shipments through a 'pro clima' surcharge to cover the cost of carbon offsetting. For mail, 260 business customers signed up to the service despatching 191m consignments.

Now that all domestic addressed letters will automatically be carbon neutral at no additional cost to the customer, Swiss Post expects to offset around 50,000 tonnes of CO₂ a year from letter mail via both an international Gold Standard project and a Swiss climate protection project.

The Swiss project generates green electricity on farms using small- and medium-sized agricultural biogas plants. For the international Gold Standard project Swiss Post invited its customers to choose between three projects in an online ballot that took place in January this year.

Customers sending international mail, domestic parcels and goods consignments will be able to continue using a carbon neutral service after April by paying the pro clima surcharge. Swiss Post said the surcharge would reduce owing to favourable developments in the market for emission certificates.

Swiss Post's climate protection strategy is designed to reduce the company's emissions by 15,000 tonnes by 2013 through measures like switching to electric vehicles for all mail delivery by 2016, applying the Minergie standard to the post's new and renovated buildings, and operating the major proportion of its transport between urban centres by rail.

Since 2008 Swiss Post's electricity consumption has been derived exclusively from water and wind power. Current plans involve the installation of photovoltaic panels on the roofs of more than 20 company buildings.

Le Groupe La Poste goes carbon neutral

Le Groupe La Poste's domestic letter and parcel services became completely carbon neutral on 1 March this year, and express services to both domestic and international destinations are due to be carbon neutral by 1 July.

The switch to carbon neutrality is being achieved without additional cost to either private or business customers and includes emissions generated by subcontractors, according to Le Groupe La Poste.

The carbon offsetting programme involves projects in both France and developing countries. The company intends to adopt Gold Standard and Verified Carbon Standard projects as part of its effort to address the challenges of rising greenhouse gas emissions and global warming. During March all Le Groupe La Poste's employees are being consulted as part of the process to select one climate change solidarity project.

Furthermore, Le Groupe La Poste's holding company, GeoPost, is launching its carbon neutral initiative in July in a campaign entitled Total Zero. The initiative applies to business and consumer shipments to all global destinations from France, Germany, the Benelux countries and the United Kingdom.



GeoPost chief executive Paul-Marie Chavanne said the move to carbon neutrality asked the company to think differently about reducing its carbon footprint. The company has a continuous programme to measure and reduce CO₂ emissions and 'insetting' (carbon reduction) initiatives that include reducing fleet emissions through the introduction of greener vehicles. GeoPost will offset non-avoidable CO₂ emissions under a partnership agreement with French company CDC Climat.

Le Groupe La Poste has an overall objective to reduce its CO₂ emissions by 20% by 2015 compared with the 2008 level.

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DPD Austria tests rail transport

DPD Austria, a branch of GeoPost Group, is testing rail transport for parcels on a route from Wels to Bludenz in an attempt to reduce its CO₂ emissions.

The project has been made possible by an extension of operating hours at Wels station, which means that Rail Cargo's business hours are now compatible with DPD's operations. DPD will study costs and the economic viability of the pilot project, which will transport about 1,200 parcels a day.

PostNL promotes use of FSC paper



PostNL has formed a partnership with Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Netherlands to help increase the proportion of FSC paper on the Dutch market.

The FSC label guarantees that materials for wood and paper products are sourced from responsibly managed forests.

PostNL will demand the use of FSC paper in its negotiations with print and paper suppliers. The company's post offices and shops already sell greetings cards, envelopes and packaging material that is 80% FSC certified.

Le Groupe La Poste's new electric vehicle goes into service in France

The first ten of 10,000 new electric collection and delivery vans ordered by Le Groupe La Poste have been put into service at Chanteloup-Les-Vignes. The company has launched a research and development project with electricity company ERDF with a view to creating an electric vehicle recharging network.

The vehicle order, to be completed progressively until 2015, results from a study into the construction of a suitable electric vehicle and a call for tenders among vehicle manufacturers. In the end Renault was chosen to supply 10,000 light utility vehicles with a capacity of about 3m. These are based on the Kangoo Z.E.

By 2015 Le Groupe La Poste will operate several thousand electric quad bikes and more than 10,000 electrically assisted bicycles as well as the 10,000 collection and delivery vans.



The company says it will have the biggest electric vehicle fleet in the world. Its objectives are: to be the operator of reference for environmentally responsible urban logistics; to reduce CO₂ emissions per household served by 20%; and to improve the working conditions of postmen and -women.

In a related initiative French electricity company ERDF and Le Groupe La Poste have signed a partnership agreement and set up a two-year programme to research and develop a recharging infrastructure dedicated to their fleets. That would provide a point of reference for development of a commercial recharging network serving the 2m electric vehicles that the French Government wants on the road by 2020.

Electricity consumption will rise by only 1% or 2% if France reaches its target of 2m electric vehicles, but there would be a risk of exceeding the capacity of the power grid if all the vehicles were recharging at the same time. ERDF is aiming to organise recharging times to avoid such supply failures.

The research programme will carry out experiments at several ERDF and Le Groupe La Poste sites.

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CTT Correios de Portugal advances its green agenda

CTT Correios de Portugal says it reduced its consumption of printing paper by 24% and its use of gas and electricity by 6% in 2011.

The company introduced environmental scorecards and training to make employees aware of the carbon footprint of its operations.

Actions to achieve the reduction in paper use included: changes in record-keeping procedures at post offices; pre-setting printers to double-sided printing; and replacing printers in post offices with multi-function devices for printing, photocopying and faxing.

Measures to achieve reductions of 3.5GWh in energy and about 0.8TJ in natural gas and propane included rationalisation of the post office and delivery centre networks; greater energy efficiency in sorting centres and the relocation of administrative functions to a new, more environmentally friendly headquarters in Lisbon.



Russian Itella depot gains ISO14001 environmental certification

Itella Logistics has obtained its first ISO14001 environmental certification in Russia where the company said the majority of its service warehouses have already achieved ISO9001 quality management certification.

ISO14001 and ISO9001 certificates now cover 30 units across Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Russia. The company said it wanted to improve the quality of its services while taking into account the environmental impact of its operations.

DHL's GoGreen delivers for the Danish Presidency

DHL is the official logistics partner for the Danish Presidency of the European Union during the first half of 2012.

The company's carbon-neutral GoGreen products and services will be used by all Danish Ministries as part of the plan to organise the Danish Presidency according to the ISO20121 standard for sustainable management. The Danes expect that their presidency will be the first to be certified as sustainable.

Le Groupe La Poste's green package carries a recycling message

Le Groupe La Poste launched an ecological Colissimo parcel package in time for Christmas last year, donating a proportion of the selling price to EcoAct in order to help preserve the Brazilian forest.

The special edition packaging used cardboard made from recycled paper and paper manufactured from sustainable forests, glue based on water and corn starch, and petroleum-free ink made from 99% vegetable matter.

An online competition to find a design on an environmental theme produced a winning illustration that conjured up an imagined world where everyday objects are reused in new ways. The box design was monochrome so that senders or receivers could colour it in to generate a second use beyond packaging.

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Le Groupe La Poste offset all the emissions generated by the manufacture, transport and delivery of the packaging product.

Swiss Post's PostBus trials fuel cell drives

Swiss Post's PostBus is testing fuel cell drives over the next five years in a multi-partner project which includes the Swiss Canton of Aargau, the Swiss Federal Office of Energy and the European Union.

The long-term test is focusing on ecological sustainability and is expected to save at least 2,000 tonnes of CO₂ over the next five years. The aim is to acquire know-how about hybrid technology using fuel cells in everyday conditions over the long term.

Hydrogen-powered vehicles emit only steam and run quietly; during braking, the PostBuses being tested recapture energy which is stored for use to heat or cool the vehicle.

PostBus is deploying five Mercedes-Benz Citaro FuelCELL hybrid buses fuelled exclusively with hydrogen converted into electrical driving power. The vehicles will be operated on routes in and around Brugg by PostBus subsidiary Voegtlin-Meyer.



PostBus claims to be the first public transport company in Switzerland to use hydrogen fuel. The hydrogen will be generated by renewable sources. The company is also building a hydrogen fuelling station, initially for PostBuses but with a view to being made available to other vehicles as well.

>> In Brief - Europe

CTT ad wins bronze medal

CTT Correios de Portugal has been awarded a bronze medal by the Portuguese Association of Advertisers for its campaign communicating its environmental agenda. The campaign strengthened environmental sustainability as a CTT brand attribute.

Chronopost Employees encouraged to recycle

Chronopost Portugal has placed recycling bins and waste collection containers in all its depots in order to increase recycling by employees of paper, plastic, bulbs and electric and electronic articles.

CTT volunteers help save the forest

Twenty employees of CTT Correios de Portugal, including the vice chairman, volunteered to participate in a company programme to clean one hectare of forest in Serra de Aire in the country's central region, removing infesting species and allowing the development of species such as holm oak and cork oak.

Danish campaign to save workplace energy

Post Danmark is participating in a Danish nationwide campaign to save energy in the workplace, which is running for four weeks from 28 February. The workplaces saving the most will receive DKK10,000 (€1,345; US\$1,764) subject to a maximum of DKK500 (€67; US\$88) per employee.

One sheet fits it all at DPD Switzerland

DPD Switzerland is saving more than 30,000 sheets of paper a month by printing its export invoices on one sheet of paper instead of two.



Green Flash

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ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

IPC Green Flash is a quarterly special edition in the ***Market Flash*** series. The purpose of the special edition is to share the many successful environmental sustainability initiatives being undertaken by IPC member posts and participants.

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