

Have Customer Connect success stories or pictures to share?

Now is your branch's time to shine. Let other members know how you've been contributing to the program. Send any stories or pictures to postalrecord@nalc.org or to:

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Customer Connect

Carriers boost revenue by promoting USPS products

California carrier gives a boost to Postal Service revenue

Even bad news is good news for somebody. Case in point: The recent earthquake and tsunami in Japan were a devastating tragedy for that country. It was also a splash of cold water to the collective face of quake-prone Southern California. That meant a massive boost in business for Garden Grove home-based entrepreneur Joe Brannin, who sells emergency survival supplies online at his eBay website, livingfresh.com.

In fact, the business has pretty much taken over his house. Merchandise, boxes and large envelopes seem to be everywhere. Thanks to Garden Grove Branch 1100 member Jose Robles and Business Solutions Specialist Sara Finseth, most of those boxes and envelopes have "United States Postal Service" printed on them.

Brannin, who also works as a 911 dispatcher, has used the Postal Service since he began his business in 1999, when he primarily sold portable air purifiers (thus the name "Living Fresh"). But he also has used competitors.

One day, after Robles clocked off work, he noticed Brannin and his family loading parcels onto the dock at the Garden Grove Post Office. He recognized

them as customers from his route and offered to help. As he did, he wondered if Brannin was making maximum use of our latest products, services and prices. "I always think about what *more* we can do for our customers," Robles said.

He convinced Brannin to talk to a USPS sales representative, so Customer Service Supervisor Raul Guzman entered the lead into Customer Connect, prompting a call from Finseth. She introduced Brannin to the new Regional Rate Priority Mail Flat Rate boxes, customized "Greetings from Southern California" Flat Rate Priority boxes and also to Every Door Direct Mail.

Both the prices and the boxes were a hit with Brannin. He liked the added value of the customized identification with Southern California for his out-of-state customers. He intends to use Every Door Direct Mail to promote emergency gear "garage sales" on selected weekends. And, as a Click-N-Ship user, Brannin also is a fan of usps.com and has become a self-taught expert on packaging products for the mail.

Overall, Brannin has nothing but praise for Robles and the USPS. "I don't insure my shipments, because I feel that delivery by the Postal Service is a virtual



Garden Grove, CA Branch 1100 member Jose Robles (second from l) and Customer Service Supervisor Raul Guzman (far l) met with Living Fresh owners Joe and Ann Brannin (r) in front of their home, which serves as the shipping center for their family-owned business, to recognize their profitable new partnership.

guarantee," Brannin said. "I've always had superb treatment at my local post office."

The family-owned, home-based business now ships about 40 parcels a day with the Postal Service. Finseth estimates that Brannin's expanded use of USPS products will bring in \$30,000 in additional annual revenue. ✉

Customer Connect contributors

Here's a sample of the successes carriers have had promoting USPS products:

USPS Area	Carrier	Branch	Company	Sale Amount
Capital Metro	Edward Yatty	Br. 443, Hagerstown, MD	Alice's Cottage	\$58,800
Eastern	Michael Dinklocker	Br. 531, Charleston, WV	Aracoma Drug Company	300,000
Great Lakes	Michael Ventrella	Br. 825, Oak Brook, IL	Sunrise Bidders DBA Ubid Inc.	588,750
Northeast	Carmen Rodriguez	Br. 36, New York	AFUWI	50,400
Pacific	Lakhibir Singh	Br. 1427, Santa Clara, CA	Deluxe Media Management	58,000
Southeast	David Ortiz	Br. 1172, Tallahassee, FL	EZ Grips	75,000
Southwest	Mary Luttrell	Br. 132, Dallas	Casscom Media	138,510
Western	Dan Johnson	Br. 82, Portland, OR	OIA Logistics	100,000

Through Customer Connect, letter carriers are taking advantage of their special relationships to encourage business patrons to use USPS instead of private delivery services. Since the startup in mid-2003, letter carriers have generated more than **\$1.2 billion** in new annual revenue.

