

Customer Connect

Carriers boost revenue by promoting USPS products

Carrier's lead results in cookie shipments to troops

When Hudson Valley Merged, New York Branch 137 member Shannon Clark told Adams Fairacre Farms owner Barbara Johnson that she could pay a lower price for shipping cookies to the troops, Johnson was interested.

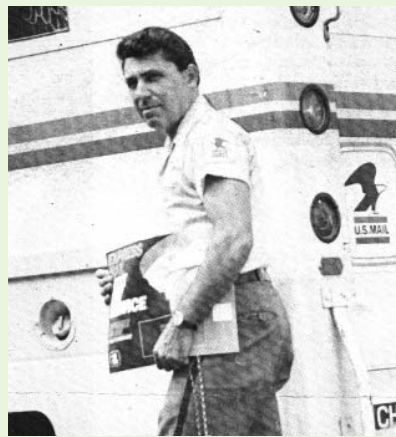
So, Clark submitted a Customer Connect lead, and Business Solutions Specialist Larissa Valdez made the connection, with Postmaster Robert Dini accompanying her for the meeting with Johnson.

The postal team learned Johnson had organized a project to collect holiday care packages containing more than 5,000 cookies for shipment to troops serving overseas. Realizing they had to act quickly to meet tight holiday shipping deadlines, the team proposed a Priority Mail online solution using Click-N-Ship, carrier pickup, and the \$2 discount for shipping large flat-rate boxes to troops with APO/FPO addresses.

The cookies arrived at their respective destinations, including Iraq and Afghanistan, within a few days. The project was deemed a success, with dozens of cookies collected for troops overseas. More than 130 packages were sent using Click-N-Ship and Priority Mail service with free delivery confirmation and free pickup.

Thanks to the team's efforts, the Postal Service earned as much as \$5,200 in new annual revenue. ☐

Customer Connect pioneer shares his tips with carriers



Brooklyn, NY Branch 41 member Paul Ippolito in a 1986 photo

The idea of Customer Connect is not a new phenomenon. Paul Ippolito, a retired Brooklyn, New York Branch 41 member, was known as "Mr. Express Mail" during the 1980s for submitting the names of more than 140 potential customers.

"No one is in a better position to introduce Postal Service products and services than those employees who deal directly with their customers," he told an area newsletter in 1986.

When Ippolito saw overnight delivery companies trying to gain a larger share of the market, he started making visits to businesses he saw using those competitors. He talked to them and distributed brochures about Express Mail and ultimately persuaded many businesses to switch to USPS for their shipping.

These days, Ippolito has two main tips for carriers trying to garner Customer Connect leads. "Be well dressed and presentable," he said, because it gets you past the middlemen and it's easier to talk to the people who make decisions. "And be assertive," he added. If a carrier is not assertive, they're not going to convince customers to choose the Postal Service.

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	Mattie Glover-Hooker	Br. 496, Richmond, VA	Carter's Babies and Books	\$32,599
Eastern	Bryan Houser	Br. 273, Lancaster, PA	Christian Fitness Factory	78,000
Great Lakes	Arthur Santos Jr.	Br. 825, Oak Brook, IL	Juno Logistics	175,000
Northeast	Ricardo Diaz	Br. 36, New York, NY	Bethel Nutritional Counseling	331,656
Pacific	Raymond Fulls	Br. 1100, Garden Grove, CA	John Covan's Thunder Road	115,000
Southeast	Tonia Crockett	Br. 73, Atlanta, GA	Boozin' Gear	100,000
Southwest	Carla Slater	Br. 132, Dallas, TX	Minol	25,000
Western	Tracy Johnson	Br. 5521, Shawnee Mission, KS	Capital Fulfillment Group	550,000

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 **\$951 million** in new annual revenue.

