

Customer Connect

Carriers boost revenue by promoting USPS products

NALC branch shaking the money-maker

Customer Connect is “a proven money-maker” for the Postal Service, so Len Hall, a Palatine, Illinois Branch 4268 member and Customer Connect coordinator, is mystified there isn’t more enthusiasm for the program from both management and letter carriers.

Hall reports that the 130-member Palatine branch, based about 30 miles northwest of Chicago, has been a consistent leader in the level of participation by NALC members and tops in their area for leads turned in by letter carriers and sales consummated. The program has gained leads from at least 100 of the Palatine branch members.

Still, the 25-year carrier says, “The success the Customer Connect program has achieved so far is minuscule compared to the amount it could bring in” with enthusiastic backing from management and solid support from letter carriers.

To help kick-start—or sustain—efforts in other locales, Hall put together a list of common-sense tips for carriers and managers to help promote Customer Connect:

- **Every address is a possible lead.** People run businesses out of apartments and homes. Even customers who don’t have a home business might have a friend, acquaintance or family



“Team Palatine,” made up of NALC members from Palatine, Illinois Branch 4268, has garnered hundreds of leads for the Customer Connect program.

member who does.

- **Be friendly.** Saying “Hi!” to your patrons or thanking them for using the USPS is the easiest way to start a conversation.
- **A complaint could be a good sales opportunity.** People who complain usually care enough to listen to sensible solutions. Follow up by asking them for a chance to serve them better.
- **Don’t be afraid of franchises or businesses with multiple locations.** Someone has to make the decisions; you can find out who.
- **Anyone using FedEx or UPS for residential delivery probably can save with USPS.** The reason is simple—in most cases they’re paying the private company *and* us, because we deliver more parcels over the last mile to

residential addresses for FedEx and UPS than ever before.

- **If a company has a website, it should offer USPS shipping.** This is the biggest area of growth for the parcel business and customers deserve a price-conscious alternative.
- **Try to get customers the answers they need now.** Steer them to usps.com.
- **Follow up, follow up, follow up.** Just turning in a lead is not enough. If the sales team doesn’t contacted the business promptly, call sales to find out why. If they don’t give you a good reason for delay, call your NBA’s office to discuss your next step.
- **Make Customer Connect stand-ups personal and relevant to your office.** No one likes to hear someone read off a piece of paper about the same old stuff every week. ✉

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	Terry Turner	Br. 439, Greenville, SC	Sustain Tex	\$32,760
Eastern	Darrell Hamed	Br. 783, Morgantown, WV	American Red Cross	175,000
Great Lakes	Linda Seren	Br. 580, Hammond, IN	Roaman’s	3,468,000
Northeast	Shawn Henderson	Br. 6000, Long Island Mgd., NY	Occunomix	125,000
Pacific	Eugene Davison	Br. 24, Los Angeles, CA	DV Warehouse	250,000
Southeast	Selim Yesan	Br. 1071, South Florida	Comprehensive Phase One	45,750
Southwest	Gary Wylie	Br. 226, Fort Worth, TX	Thomas Rubber Stamp Co. Inc.	26,000
Western	Jeffrey Dasen	Br. 576, Phoenix, AZ	Hello Merch	45,000

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 **\$854 million** in new annual revenue.

