

Business improving



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This publication has kept NALC members updated about the legislative fight to protect the Postal Service during the current financial crisis. In addition to a legislative fix, increasing total mail revenue is a preferred remedy. We have seen indications that such an increase is, and will continue to be, occurring. In the third quarter, USPS operating revenue improved by 3.6 percent over the same period last year (SPLY). Letter carriers around the country have been working the dramatic 8.8 percent increase in packages. This parcel revenue is desperately needed to replace the loss of First Class letter-size mail.

Another positive development concerns USPS testing of Sunday delivery service of Parcel Select packages in more than a thousand ZIP codes. Initially, the test will involve one mailer but other mailers may be added at a future date. City carrier assistants will be assigned to make the Sunday deliveries.

This year, USPS has created additional value-added products. Insurance is now included with most domestic Priority Mail shipments. Depending on the postage payment method used, customers will receive up to \$100 of insurance coverage against loss, damage or missing contents. Customers also will receive day-specific delivery estimates that are based on their packages' destinations. Labels, retail receipts, and the Track & Confirm site at usps.com will let customers know when their packages are scheduled to reach their destinations.

Express Mail has a new name—Priority Mail Express—and still includes the same money-back service guarantee and insurance up to \$100. Express Mail International is renamed Priority Mail Express International, and the Express Mail Corporate Account will be called USPS Corporate Account. And, of course, when customers ship with Priority Mail Express and Priority Mail, they also get USPS Tracking and free Package Pickup, as well as Flat Rate and online postage payment options.

Other positive signs come from analysis of Customer Connect data. The 2013 Fiscal Year (FY) revenue target was set at \$200,005,497, while the actual year to date* (YTD) revenue is \$247,664,421. Additionally:

Leads

Actual YTD: 46,490
SPLY: 45,451

Sales

Actual YTD: 7,237
SPLY: 6,048

Here are a few recent Customer Connect success stories:

Roy Jancio of New Jersey Merged Branch 38 submitted a Customer Connect lead for Co-Ed Uniform. Co-Ed Uniform is a family-owned business that works with both public and private schools in design and development of a uniform program that meets their needs. Co-Ed was using a competitor that added surcharges to its invoices due to the use of poly bags. Co-Ed owner Gary Hersh was impressed to learn the cost savings from switching to USPS. This lead generated \$122,218 in new USPS revenue.

Syracuse, NY Branch 134 member Thomas Buffum submitted a lead after he encountered a postal patron who needed shipping help quickly. The customer, Hunter and Hilsberg, has products that were mentioned by Dr. Oz on television, and had 200 orders waiting to be filled. USPS helped the customer open an account with Endicia.com and provided packaging for the initial orders. This lead created \$124,800 in new revenue.

Kimberly McLaughlin of Cleveland, OH Branch 40 supplied a lead for Vapermate, which led to a cost analysis showing a significant savings to the customer by converting to USPS. Vapermate selected Stamps.com as its PC postage provider and now is using Priority Mail for both its domestic and international shipments. New USPS Priority Mail revenue generated is \$146,000.

Stamford, CT Branch 60 member John Thomas submitted a lead for Ryan's Barkery. Eleven-year-old Ryan Kelly started his own business with his mother, Daniela. They had adopted their beagle, Barkley, and didn't like the dog treats that were available, so they created their own. Ryan began selling the treats locally, and eventually he was featured on a segment of the television show "Shark Tank." They started shipping with USPS and the new revenue for this sale is estimated at \$507,310.

District management, union representatives and sales-team leaders recently converged on the Temple City, CA, post office to congratulate the office for being the first in the Santa Ana District to achieve 100 percent letter carrier participation in Customer Connect. In reaching this milestone, Temple City also became the first office to receive breakfast presented by Santa Ana District leaders in the districtwide "In it to WIN it!" Customer Connect contest.

Temple City was presented with a certificate of appreciation and a letter of congratulations that identified them as a team of "trailblazers" who understand that their relationships with customers are key to retaining and growing revenue.

Representing the NALC was Anita Guzik of Los Angeles Branch 24, who urged carriers to "keep up the good work bringing in leads," and reminded them that "the revenue you generate funds our paychecks."

* Year-to-date performance through Aug. 9, 2013