

Customer Connect adds up for USPS

By touching every address in the United States at least six days a week, letter carriers naturally develop special relationships with their customers. Since USPS's Customer Connect program began in 2003, thousands of carriers have successfully leveraged their interactions with business customers to encourage them to use the Postal Service instead of relying on private delivery and mailing services. Below are some recent stories about Customer Connect leads submitted by letter carriers that have helped USPS earn new revenue.

BIC

Stamford, CT Branch 60 member **Richard Cohen** was asking a friend who works at BIC about using the Postal Service to ship out its packages.

The carrier asked the Customer Connect coordinator in his station to submit the lead for the worldwide manufacturer of stationery, lighters and razors, among other items. Together they reached out to USPS customer relations coordinator Lisa Landone.

After speaking with BIC, Landone got the district business development specialist (BDS) team involved to move forward. The BDS team worked with BIC, discussed its needs and options, registered the company with Stamps.com and explained how to use the service, and discussed mailing its products with USPS.

Features and benefits such as free tracking and free pickup, along with Parcel Select delivery between two and seven days were emphasized to win BIC's business.

After numerous conversations and visits, BIC began testing USPS packaging products and service on this new venture for the company. USPS Field Sales followed up, and BIC now will be getting

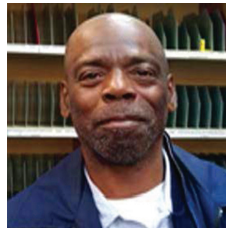
a daily pickup that works for both parties.

The Postal Service projects the revenue from this initial sale to be \$1.7 million, with additional sales and revenue in the near future, thanks to Cohen's lead.

Classy Raptor Tactical

He had a good lead in his sights.

Eagle-eyed San Antonio, TX Branch 421 letter carrier **Gregory Childress** noticed a UPS truck outside Classy Raptor Tactical, a purveyor of gear



Gregory Childress

and weapon accessories in San Antonio. The carrier spoke with the owners, Curtis and Jennifer Iovito, and inquired if he could have a sales rep contact them to see if USPS could offer a competitive bid for their shipping services.

The Iovitos, no fans of the fuel and delivery-area surcharges they were saddled with, agreed to hear what USPS would say and were won over by Priority Mail, free shipping supplies and free daily pickups.

As for USPS, it hit a financial bulls-eye thanks to Childress's lead, with \$310,765 in new estimated annualized revenue.

H&D Plumbing

As its lone officer, **Larry Neace** pretty much does it all for small Hazard, KY Branch 3857. But the branch secretary went above and beyond when he signed up a lucrative new lead for USPS.

Neace knew that Jamie Nickles worked for and eventually had bought H&D, a vendor for heating and cooling supplies in Hazard. Nickles had been thinking of selling his parts online and Neace urged him to do so. "The market in Hazard is decent but not as big as it could be," Neace said.

Nickles took Neace's advice and created an online presence, including on eBay. Now, Neace is picking up five to seven packages a day at H&D and suspects Nickles's business will only grow in the future.

Neace's lead generated \$32,240 in estimated annualized revenue for USPS, and if his prediction about Nickles's business proves correct, that figure will only grow in the years ahead.



Larry Neace (r)

SafeNetRx

For **Vic McCuen**, a friendly conversation in a bar a few months ago turned into a prescription for Customer Connect success. A fellow patron at the watering hole struck up a conversation with McCuen, president of Central Iowa Merged Branch 352, and the conversation turned to SafeNetRx, a firm that acquires unused medications and ships them out to people in need.

McCuen suspected that USPS would be a better fit for SafeNetRx than the shipper it was using. He forwarded the lead to **Michele Donnelly**, a Branch 352 trustee who is assisting with Customer Connect efforts and for whom McCuen has effusive praise. The program's numbers "are up greatly because of her efforts," he said.

Thanks to McCuen and Donnelly, the Postal Service is now enjoying an estimated annualized revenue of roughly \$95,000 from SafeNetRx. And patients with limited financial means are receiving much-needed medications at little or no cost via USPS. **PR**