

New system

records

complaints

about late

delivery of

periodicals.

re your subscribers complaining about late delivery of their favorite magazine or newspaper? Do you want that complaint tracked? Do you want to bring this complaint to the attention of the delivery supervisor? Well, the Postal Service is making it easier for you to

communicate your concerns and, at the same time, establish a trends and analysis database. Mailers soon will be able to turn to the Webbased Electronic Publication Watch System — or ePubwatch — which the U.S. Postal Service begins pilot testing this month.

The Postal Service worked with members of the Mailers' Technical Advisory Committee to develop the system, which records customer complaints and

allows the option of requesting an ePubwatch on periodicals.

Mailers simply go to the Website — *epubwatch.usps.gov* — and enter their information on a subscriber's complaint. Mailers can use the Publishers' Complaint Tracking page to maintain

their own database. By entering every complaint, mailers will also be assisting the Postal Service to identify problem areas and delivery service trends. If the subscriber continues to have a problem, the mailer has the option of requesting an electronic publication watch. It's

then forwarded electronically to one of 7,500 delivery units that will be part of the system. They'll be notified of an ePubwatch request by a flashing siren on their computer screens.

"We're committed to providing mailers with timely feedback," says John Rapp, vice president, Delivery. "And our definition of real time is that delivery units will get the information as soon as the mailer enters it."

The pilot test is being conducted in Chicago and Long Island, NY. National deployment is expected by February 2001.

Contact the National Customer Support Center in Memphis, TN, to obtain a login ID and password. Call 1-800-458-3181.

#### WHAT'S INSIDE

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**8** EXPLORING GLOBALLY

#### Looking for information about the USPS request to increase postal rates and fees in 2001?

Go to www.usps.com. There's a direct link to The Federal Register Rate Case Proposed Rules, or you can click on Info, then Rates, to find a wealth of information — FAQs, proposed rates and fees, local experts to help you with your rate case questions, and much more.

Also, check out the February 2000 issue of *Memo to Mailers* available online at *www.usps.com* under "Info," then "Postal Periodicals and Publications" for information on the rate case proposal.

#### **5-YEAR** STRATEGIC PLAN

### FLEXIBLE INNOVATIVE RESPONSIVE

ou don't need a crystal ball to know that there are challenges ahead for the U.S. Postal Service. How will USPS respond and what direction will it take in the next five years? A new strategic plan offers a vision of a Postal Service that is flexible, innovative, and responsive, and evolves in partnership with its customers.

The Postal Service's Five-Year Strategic Plan, which is required under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993, was sent last month to Congress and the president. It recognizes future challenges and opportunities facing the Postal Service, and outlines goals, strategies, measurement and management systems.

The plan is available on www.usps.com. (Click on "About USPS" and then "Who We Are.")

In an introductory letter, Postmaster General William J. Henderson acknowlcontinued on page 5

#### PHOTO PROCESSING IS A SNAP, THANKS TO USPS

## Say cheese



onvenience and a quick turnaround are the keys to success in the mail order film processing business, which is why District Photo Inc., headquartered in Beltsville, MD, relies on the U.S. Postal Service.

"We're the largest mail order photo processor in the United States," says Al Steinman, chief marketing officer of DPI, which processes thousands of rolls of film every hour.

#### FYI EMS

Now you can receive the excellent service that Express Mail International Service (EMS) provides at even a lower price.

A final rule was published in the *Federal Register* on October 11 implementing a 5 percent discount off the basic published prices for EMS shipments paid by an Express Mail Corporate Account (EMCA), excluding pickup fees, any special fees, and shipments made under an International Customized Mail agreement. An EMCA is an advance deposit account developed for Express Mail that enables customers to deposit funds with the Postal Service for payment of anticipated future Express Mail mailings.

See the *Federal Register* and the July 27 issue of *Postal Bulletin* (No. 22029) for more details, or contact Angus MacInnes at 703-292-3601.

"Our niche is convenience. Customers can mail film for processing from home in a prepaid First-Class Business Reply Mail envelope. The key to our success is turnaround. For years we have been relying on the U.S. Postal Service to deliver for us quickly — both ways — and they have," Steinman says.

After film is processed, the prints are sent back to the customer via Standard (A) Automated Flats and Priority Mail Drop Shipment.

DPI's mail order brands are Clark Color Labs and Reliance Color Labs. In addition to operations in West Virginia, Canada, United Kingdom, as well as its Maryland headquarters, the firm recently acquired York Color Labs and performs photo finishing for 1,900 local retail outlets in five states.

"We're in a growth mode," says Steinman, "but we can't grow without the Postal Service's good service."

The new area of growth for District Photo is the new dot.com companies that electronically send and receive photos online in just one day. DPI provides quality production of select prints, negatives, CDs, disks and enlargements. It relies on the Postal Service to get those off-line and to the customers.

"Their new dot.com business presents a significant opportunity for the Postal Service," says Tom Medlock, national account manager. "We just need to consistently perform in order for this business to grow."

#### **FYI DOUBLE-CHECK**

"Please remind business mailers to double check return receipts before mailing. The Postal Service gets a lot of return receipts with no address on the front of the card. Sometimes, carriers or clerks do not catch the error and we are unable to return them to the mailer."

H.B. Schroeter Postmaster Gainesville, FL

#### **EDITOR'S NOTE**

Ongratulations to Robert Engeman, director of Mailing Operations, North Shore Agency, Westbury, NY, for winning the Mail Center Manager's Award at the Fall National Postal Forum in Anaheim, CA. His name was not included in October's issue. We apologize to Mr. Engeman and to our readers for the omission.

#### NEW OFFICER APPOINTMENTS AT USPS

ostmaster General William J. Henderson announced new appointments to the senior management team of the U.S. Postal Service.

- JOHN E. (JACK) POTTER assumes the duties of Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President. He moves from the position of Senior Vice President, Operations.
- RICHARD J. STRASSER, JR., has been named Chief Financial Officer and Executive Vice President. Strasser has been in the position in an acting capacity since May. He previously served as District Manager, Northern Virginia.
- DONNA M. PEAK has been named Vice President, Finance, Controller. She previously served as manager, Compensation, Employee Resource Management, and has been serving in an acting capacity as Vice President, Finance, Controller, since May.
- MICHELE C. PURTON has been named Treasurer, Vice President, Finance. For the past year, Purton represented the Postal Service in Stanford University's Sloan Fellow's program as a Postal Career Executive Service executive-intraining. She formerly served as manager, Customer Service and Sales, for the Northland District and Finance Manager, Midwest Area.
- PAUL VOGEL is assuming the duties of Vice President, Network Operations Management. He has been serving in an acting capacity since April. Vogel's most recent permanent assignment was Manager, Operations Support, Great Lakes Area.
- Allen R. Kane is assuming a new role as Senior Vice President, Future Business Design. He formerly was Chief Marketing Officer.
- JOHN NOLAN, Deputy Postmaster General, takes on the additional responsibilities of Chief Marketing Officer, with the title Deputy Postmaster General and Chief Marketing Officer. ■

## Enhanced service. New name. Parcel delivery. Global Express Guaranteed™



UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

■here significant are enhancements to the Postal Service's premier international expedited service. Global Express Guaranteed<sup>TM</sup> (previously known as Priority Mail Global Guaranteed) expanded from what had been offered as

"documents only" to include a full package delivery service. Global Express Guaranteed (GXG) is now available from more than half of the nation's postal retail locations — about 20.000 total. GXG service is available to more than 200 countries and territories around the globe, including the recent addition of China.

GXG is the result of an international strategic alliance with DHL Worldwide Express, Inc. It is sold and transported domestically by the U.S. Postal Service, and international transportation and delivery are provided by DHL Worldwide Express.

"GXG evolved into the service it is today in very logical, measured and evenly paced steps," said John Kelly, president of USPS' Expedited/Package Services. "Our goal in forming a strategic alliance with DHL Worldwide Express was to offer a service that gives our customers the best in fast, guaranteed delivery overseas," added Kelly. "GXG fits that bill."

Global Express Guaranteed still offers the lowest published rates in the market.

#### PRIORITY MAIL GLOBAL GUARANTEED/GLOBAL EXPRESS GUARANTEED Chronology

#### **APRIL 19, 1999**

Initial rollout of Priority Mail Global Guaranteed™ (PMGG)

- Enhanced expedited international service to 19 western European countries and one territory
- Date certain guaranteed delivery with track and trace
- Acceptance of documents only at approximately 3,500 postal retail locations
- PMGG available through strategic alliance with DHL Worldwide Express

#### **NOVEMBER 1, 1999**

PHASE II EXPANSION

- Reach of PMGG service extended to a total of 65 destinating countries and territories
- Acceptance of documents only at more than 10,000 postal retail units
- Current price structure remained the same

#### MAY 28, 2000

PHASE III EXPANSION

- Expanded delivery to more than 200 countries worldwide
- New multiple rate groups based on weight and destination

#### AUGUST 27, 2000

PHASE IV EXPANSION

- Acceptance from an additional 10,000 postal retail locations nationwide (totaling about 20,000)
- Acceptance of shipments destined for China
- Minor changes in some rates, including lower rates to some destinations still the lowest published rates in the market

#### OCTOBER 1, 20000

PHASE V EXPANSION

- Name change to Global **Express Guaranteed** (GXG)
- Package acceptance (non-documents)
- New classification of mail for full package service (non-documents)

1999 2000

#### **News from Postal Customer Councils**

#### GREATER ILLINOIS PCC

The Greater Illinois PCC, I which is a cooperative effort of the Chicago, Northern Illinois and South Suburban PCCs, is having its fourth annual Mailers Forum Nov. 21, 2000, at the Hyatt O'Hare in Rosemont, IL. More than 800 business mailers and vendors are expected to attend. Several business sessions will be offered, addressing such subjects as postal reform, the rate case, eCommerce, global issues, and more. The featured speaker will be Deputy Postmaster General John Nolan. The exhibit hall will feature nearly 50 exhibits on the latest in mailing equipment and software. For more information call 1-800-851-0285.

#### GO TO THE SOURCE

Has your PCC ordered the new Publication 286? Remind your postal co-chair or CRC liaison that it's available from the supply centers. The PSIN is "Pub286," the PSN is 7610-02-000-9999, and the edition date is June 2000. This "bible" to running a successful PCC program answers questions about starting a PCC or operating an existing program. It's indispensable.

#### ON THE WEB

Have you checked out the national PCC Website lately? There have been changes over the past few months. Log on to www.national.pcc.usps.com. Pay particular attention to the Locate a PCC, National/Local Events, and Speaker's Bureau sections. Comments and suggestions are welcome. Send them our way via the feedback link.

#### WAS IT SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED?

## Signature capture knows for sure

"What's really

**cool** about si

about signature capture is that by the end of this year it will provide the means to electronically

"capture"

customer signatures after they have signed for important mail."

Julie Rios Manager of Information Systems Expedited/Package Services checking on claims or needing duplicate return receipts, the U.S. Postal Service's new infrastructure, "signature capture," will speed up a process that formerly took days.

It replaces an old system that required employees to manually file 400 million little slips of paper annually at 35,000 locations nationwide. Now, a new national database makes retrieval of a delivery record just a click away for postal employees — not a 10 to 15-minute dig through a filing cabinet.

The process itself is simple: the letter carrier's hand-held scanner links an article number from a mailpiece to a unique number on a delivery receipt that is signed by the recipient of the mailpiece. This information is then linked and stored in a national database.

"What's really cool about signature capture is that by the end of this year it will provide the means to electronically "capture" customer signatures after they have signed for important mail," says Julie Rios, Expedited/Package Services manager of Information Systems.

"The new service, Signature Confirmation™, will actually prove "who" got the expedited or package mail," explains Rios, adding that it goes one step further than the Delivery Confirmation™ service that tells a customer the date and time Priority Mail and Parcel Post were delivered.

"In a nutshell, signature capture provides the means for us to give faster service to customers needing a return receipt after mailing or filing an indemnity claim for a lost item," Rios says. "When Signature Confirmation is up and running, it will provide that all-important proof of delivery. And this is just the beginning of new services to come."

#### WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

#### SIGNATURE CAPTURE

The new internal Postal Service system that converts delivery information storage and retrieval from paper to electronic.

#### DELIVERY CONFIRMATION™

This service provides the date and time of delivery (attempted delivery, forwards and returns) for Priority Mail and Standard Mail (B) for a small fee. Customers can check the Internet or a toll-free number to "confirm" the information. The service began in March 1999 and has two options.

#### **ELECTRONIC OPTION**

Electronic customers can send an electronic file that includes details about the pieces in the mailing. The mailer retrieves delivery information electronically, either by electronic file transfer or Internet inquiry. There is no charge for Priority Mail and a fee of \$.25 for Standard Mail (B).

#### RETAIL OPTION

This is available at all post offices, stations, branches and contract units. Customers are provided a form that includes a barcoded label and a detachable mailing receipt. Retail customers can access delivery information by calling a toll-free number or via Internet inquiry. Retail fees are \$.35 for Priority Mail and \$.60 for Standard Mail (B).

#### SIGNATURE CONFIRMATION™

This new service will be available later this year for an additional fee. This new enhanced service will capture the signature and name of the recipient and the delivery address, if different from the original. In essence, it will provide proof of delivery service that's comparable to that of other companies. Customers will be able to view the time, location and name of person who received it on the Web. If a hard copy of the signature is needed, it will be mailed or faxed.



#### 5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN continued from page 1

edges that the "future of the Postal Service is less certain." He says traditional postal operations and services are challenged by technological changes in communications and commerce, and recent achievements won't guarantee the relevance of the Postal Service to changing customer needs in a dynamic, competitive market.

But, he says, there still are opportunities for reducing costs, improving productivity and maximizing the efficiency of the postal operating system. There also are opportunities for growth as the Postal Service finds new ways for serving its customers and their communities, according to Henderson.

"The Postal Service is certainly not the only institution chal-

From nature's wonders, to America's mar-

velous inventions, musicians and com-

posers, literary masters, and military

heroes. This year's commemorative stamps

are a fascinating philatelic brew. Get the

inside stories behind them that you won't

find anywhere else in this beautifully

designed and illustrated book.

lenged by changes brought about by new communication technologies; however, it is one of the most visible," says Henderson.

The strategic plan captures the factors that are fundamentally transforming the global postal industry — the growth of Internet communications and electronic commerce, the deregulation and privatization of foreign postal administrations and the potential diversion of significant volumes of several categories of letter mail to electronic channels.

The plan restates the historical mission of USPS — to bind the nation together, provide access in all communities and offer prompt, reliable postal services at uniform prices — and outlines a vision for the future. That vision is "to become an organization that can improve performance and afford-

ability, implement innovative ways to grow both its revenues and those of the mailing industry, and find flexible, responsive solutions to the challenges raised by technology and the seismic shifts in the global postal business environment," the study says.

The framework for achieving this vision is to build on the Postal Service's role as the "gateway" to the nation's households and businesses, and to take advantage of its infrastructure that will serve as the foundation for its 21st century role — the "last-mile" gateway into every American household and business for messages, transactions, and merchandise. In addition, new and expanded products and services will build on the Postal Service's "brand" — the trust and security inherent in the postal system.

he Five-Year Strategic Plan reflects efforts to reach out to stakeholders, including business customers and members of the mailing industry. This is an ongoing process. GPRA requires annual reports on progress made on the goals described in the Five-Year Strategic Plan. Your feedback is welcome. Send comments to: Robert A.F. Reisner, Vice President, Strategic Planning, U.S. Postal Service, 475 L'Enfant Plaza SW. Washington DC, 20260-1520, or stratpln@email.usps.gov.



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# It's in the sleeve



#### THE CHALLENGE

Fruits and vegetables are a part of good nutrition for everyone. But tell that to the kids. That's why National Safety Associates (NSA) of Memphis, TN, came up with JUICE PLUS GUMMIES, a food product for children. It provides the nutrition of 17 fruits and vegetables in a gummie form.

NSA markets through its distributors, with products delivered to residential addresses. It ships more than 20,000 weekly. Previously, NSA had moved parcels 5 pounds and under from a competitor to USPS Priority Mail. As a result of this relationship, the Postal Service was the first carrier considered when NSA developed its JUICE PLUS GUMMIES for children.

But there was a glitch. When

packaged, the JUICE PLUS GUM-MIES weighed slightly more than 5 pounds, the ceiling NSA set for using Priority Mail. How could this merchandise be distributed cost effectively?

#### THE SOLUTION

Mike Lyon, director, NSA Distribution/Operations, knew the value of using Priority Mail to ship his products. Lyon worked with Postal Service Account Manager Georganne Raupp to craft and implement a solution.

Lyon developed a prototype sleeve for the four-pack shipment of JUICE PLUS GUMMIES, one that was lighter than the corrugated box originally considered. The decreased weight of the outside packaging reduced the overall weight to less than 5 pounds.

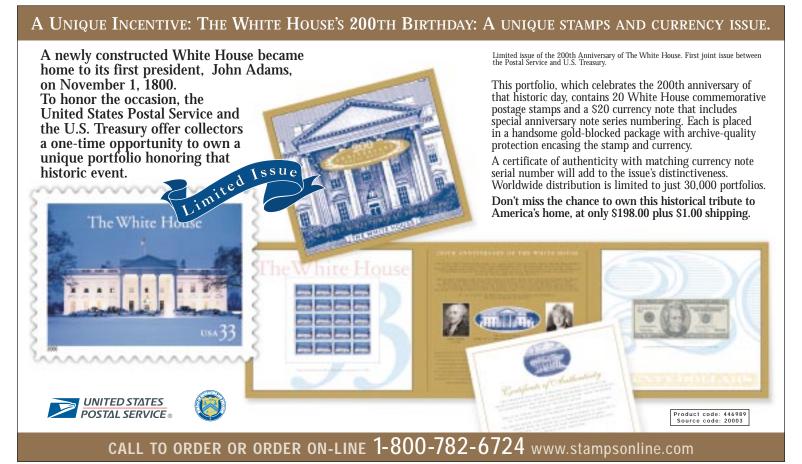
#### THE RESULT

Using Lyon's prototype, Raupp worked with NSA and USPS to design customized packaging that allowed the customer to reduce the overall cost of packaging and at the same time lower shipping weight.

As a result of this innovation, NSA elected to use Priority Mail for its new nutritional food shipments. Not only were shipping costs reduced, delivery was expedited, increasing the distributor's level of satisfaction.

"The gummies along with all other JUICE PLUS products have exceeded projected sales each month," says Lyon. "NSA feels it is partially due to Priority Mail and its now proven track record. NSA and our customers benefited from this partnership with improved delivery times, increased satisfaction, reduced shipping and packaging cost, and uninterrupted service."

Mike Lyon, director, NSA Distribution/Operations, knew the value of using Priority Mail to ship his products.



### POSTAL NEWS BRIEFS



#### HANJIN EXPRESS

Hanjin Express, the international express service of Hanjin Transportation Co., Ltd., signed an agreement with the U.S. Postal Service that will provide companies in Korea with a new option for shipping to the United States. Hanjin, one of the largest transportation and logistics companies in Korea, has matched strengths with the Postal Service to provide

companies in Korea with a priority package delivery service to the U.S. that will offer most of the benefits of express services at substantially lower prices.

#### PMPCS TO USPS

The U.S. Postal Service and Emery Worldwide Airlines agreed to a transition of Priority Mail Processing Centers to USPS management and operation. The network of 10 PMPCs has been operated by Emery since it was established in 1997. The change will be effective Jan. 7, 2001.

The Postal Service plans no major changes in service performance or operation of PMPCs during the transition.

Affected PMPCs are located in: Nashua, NH; Springfield, MA; Rochester, NY; Bethpage, NY; Kearny, NJ; Philadelphia, PA; Pittsburgh, PA; Jacksonville, FL; Orlando, FL, and Miami, FL.

#### **RECYCLING AT WORK**

The U.S. Conference of Mayors is seeking nominations for the Eighth Annual Recycling at Work Awards. Deadline is December 15.

The awards honor companies; organizations; universities; individuals; and local, state, and federal government entities whose leadership makes recycling successful. The top two awards are the Direct Marketing Association (DMA) Robert Rodale Awards.

Applications can be accessed at www.usmayors.org/USCM/recycle/awards/rcyc\_awrd.htm, or by calling Paulo Heyman of the U.S. Conference of Mayors at 202-861-6780.



Check out Priority Mail envelopes featuring USPS Pro Cycling Team captain Lance Armstrong.



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#### SO, YOU THINK SANTA'S ELVES ARE BUSY?

This year, between Thanksgiving and Christmas, the U.S. Postal Service expects to deliver 20 billion holiday letters, postcards and packages — up 3 percent from last year.

USPS expects to postmark about 280 million cards and letters on December 11, predicted to be the busiest day of the holiday mailing season. December 18 is expected to come in second for heavy mailings of cards and letters.

On an average day from October through December, the Postal Service receives about 100 million letters and cards nationwide. This number is expected to increase an average of 150 million a day from November 24 through December 31.

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# EXPLORING the globe

Thinking of growing globally? The Postal Service helped develop a tool that can help businesses explore the world of opportunities for direct mail marketing.

Consider these statistics: fewer than 500 U.S. companies account for 85 percent of U.S. exports, between 5 percent and 30 percent of U.S. mail order companies sell overseas, and overseas sales account for as much as 25 percent of sales for some large mail order companies. And, in the Internet age, going on the Net means going global.

In an effort to assist businesses in penetrating the international direct mail markets, the Postal Service, in conjunction with the Direct Marketing Advisory Board, developed the IDMAPS (International Direct Marketing Analysis and Profiling System) software. It's a tool to support and assist in expansion opportunities around the world.

IDMAPS can help identify the potential for direct mail marketing in specific countries, conduct a detailed assessment of business expansion opportunities in targeted countries, support development of marketing plans targeted for specific countries, and assess the current development of the direct mail market in countries around the world.

"The information available on IDMAPS is incredible," says Bob Michelson, manager of Marketing for USPS' International Business. "It provides statistical data for nearly 200 countries. It can help analyze global trends or target a country for further analysis. It can create a country profile to determine its potential for direct mail development based on factors such as economics, demographics or postal infrastructure. It can benchmark a country as to its stage of direct mail development."

Essentially, says Michelson, it's a roadmap to direct marketing opportunities around the world. In partnership with USPS, businesses will be able to reach the right markets and export their brands more effectively.

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