

POSTAL NEWS

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1. DM facing more postal misery

PrintWeek, 03 April 2008

More postal strikes are looking a certainty after workers rejected Royal Mail's pension changes.

Members of the CWU, the communications union, voted overwhelmingly on Tuesday against changes which include the end of the organisation's final salary pension scheme and the raising of the retirement age to 65 from 2010.

A new wave of strikes, predicted by PrintWeek last week, would bring more havoc to the direct mail industry, which is estimated to have lost £8m due to last year's industrial action.

The CWU and Unite the Union, which represents Royal Mail's managers, are now discussing a joint approach to industry action should Royal Mail refuse to enter what it has termed "meaningful

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2. Postal firms must expand to survive

By Criselda E Diala on Thursday, April 3, 2008

Middle East postal companies have just two years to become more responsive to demand if they are to survive the competition, said management consulting firm Oliver Wyman.

"Recognised brands such as the UAE's Emirates Post must develop new strategies to deal with the liberalisation in the industry," according to a white paper issued by the firm.

Government-owned postal companies must “develop business designs that align the organisation, products and services, network, and delivery systems without adding process inefficiencies and running up costs,” the paper said.

Speaking to Emirates Business yesterday following the release of the paper “Uncovering Value in the Middle Eastern Postal Market”, Manny Hontoria, Director of Oliver Wyman and co-author of the research, said regional postal firms have great potential to generate significant value but have limited time before regulatory liberalisation and e-commerce erode its competitive edge.

“There is a growing demand for quality services and postal companies should capture this opportunity. We may be looking at approximately two years from now before the sector becomes liberalised, allowing new players into the market,” said Hontoria.

Currently most of the countries in the GCC, except Bahrain, have regulated markets, which allow postal companies to set barriers for new entrants as deregulation occurs. Aside from the traditional letter and parcel services, postal companies have also been commissioned by various industries such as telecom aviation, government, logistics, insurance, global money transfer and private businesses.

The Oliver Wyman white paper mentioned that regional postal companies, such as government-owned entities, enjoy significant advantages like exemption from trade licence restrictions. The growing multi-national population and expanding industries in the region have also been economically favourable to postal companies.

“Large existing post office networks, recognised brands [such as Emirates Post in the UAE and Egypt Post in Egypt], a large local population and growing immigrant population, highly regulated markets, and low personal computer and internet penetration” are factors that could feed expansion and cross-selling opportunities in the region, the report said.

Hontoria said postal firms need to address both governance and recruitment-related issues. As government entities, he said postal companies require vision and the ability to execute new strategies.

“Another challenge is attracting the right kind of people to do the job. Shortage of talent is a critical concern for the industry,” said Hontoria.

Last Update at 8:32 am on April 3, 2008

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3. Letter: Postal service needs to keep eye on boxes
Opinion

On March 10, I went to mail a card at a mail drop at 34th and Bell. I tried to put my card in the box. An envelope was sticking out.

I had to stuff the mail in the box, which was full and running over. Any thief could have reached in and gotten all kinds of mail. You cannot put mail in our boxes because of identity theft. Sometimes we have to use a drop box because it's closer than the post office.

I tried to tell the post office about the problem, but the post office phones aren't adapted for public use. I couldn't reach anyone. I then drove to the post office and stood in line until I could tell a clerk what had happened.

We pay enough for packages and mail. I just pray that they get to the box before someone steals them.

Evelyn Newbill

Amarillo

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4. French Postal Bank reports higher 2007 results

Thu Apr 3, 2008 5:59am EDT

PARIS, April 3 (Reuters) - France's Banque Postale, the state-owned post office bank launched in 2006, reported a rise in earnings in 2007, despite strong competition, and said it would start offering consumer loans in 2009 or 2010.

The bank said its net attributable income grew 9.4 percent to 539.6 million euros (\$843.2 million).

Last week it reported net banking income was 4.745 billion euros, up 2.2 percent or 5 percent when stripping out provisions and a gain on the sale of shares in Euronext (ENXT.PA: [Quote](#), [Profile](#), [Research](#)).

Banque Postale, which is a subsidiary of the postal service with branches in post offices, said the year had seen heightened competition.

But it won 830,000 new accounts and now has 11 million postal accounts and 9.3 million active clients.

Other French banks such as BNP Paribas (BNPP.PA: [Quote](#), [Profile](#), [Research](#)), Societe Generale SocGen (SOGN.PA: [Quote](#), [Profile](#), [Research](#)) or Credit Agricole (CAGR.PA: [Quote](#), [Profile](#), [Research](#)) lobbied against the creation of the post office bank because it was the only entity able to offer so-called Livret A savings accounts.

But since 2007 all banks can offer this account which offers tax benefits.

Chairman Patrick Werner said in a statement that 2008 would see a new boost for the group with a refreshed Internet site. Consumer credit sales were due to start in 2009 or 2010.

The bank also has several partnerships and can offer mortgages through the branch network of the MatMut mutual insurance group from CNP Assurances (CNPP.PA: Quote, Profile, Research), in which it has an indirect stake of some 17.5 percent. (Reporting by Marcel Michelson/Editing by Andrew Hurst)

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5. Belgium backs Qatar bid for postal meeting

Published: Friday, 4 April, 2008, 05:10 AM Doha Time

BELGIUM has pledged its support for Qatar's bid to host the World Postal Congress in 2012.

Belgium's Ambassador to Qatar, Guy De Lauwer, informed Q-Post chairman Ali Mohamed al-Ali of the decision when he visited the latter at his office yesterday. The ambassador lauded the Q-Post initiatives in hosting a number of events at the international, Arab and GCC levels for the improvement of postal services in the Universal Postal Union (UPU) member countries.

The ambassador hoped that with the experience gained from organising several significant postal events in the recent years, Qatar will be able to host the UPU postal congress in 2012.

De Lauwer also supported Q-Post's nomination to the UPU board at the forthcoming UPU conference in August.

The ambassador visited the Q-Post Philatelic Bureau and lauded the postal corporation's latest introduction – perfumed stamps and electronic postcards. This reflected the development of the Qatar, the ambassador stressed.

The CD postcard provides useful information and pictures on Qatar and is issued in six languages.

Thanking Belgium for its support to the Q-Post activities, al-Ali said the relations between the two countries had been growing steadily on various fronts in the last few years.

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Collected by Chairul Anwar, Bandung, Indonesia.

E-mail address : chairulanwar49@operamail.com, uyungchairul@plasa.com.