

POSTAL NEWS

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- 1. Global Dispatches: NZ Post swaps out Microsoft for Google Apps. July 27, 2009.**
- 2. Postal Service's Future: Mail Change Marches On. July 27, 2009.**
- 3. Postal Dept in talks with SBI, ICICI for infrastructure. July 27, 2009.**
- 4. TNT 2Q Net Pft Down 61%, Ups Savings, But Pays Dividend . July 27, 2009.**

1. Global Dispatches: NZ Post swaps out Microsoft for Google Apps

By Mike Bucken

July 27, 2009 12:01 AM ET

Computerworld -
NZ Post to Add Google Apps

WELLINGTON, New Zealand -- The Postal Services Group of New Zealand Post expects to save \$2 million Australian (\$1.6 million U.S.) by replacing its Microsoft Outlook, Exchange and perhaps SharePoint software with Google Inc.'s hosted Google Apps software.

The New Zealand Post unit awarded a contract to Google partner Fronde Systems Group Ltd. to roll out the Google Gmail, instant messaging, video chat, Google Docs and Sites services to its 2,100 workers.

Tracy Voice, general manager of business capability for the Postal Services Group, said the bulk of the savings will come from cuts in infrastructure costs.

Voice said that a 10-week proof-of-concept project allayed concerns about the security of the hosted systems.

— Rob O'Neill, Computerworld New Zealand

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2. Postal Service's Future: Mail Change Marches On

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Postmaster General John Potter says the U.S. Postal Service has trimmed 25,000 staffers this year as it deals with enormous deficits caused by falling demand for its services. The Postal Service employs 635,000 people, down from 800,000 in 1999.

Thousands of routes have been cut as volume has declined, but unlike the decreasing business and job cuts in other industries, these reductions are, in the long run, a good thing.

Ebbing volume at the Postal Service has two causes, one permanent and destined to increase, and the other temporary. The massive migration of communication to e-mail, cell phones, text messages and tweets will not be reversed, and fewer personal messages are likely to be sent on paper via snail mail each year.

Overall, the Postal Service is likely to shrink over time. While the transition will be difficult, the change will save resources over the long haul.

The Postal Service is expected to lose about \$6.5 billion this year. That's a serious problem because, unlike other government agencies, the Postal Service is by law supposed to be fully self-supporting.

MAIL VOLUME DECREASES

The Postal Service expects to handle about 170 billion items this year, 20 percent below the peak of 210 billion several years ago. As volume declines, so do economies of scale, and it becomes harder and harder for the Postal Service to break even.

Each route eliminated by combining carrier routes saves about \$100,000 per year and, in some cases, allows the elimination of a vehicle.

To increase savings further, Potter has also suggested to Congress that mail delivery be reduced from six days a week to five.

Technology and our dependence on it is getting more prevalent, not less. The volume of mail sent is going to continue to decrease.

Mail service is incredibly labor intensive. It burns up an extraordinary amount of fossil fuel and human labor, demands a tremendous number of vehicles and uses an awful lot of paper.

It will probably always exist in this country, because, while information can be sent via computer, objects cannot. Over time, though, that service will inevitably decline to five days a week and, eventually, to fewer days than that.

This all will be a change, and a big one, but it won't be a bad. In truth, e-mails and texts are better, cheaper, faster and more environmentally friendly ways to communicate in most cases. The sooner we stop depending on the Postal Service, the better off we will be.

3. Postal Dept in talks with SBI, ICICI for infrastructure

STAFF WRITER 18:39 HRS IST

New Delhi, Jul 27 (PTI) Department of Posts is in talks with State Bank of India and ICICI Bank for use of its vast post office infrastructure for rural banking.

"In rural areas, we wanted to sell gold coins as banking outlets. We are in talks with ICICI Bank if they want to avail our infrastructure for their expansion of their business", IT & Communications Minister A Raja said in Rajya Sabha while replying to the working of his Ministry.

For the loss-making rural post offices these would be a revenue generating mechanism.

He said Department of Post can also start saving bank accounts on behalf of State Bank of India.

However, he made it clear that this would not mean privatisation of the services.

"We are not going to privatise the postal services.

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JULY 27, 2009, 10:23 A.M. ET

**4. TNT 2Q Net Pft Down 61%, Ups Savings, But Pays Dividend **

AMSTERDAM (Dow Jones)--Postal and express group TNT NV (TNT.AE) Monday reported a steeper-than-expected 61% fall in second-quarter net profit as its Express unit continued to struggle, and upped its annual cost savings target, but said it would pay an interim dividend.

TNT said second-quarter net profit fell 61% to EUR81 million from EUR205 million a year earlier, missing analyst expectations of EUR96 million.

The Hoofdorp-based company said it has increased its EUR400 million savings program for 2009, and now aims to save EUR550 million to EUR600 million. So far, it has realized just EUR275 million.

Sales at its Express unit ...

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