

POSTAL NEWS

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1. Bangkok college helps regional services survive

By Wannapa Phetdee

The Nation

Published on August 31, 2009

Keith Wecker, headmaster of Bangkok International Preparatory and Secondary School, posed with students during the swimming class.

'Target customers change, so we must change' - director

With today's helter-skelter advances in electronic communications, it's not difficult for many people to believe the days of the postal business are numbered - because its customers are opting for modern, faster, more convenient forms of communication.

Not so, according to the AsianPacific Postal College (APPC), whose regional training centre is in Bangkok.

"Lots of people thought the postal business would die when telegrams came (to Thailand) many years ago. We don't think it will die. No matter what kind of technology is popular, we believe our target customers will change, and the postal business will never die," said APPC director Somchai Reopanickul, who is also director of the AsianPacific Postal Union (APPU).

When target customers change, marketing strategies need to be changed. But this alone is not enough. Postal officials need to adjust the way they work and increase their capacity, he said.

As a result, the APPC - which provides courses to develop the capacity of postal officials in 31 AsiaPacific countries - has come up with new courses to modernise participants' ideas and working procedures so the postal business can survive.

As well as serving AsiaPacific postal systems, the APPC also attracts course participants from other countries, such as South Africa, Egypt and Kuwait.

"The customer-to-customer form of communication has been reduced, but not business-to-customer communication. Direct mail, which companies use as a

communication channel with their customers, is still popular even though electronic advertisements are sent by email. Customers still want to see advertisements on paper, and paper can approach more customers.

"To be able to survive, we need to break into the ecommerce market. We are making use of ecommerce to persuade more and more companies to deliver their products to customers by post. 'Hybrid mail', which combines physical and electronic means, is another method of saving time and delivery costs," he said.

To send 'hybrid mail', text files, including names, addresses and the contents of such as invoices are sent via an electronic system and the text is printed on to paper at a terminal post office near the recipient's address.

Somchai said APPC had launched direct mail and advanced marketing courses to pass on directmail knowledge to postal officials. Information technology courses were launched a few years ago to educate postal officials on how they should make use of technology related to postal services. Postal financialservices courses will be available for postal officials at director and operator levels in October, and officials from the organisation's leastdeveloped member countries will be offered international postal services courses covering the Universal Postal Union Conventions, which are changed every four years. These courses will ensure that they don't face financial or qualityofservice problems as a result of changed regulations.

Somchai said, however, that adjusting strategies and work methods would not help postal services if their quality didn't create customer satisfaction.

"Quality of service is crucial. Our qualityofservice courses encourage postal workers to focus on this issue in order to compete with private companies."

Experts from highprofit postal organisations in Switzerland, France and Germany are invited to lecture postalcourse participants every year; Thailand Post officials and university lecturers who are skilled in the postal business also give lectures; and officials from the National Electronics and Computer Technology Centre teach them about information technology. Bank officials also share their financialservice experiences.

As well as theoretical knowledge, course participants also have to learn best practice onsite, in Thailand and in countries like Korea, Malaysia and Singapore.

"Taking training courses with us is an investment. I hope that our participants will be able to show they can work better and adopt given ideas in practice," he said.

More than 5,000 participants have taken courses at APPC since it was established in 1970, with Bangkok as a regional training centre. On average, 15 courses are provided each year.

2. SATO Print Engines Support Intelligent Mail Barcode

September 03, 2009

SATO, a pioneer in the Automatic Identification and Data Collection (AIDC) industry and a leader in barcode printing, labeling, and EPC/RFID solutions, announced today that SATO print engines now support the Intelligent Mail Barcode (IMB).

The Intelligent Mail Barcode is a new USPS barcode which will expand the ability of the postal service to track individual mail pieces. The IMB includes fields to identify the mailer, class of mail, special services and can uniquely number each piece of mail. It is a height modulated barcode with four vertical bar types – Full, Tracker, Ascender, and Descender.

The SATO M84Se Series, S84 Series, and Lt408 print engines now include the resident capability to print the Intelligent Mail Barcode.

Mailers can begin using the IMB now, although they are not required to until May 2011. Mailers who begin using IMB early may qualify for discounts as early as this Fall. Effective May 11, 2011, the USPS will impose penalties for non-compliance with the IMB regulations.

“Once again, SATO has stayed abreast of new compliance regulations and updated our print engines far in advance of the mandated date to better serve our customers and valued partners,” said Bob Lanzendorf, OEM sales & marketing manager at SATO America.

SATO – Delivering Best-In-Class for speed, performance, and value. SATO – leading the way with fully-functional, cost-effective printing solutions.

About SATO

SATO is a pioneer in the Automatic Identification and Data Collection (AIDC) industry and the inventor of the world’s first electronic thermal transfer barcode printer. It revolutionized the barcoding industry by introducing the Data Collection System (DCS) & Labeling concept – a total barcode and labeling solution providing high quality barcode printers, scanners/hand-held terminals, label design software and consumables. SATO is one of the first in the industry to introduce a complete, multi-protocol EPC-compliant, UHF RFID solution.

SATO is publicly listed on the first section of Tokyo Stock Exchange in Japan. It has worldwide offices in the United States, Belgium, France, Germany, Spain, United Kingdom, Poland, Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand and China. For the fiscal year ended March 31, 2009, it reported revenues of US \$776 million. More information about SATO Corporation can be found at www.sato.co.jp/english.

For more information about SATO America, visit www.satoamerica.com.

3. Now postal employees to learn ‘corporate culture’

Anupam Bhagria

Tags : ludhiana, postal

Posted: Monday , Sep 14, 2009 at 0336 hrs

After about 30 post offices in the state getting a facelift under the “Project Arrow,” the employees of the postal department will now undergo corporate orientation to have their communication skills with customers fine-tuned. Also, the customers will be provided opportunity to give their feedback to the top officials of postal department during their visit to the post office.

In Ludhiana, three posts offices have been covered under the project. These include the head post office at Bharat Nagar and post office at Model Town, and Central post office.

Sushil Kaushal, who is handling the Project Arrow in the city, said, “Under the “Project Arrow,” we have brought about many changes in these three post offices. The flooring has been re-done with office tiles, fancy lights have been installed, post offices have been white-washed and given a fresh look, so that the visitors may “see and feel” the difference between the old and the new. Also, all the counters providing different services at the post office have been computerised. Also at each counter, feedback forms will be made available which the customers will be requested to fill. The customers’ feedback will be compiled by the concerned post-master and then sent to Circle Office, Chandigarh, on daily basis.”

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4. Postal Service called federal crown jewel

Posted September 13, 2009 at 3 p.m.

I would like to remind a recent letter writer how efficient private industry is — let’s start with Enron, Bear Sterns, AIG, Bank of America, City Group, Chrysler, General Motors.

If not for the federal government stimulus plan, we would have the greatest depression in the history of our country.

Now the U.S. Postal Service: I have traveled to Europe, Canada, Mexico and South America, and I can tell you we have the best postal service in the world — and the cheapest. Americans are spoiled and take the postal service for granted.

When you take a vacation, your mail can be held in the post office for one month at no charge.

When you move, your first-class mail will be forwarded to your new address for one year at no charge. A letter can be sent to all 50 states, including Alaska and Hawaii, for 44 cents. What a bargain, the price of a candy bar!

Yes, the postal service could make huge profits — just raise the rates like private industry does — but the postal service is a service and keeps the rates low so everyone in America, rich and poor, can afford to send mail to friends and relatives and to pay their bills.

Every year, the postal service collects tons of food on postal routes and donates this food to charities for the poor.

We should all salute the postal service because it is the crown jewel of the federal government.

Leonard L. Weems

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5. Privatized postal service would cause big problems

By Letters to the Editor
September 13, 2009, 1:01AM

Thank you for your editorial (Aug. 25) regarding the impact post office closures have on communities and consumers.

Mail volumes reached their height in 2006, long after Americans began using e-mail and the Internet on a mass scale. The slump in mail volume since then is almost entirely due to a recession-driven decline in business mail.

The current financial bind for the United States Postal Service is directly related to the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006, which required the Postal Service to deposit \$75 billion over a 10-year period into a fund to guarantee payment of the employer's share of health care premiums for future retirees.

No other federal or private entity is required to pre-fund this obligation.

The increase in postage rates can be directly attributed to the growth of private sector mail processing networks which profit from workshare discounts.

This process has reduced postage for mailers at the expense of the consumer who purchases postage to mail letters and packages. These workshare discounts have exceeded the postal costs avoided.

The privatization of the postal service would end our nation's commitment to serve every American community; large or small, rich or poor, urban or rural at affordable, uniform rates. A privatized postal service would end the universal service now enjoyed by every American.

We must ensure that all Americans have equitable access to affordable mail service.

GINA MEADE
President
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American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

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