

POSTAL NEWS

No. 88/2010

**Formulated by UNI-Japan Post in cooperation with UNI-Apro,
ASPEK Indonesia and SPPI**

- 1. Improvement Of Postal Services And Recovery Of Roads To Be Armenian Transport Ministry's Top-Priority Focuses In 2011. Nov 15, 2010.**
- 2. U.S. Postal Service likely to go broke if no Congress action. Nov 15, 2010.**
- 3. Digital World: Lessons from the Israel Postal Company. Nov 15, 2010.**
- 4. Facebook launched a postal service. Nov 15, 2010.**

1. Improvement Of Postal Services And Recovery Of Roads To Be Armenian Transport Ministry's Top-Priority Focuses In 2011

YEREVAN, November 15. /ARKA/. Improvement of postal services and recovery of soviet-era roads will be among Armenian transport and communication ministry's top-priority focuses in 2011, Transport and Communication Minister Manuk Vardanyan said on Monday.

He gave a high mark to the railways reconstruction implemented by South Caucasus Railways.

“There are some faults. It can't be said that the railway area has reached great achievements, but it showed certain progress, compared with 2008 and 2009.” -0---
15/11/2010 22:28

000

2. U.S. Postal Service likely to go broke if no Congress action

Ngaiting Cheung Nov 15th, 2010 Finance. RSS 2.0.

USPS 150x150 U.S. Postal Service likely to go broke if no Congress actionThe U.S. Postal Service (USPS) announced a loss of \$8.5 billion in the fiscal year that ended in September. Officials said that the USPS will likely go bankrupt at the end of fiscal 2011 if Congress does not act to change its obligation.

The financial losses came from a drop in number of mail delivery demanded by 6 billion to 170.6 billion pieces in fiscal 2010, in addition to the USPS's obligation to pre-fund future retiree health benefits involving \$5.4 billion and using another \$2.5 billion to pay compensation insurance fund of the federal government's workers.

To deal with the \$15 billion line of credit, the USPS planned to deplete it with the U.S. Treasury by borrowing the remaining \$3.5 billion available, which means the USPS will go broke at the end of fiscal 2011 unless there is congressional action to change its obligation, official said.

The USPS has already cut 105,000 full-time jobs to reduce cost by more than \$9 billion over the past two years. However, the historic losses still occurred.

Postmaster General John E. Potter has proposed a series of reforms to Congress, including a change in policy that would allow the USPS leadership to set delivery schedules and routes and close post offices without Congressional approval. Also, he wants a rewrite of law that requires the USPS each year to pay about \$5 billion to pre-fund future retiree health benefits.

Responding to the USPS's call for congressional reforms, Rep. Darrell Issa (R-Calif.), who is set to lead the House committee overseeing postal affairs, urged the USPS to consider further cost cuts urgently.

"Congress has an obligation to ensure that effective solutions are implemented and taxpayers don't get stuck paying for a bailout," Issa said.

U.S. Postal Service likely to go broke if no Congress action

3 Comments for "U.S. Postal Service likely to go broke if no Congress action"

1.

Lostmechanic

November 15, 2010 - 12:03 pm

What bailout, the postal services income, comes solely from what postal customers pay for delivering their letters and packages? If it is such a good idea, and I think it is, that they, USPS, have to PRE-FUND their retirees health benefits then every company and all Government agencies should be required to do the same, never happen!!! The honorable Darrell Issa, how come the double standard, and if you are going to take over the committee overseeing the postal service maybe you should spend some time with the Postal Service so you can get your facts straight.

2.

shootfromthehip

November 15, 2010 - 2:40 pm

More of the same garbage I say. Why don't we start by making the system function like a private business, get rid of the fat cats and useless workers, jack the postage rates and make the remaining workers produce.

It's all too common that government run operations can't make it; let's face it without decent productivity at all levels, the ability to make changes and release the

redundant employee's/buildings/equipment, and the ability to charge according to costs and a reasonable surplus to cover future expenditures nothing, nobody and certainly no business can make it. Why would the USPS be any different?

Just another typical USA fail! Get with the times; get rid of the fat and produce.

There is no sense in flogging a dead horse.

We need mail service, but don't really need the American flag on it.

The USPS is just another force pulling the USA down the toilet!

The country was built on Capitalism (greed driven of course) but it certainly will not be sustained by sheer arrogance.

3.

Mark

November 16, 2010 - 9:54 am

This is looking more and more like an intentional systemic breakdown of the USPS that will eventually lead to privatization. Congress's failure to act(or more specifically, republican obstruction) has led to a failure to remedy what looks to be a political move to BK the USPS, the prefunding of the retiree health benefits.

Of the 8.5B USPS was down this year, 5.5B of it was the prefunded health requirements. And an additional 2.5B was related to workers compensation mandates. even if they fire every manager in the PO, it won't make a dent in the overall deficit.

So once the USPS runs it's course and needs money, Republicans will frame it as a Gov Bailout and push hard for privatization. Issa has already jumped the gun in doing so, beginning to set the groundwork for framing the bailout message.

The USPS made \$67B dollars last year, and private companies will do anything to get just a piece of that.

000

3. Digital World: Lessons from the Israel Postal Company

By DAVID SHAMAH

11/15/2010 22:39

If the Postal Company thought it could rake in a payday by charging NIS 35 for every package, a little consumer guerrilla warfare was called for.

There's a lesson in the brouhaha over the planned/attempted/ failed (depending on whom you believe) plan by the Israel Postal Company (formerly just the Post Office) to impose a fee of NIS 34.80 to NIS 38 (ditto on believing) on all packages/some packages/packages over a certain size and value (again ditto) sent from abroad. Actually, there are lessons, plural, telling us a lot about Israel, Israelis – and how the Internet really works.

First, the story, as it currently stands: Sometime last week, news reports began appearing in the Hebrew-language news sites (Yediot Aharonot, Nana, Mako, etc.) on a new, seemingly draconian edict: All packages arriving from abroad would be subject to new fees, due to “customs requirements.” Recipients of books and other items \$50 or less in value would pay NIS 38 in “processing fees,” while items valued at over \$50 would be charged a processing fee, customs payments and VAT. The move raised the ire of almost everyone, and it threatened to deal a death blow to Internet shopping for Israelis.

As the story developed, spokespeople for the Postal Authority said the change was “being forced on them” by the government; the Post Office is the next public company in line for privatization, and services it had received in the past from the government would now cost it money. One of those services that now had to be paid for, the spokespeople later said, was Customs Authority inspection of letters and packages. Apparently in the past, Customs had stationed staff at the Postal Authority’s intake facility, conducting whatever checks they needed to on the spot (the arrangement was due to a special act of the Knesset).

Now that the private Postal Company is to be in charge of the mail, it was decided that it would be unfair to provide the company with a service not given to private parcel companies, like UPS and Fedex. So, packages sent through the Postal Company would now require a payment of a “handling fee,” as the Postal Company now had to ship packages to Customs, pay them a service fee, etc. And now, all packages, not just those with a declared value of over \$100 (as had been the “custom” until now) would have to be inspected.

After a week of really bad press, the Post Office people finally clarified/relented/surrendered. On Sunday, the deputy head of the Postal Company, Herzl Bar-Mag, told Israel Radio that “there never was a plan to charge for packages from abroad.” Actually, that wasn’t quite the case: What he meant, he said, was that 90 percent of packages would be exempt.

The company later that day released “corrected” information in a press statement, and, as of this moment, the stated policy on packages is as follows: Packages with a declared value of \$50 or less (\$70 for clothing and books) that are shipped to Israel in parcels that weigh two kilograms or less will not be charged anything – no duties, no handling fees. The fees (but not customs charges) kick in only on packages larger than 2 kg. Packages valued at more than \$50 will be subject to all customs/fees, etc.

According to Bar-Mag, Postal Company statistics show that 90% of the packages sent to Israel, whether from friends/relatives or from shopping sites like eBay, Amazon and the ever-popular DealExtreme (which ships free and has a slew of items under \$2) would be exempt from any charges. And, by the way, he added, the fee is “only” NIS 35, not NIS 38. So, said Bar-Mag and the rest of the Post Office crew, the whole story was a tempest in a teapot – much ado about nothing.

Of course, none of us believe that. Anyone reading the talkbacks on the articles that appeared on this subject online would have been impressed at the fury normally compliant Israelis (when it comes to paying taxes and fees) displayed when their Internet shopping and shipping was threatened. Petitions were signed by tens of

thousands in a matter of days, Knesset members got into the act and choice “expletive deleted” were hurled at the postal people.

What got the Postal Company to back down? The question assumes that there really had been a plan to impose the charges and that the company changed its mind after seeing the Internet outrage. I rather think it was because of one particular tactic suggested by many talkbackers. If the Postal Company thought it could rake in a payday by charging NIS 35 for any and every package, a little consumer guerrilla warfare was called for: Order lots of 99-cent items from DealExtreme, and “forget” to pick them up from the Post Office. By “donating” ten bucks, tens of thousands of Israelis could gum up the works in the Customs office, thus showing the “authorities” what happens when they mess with irate consumers.

That’s the story, in a nutshell – and here are the lessons (IMHO, YMMV and all other usual disclaimers apply):

- **Internet Ignorance:** The Postal Company claims this week that its plan all along was to exempt packages 2 kg. and under from the charge. But last week’s stories that claimed all packages would be checked and charged seemed to include copious comments from Postal Company officials. Like any other large business in this country, they no doubt have an official spokesperson who is supposed to stay on top of stories – or inaccuracies, if that was the case. Don’t they use Twitter over there? And if not, I think I see a job opening for a social-media consultant looking for work!
- **Net journalism needs work:** What applies to the Postal Company applies double to the news websites that spread the story. The first story on the charges appeared on Yediot Aharonot’s website on November 7 – and it took until November 14 for a media rep (from Reshet Bet) to get one of the Postal Company’s people on the phone. For all I know, of course, the company was inundated with queries from journalists and bloggers on November 8, but I tend to think that this was not the case.

How do I know? Because of the discrepancy in figures: It’s one thing to say a fee is being charged, but every story listed the wrong fee, NIS 38, instead of the actual fee, NIS 34.80. Notice the similarity in those numbers? I could see how a hasty conversation/copy and paste from a website in the initial story could supply the wrong number in the first story, but for that number to still remain as the “official” fee later in the week means that nobody bothered to check with the Postal Company. Whether they backed off on imposing the fee on 2 kg. and smaller packages because of consumer protests is an open question, but I’m pretty sure the fee was NIS 34.80 from the start.

Having worked in both net and print journalism, I am pretty sure a story with an inaccurate number would never have gotten past the editor – probably even the first time, for sure the second time – in a print publication, if there had been no Internet story first. The editor would have made us call up and check the information (the stories that appeared in the print media were basically reporting on the fees AND the net outrage; that actual “investigative journalism” work belonged to the websites that broke the stories).

- Power of the Internet: Talkbacks have an impact, the web as the new public square, yadda yadda. Those are the obvious points, of course, but perhaps a less obvious point is one on the psyche of Israelis. The fee story shows that they can quickly mobilize on an issue when they really feel pain – meaning that they haven't felt the pain when they don't mobilize en masse for a cause, no matter how worthy it is.

That's a lesson politicians might take to heart, and it should be a source of comfort if (may it never come) we are faced with a truly serious national emergency. As for us, the real lesson is – you have until December 31 to take advantage of the old rules. Shop now!

digital.newzgeek.com

000

4. Facebook launched a postal service

Posted: 15 November 2010 by Anton

Facebook launched a postal service Facebook will launch its own postal service, code-named Project Titan, which many call the "killer Gmail». The new project at risk of becoming world's most popular email services, as Facebook has half a billion users.

The social networking site Facebook on Monday will present its own postal service, code-named Project Titan at a press conference, Facebook, reports TechCrunch citing its source.

as the publication suggests, Project Titan - this is more than an updated service messedzhinga existing social networks. Project Titan will receive a full functionality, including access to the user's mailbox. Moreover, the user can open the box on the e-mail clients such as Mozilla Thunderbird or Microsoft Outlook. In addition, it can be synchronized with other mailboxes, and various mobile devices.

new service experts have dubbed "killer Gmail», because it can divert a large number of users with email service Gmail, because the number of Facebook users has more than half a billion. However, under the blow could fall, and other email providers.

According to Comscore in the summer of 2009, the main provider of postal services in the Internet is a Microsoft Hotmail service to 343 million monthly users, Yahoo and Gmail accounts were the second and third places respectively with 285 million and 146 million users.

introduced its service, Facebook can make good money on contextual advertising.

After all, a social network "knows" all about friends and how close they communicate with each other. This allows us to find out what personal letters will be read faster than most, and arrange them by priority, respectively. In addition, it shows what kind of advertising on user will be able to pay attention.

note that competition between Facebook and Google have recently become increasingly fierce, especially after last week Facebook banned Google to use address books of users Gmail.

Now Google allows its users to exchange information about their contacts with only those websites that provide two-way integration of the contact lists of users. Experts

say the policy change Google's data export is directed primarily against the social networking site Facebook.

Note that the Google services to provide the data of its users to third-party developers through a special interface (API). Sites, including Facebook, using it to enable users to automatically import your contacts from the service Gmail, and quickly find any friends to their email contacts.

Tags: Facebook, work, postal, service

000

Collected by Chairul Anwar, Bandung, Indonesia.

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