

POSTAL EXPRESS & LOGISTICS NEWSLETTER

Postal Innovation Platform

The New Normal



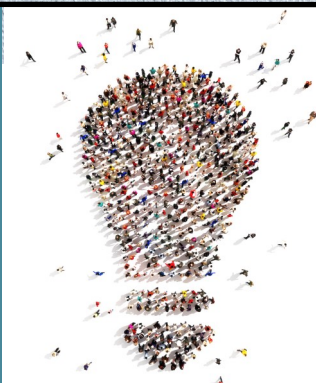
Maneuvering **COVID-19**
through uncertain times

POSTAL
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**Postal & Logistics
Innovation Startup Award**
at Parcel+Post Expo

Call for Submissions

Find out more in this newsletter on p25



Upcoming Webinar

**Artificial Intelligence (AI) -
opportunities & challenges**

23 June 2020, 2 - 3:15 pm CEST

(14h00 - 15h15 Swiss time)

Find out more on p24

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Postal Express & Logistics Newsletter | This newsletter provides original analysis, information and opinions on current issues. Opinions are the sole responsibility of the author(s).

the Postal Innovation Platform (PIP) is an open platform and forum which focuses on innovative postal services and studies the future of the postal industry with a solution oriented approach. It provides a conference, think tank and research platform that is unique in the postal world and shall ease the implementation of new and innovative postal business solutions.

Letters | We do publish letters from readers. Please include a full postal address and a reference to the article under discussion. The letter will be published along with the name of the author and country of residence. Send your letter (maximum 450 words) to the editor-in-chief. Letters may be edited.

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Editorial

by Bernhard Bukovc



New realities have been established and nothing will be as it was before. Covid-19 has changed the world and our society as we have known it for many decades. Some people say that it is a chance and opens opportunities. Let us not be mistaken. This crisis is a tragedy and a disaster. If anything, it can open eyes and make governments and businesses aware of how important digital transformation and innovation are.

Were governments and postal operators prepared for the challenges which emerged in this crisis? Yes and no. Those that coped best with the problems were those entities which are more innovative, and which have already adopted a digital transformation strategy. This of course also applies to postal, express and logistics companies. It is remarkable how well postal operators adapted to the crisis and provided excellent services. It became not only apparent that postal and logistics providers played a key role in mastering the crisis and in providing necessary solutions and a global network, it became also clear how important it is to have systems in place that can cope with the various challenges. Digitization, automation as well as modern and efficient structures, processes and operations became crucial.

In addition, postal operators that were struggling to define their roles in the new postal and logistics ecosystem with a society which has different needs and requirements than the societies ten or twenty years ago could (re-)identify some of their key USPs. eCommerce growth has already shown how important it is to be close to customers and offer them convenience and services tailored to their needs on the last mile. Most companies still have a long way to go to offer customer centric services and solutions. During the crisis, the delivery of goods suddenly moved to the center of managing the crisis itself. It was often the only means to receive some goods because most commerce was closed. Even if it was possible to buy the goods in stores that were allowed to stay open, people often chose to not take any risks and preferred home delivery. For elderly citizens this was anyway the safest and most desirable way. Postal, express and logistics providers were and still are essential in providing a basic and secure infrastructure.

What does this mean for the wider industry for the months and years ahead?

First, I believe that the discussion of basic infrastructure will be led differently in the future. Our societies have a need for certain essential infrastructure, services and solutions. However, this does not mean that we have to fall back into universal services debates which often reflect a dogmatic instead of realistic perception of what society needs. Instead, what is needed are efficient services and solutions, driven by digitization and automation as well as innovative products and services which are customer centric. For most cases, markets will perfectly provide for these services. For a limited number of selected essential needs, a cooperation between governments and service providers can develop and provide respective solutions. In some countries postal operators provide social services, such as services for elderly. This could become an increasingly important pillar and provide a good basis for a cooperation between posts and their governments.

Many postal and logistics companies have realized that their systems and operational processes are not up to speed to cope with the challenges. Strategies will show a stronger push for digital transformation, automation and customer centric services. Most postal, express and logistics companies have already done a lot in this area, but equally a lot still needs to be done.

Governments were often quite lost in this crisis. They need strong partners. Several postal operators have already understood that a strong cooperation with government entities is beneficial for both parties, the governments as well as the posts. Postal operators can offer access points, administration of selected government services and can be an intermediary between governments, citizens and businesses. In times of crisis this can become vital and can help to manage the crisis in a better and more efficient way. In normal times, the partnership can add to more efficient government processes and offer citizens and businesses easier access to government services.

Also, the Postal Innovation Platform (PIP) has adapted its services and activities to the “new normal”. It is more important than ever to exchange on new technologies, innovation and best practice, to look into solutions and products, discuss with peers the experiences and accelerate the drive for digital transformation and innovation.

Together with our partner Swiss Post we have decided to organize a series of webinars in which we invite postal, express and logistics companies as well as suppliers and startups to present innovative solutions and products around topics which were suggested by our partners.

On 22 April we organized our first webinar which focused on “Enhancing the Value of Parcels & Packaging”. On 26 May we discussed opportunities regarding “Access to Postal Services - offline & online”. Our next webinars will be “Artificial Intelligence (AI) – opportunities & challenges” on 23 June

Please join us for these webinars and get involved. If you want to suggest topics for the future or if you want to contribute, e.g. with a use case, just let me know.

In this newsletter you will find articles and interviews reflecting on some key developments and trends in the postal, express and logistics industry. **Michel Heck** from DHL's innovation team shares insights into recent DHL research on packaging innovation (“Rethinking Packaging” report).

I have talked with **Candan Sunyüz** of Turkish Post Ptt and Chairwoman of the Postal Union for the Mediterranean (PUMed) and **Manale Azar** of Liban Post, Secretary General of PUMed. PUMed has developed over the recent years into an important player for innovation and cooperation in the Mediterranean region and both share insights into activities and projects that are responsible for the organization's success.

Covid-19 will continue to be the most important event with which postal, express and logistics companies will have to cope for years to come. How they can approach the problems and how they can master the situation will be analyzed by **Rodrigo Medgenberg**, Chief Sales Officer at Escher Group.

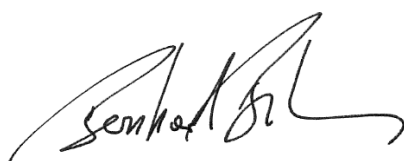
Matthias Finger, Professor and Chair Management of Network Industries at EPFL and Director for the transport area at the Florence School of Regulation presents some thoughts on Logistics-as-a-Service and analyses its practicalities and feasibility.

Paul Donohoe, responsible for Digital Economy at the Universal Postal Union (PUMed) discussed with me a recent UPU report on “Digital Economy and Digital Postal Economy” and its main conclusions.

Adam Houck, Managing Consultant at IBM in Strategy and Analytics, presents findings and thoughts on how COVID will change the postal and logistics industry.

Kate Muth, executive director of the International Mailers' Advisory Group (IMAG) shares insights and views on the rate changes that will heavily impact shipments to and from the US and what this means for eCommerce merchants and other large shippers.

Enjoy reading this new edition of our newsletter !



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Interview with Adam Houck* on the impact of Covid-19 on our society and posts



Covid-19 will have a huge impact on the postal industry. We cannot see the full implications yet, but will the crises accelerate the letter mail decline and possibly also have a negative effect on the parcels business?

I'll start with letters. The data shows accelerated declines are happening globally, which is not surprising. History shows that in times of economic decline, these volumes all but disappear.

I think the matter of how and if volumes recover is twofold. In the short-term, what role can marketing mail play during the restart period that could assist in their recovery; and what assistance can posts offer to small businesses? Longer term, so much depends on the shape of the economic recovery. You will have two effects: (1) Income effects – as the global economy will likely be on a long, slow recovery with continued recession in sight for the foreseeable future, general economic conditions will dampen demand for advertising mail. (2) Substitution effects – advertisers and bill payers will continue to shift toward more efficient and cheaper mediums. Together, these are a recipe for a very poor outlook for letter mail products, even if significant pricing/incentive structures are changed that encourage business mailers to increase volumes.

It is a very different question for parcels. I don't see much negative effect on the parcels business, if you are measuring against pre-COVID times. In the near-term, I think we will see a marginal decline in the volume of parcels when stay-at-home restrictions are lifted. However, as we have now moved to a new baseline where people will likely continue to order more e-commerce goods even after COVID, parcel volume growth will continue long-term. At some point the challenge will shift to delivery capacity and determining how citizens and businesses will be served in a post-COVID world. There will likely be strong incentives for partners to better collaborate and 'share' capacity in the first and last mile.

Have posts been ready to cope with this situation and how are they doing currently?

I'd say the evidence suggests posts have done a wonderful job responding to the crisis thus far. Mail is moving. Parcels are being delivered. Service impacts/delays have occurred which is not surprising. More tonnage of container ships was idled around the world in late February (which seems like a lifetime ago) than during the global financial crisis. People forget that 80% of the world's goods trade volume is carried via sea freight. The vast reductions in available cargo and passenger airline capacity forced posts to adjust operations and seek alternatives to move mail. Posts have been forced to balance the trade-offs that include shifting volumes to slower transit modes, paying higher per kilogram rates, and reducing network visibility. Given the extreme challenges faced, posts have done an outstanding job.

It is also worth looking at Amazon's performance to understand what is happening globally. Their earnings report on 4/30 confirmed what most thought would happen: that parcel demand and volumes would be significantly higher and that operating in this environment would come at remarkable cost. As economies restart and transport capacity increases, some of the operational pressures and constraints will abate. I'd guess, however, that even in an environment with historically low oil prices that the price to operate will still exceed pre-COVID levels.

Are there also some opportunities for the postal sector?

I'm convinced there are opportunities well beyond the traditional 'increased parcel volumes can translate to greater first and last mile volumes for posts.' This is much too narrow; let me explain.

* IBM Global Postal Practice Leader, Academy of Technology Leadership Team

First, we need to think in the aggregate about the supplies of goods to be moved in localities, and any available capacity to move those goods. 'Goods' can mean just about anything. We need to consider what roles posts can play with non-traditional partners and how to use collaborative logistics across all partners to match this needed supply with demand. Some of the opportunities might require a re-tooling of physical networks to provide the intra-day flexibility to deliver the requirements of ship-from-store models.

I'm not advocating posts redesign their physical networks simply to capture hyper-local delivery demand. I am, however, suggesting these current and post-COVID opportunities warrant significant consideration to redefine the elemental role posts can play in society.

We also need to concede that no one understands how the world will look after COVID. Therefore, in a world where there are no answers, we need to ask the right questions that will shape our approach going forward. I'll give you an example.

One question I keep pondering is 'how will contactless payment and transaction technologies influence the future?' Here in the U.S., signature verification is required for certain shipments such as alcohol. That verification process has been suspended during COVID. I'm curious how these verifications will occur in the future, utilizing the available technologies of the day?

I don't know the answers. I do know that the flexibility and agility observed by businesses has been remarkable and I believe posts have similar capabilities. Yesterday, businesses were making automobiles. Today, those same businesses are finding new ways to create PPEs, ventilators, and other medical supplies. COVID has revealed we are much more flexible than we originally thought.

Which are the strengths of postal companies that can turn out to play a significant role during, but also in the time after this crisis?

I think the strengths lie in two dimensions: ubiquity and the essential role posts play in society. Combining those elements yields significant potential.

The size and scope of the physical postal infrastructures is formidable. Posts should use their physical networks of assets (such as trucks, buildings, and employees) to contribute to both the recovery and well into the future. The goal should be to experiment and identify roles that aid in the development of 'smart cities' during quarantine, during the res-

tart, and long after the crisis.

This relates back to the essential role posts play in society and their declining financial positions. While parcels have become a growth area for posts prior to and during COVID, they do not compensate for the loss of traditional mail revenue. To continue funding their delivery networks in the face of declining volumes, posts must continue to explore related markets for products and services that leverage existing assets, have preexisting demand, and provide additional revenue streams. These services can use postal infrastructures, including the retail and delivery network, to better provide a variety of services including social security payments, licenses, paying taxes, and welfare.

Posts and governments should collaborate on how to best use and repurpose publicly owned assets to improve citizen life. Indeed, there have been many tragedies resulting from COVID. One positive outcome has been the ability for businesses under duress to explore new ways to deliver for their customers. I see the world's posts having the same potential today and well into the future.

Posts re-discover some of their key advantages compared to other competitors. How can this influence their strategy for the coming years? What changes or key developments can we expect for the postal industry as a consequence of Covid-19?

This is such a difficult question. I think COVID has changed the way people think about essential services. I would argue, for example, society now believes that parcel delivery is very much an essential service.

If we consider how we would be living through stay-at-home orders without the growth of both e-commerce and last mile services, we could be in a much worse place. Think for a moment about how much more challenging things like food delivery services could be had we not already built out the capacity from Uber Eats, Doordash, and Grubhub. Think about how much more difficult it could be to stay at home during COVID. Because of these last mile services, people were able to more easily and safely transition to staying at home while enjoying doses of 'normalcy' each day.

As a result, people are reconsidering the role posts play in providing essential services. They are also questioning their willingness to pay more for postal and delivery services. In some way, this has to influence and shape the policy debate about postal regulation and reform.

I would like to believe posts and delivery companies are already evaluating how to serve as better partners. COVID has taught us many things. One important lesson is the businesses who could quickly adjust operational models, scale to meet both increasing and decreasing demand, and find new ways to deliver value to customers, are succeeding. Posts play an important role as these changes occur. They need to be leading from the front, pushing for greater collaboration and partnering to raise the overall level of welfare in society for the prosperous times, not just the dire.

Interview with **Adam Houck**

IBM Global Postal Practice Leader

Academy of Technology Leadership Team

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Interview with Paul Donohoe*

Key success factors for Posts to advance on digital transformation



In the past, digital services were often seen as a threat to postal services because they accelerated the decline in mail volume. This has changed, and most posts have grasped the opportunities and embrace new technologies. What triggered this change?

Customers are now digital communicators and consumers and demand access to relevant and up to date information digitally. To meet these demands, Posts had to provide this information – track and trace, postal office locations, hours, etc.. These days, customers and partners expect interactive and intelligent services to complement the physical.

As well, the reduction of cost of technology through partnerships and cloud technology increased the pace of the digital transformation of Posts.

Over the past 10 years, all industries have undergone a digital transformation, moving towards digital integration with their suppliers and partners. The Posts faced this evolution, at a time when new entrants were expanding their offers across the value chain based upon a digital platform capability – eg. E-commerce platforms are moving into logistics. So Posts had to adapt and innovate to remain relevant.

According to UPU research, 80% of Posts have diversified their services into digital to remain relevant in the marketplace, and to attempt to leverage Posts image and reputation as a provider of trust in the digital space. From our research, the top drivers for Posts to launch digital services are related to three strategic objectives:

- Leveraging competencies: to create and exploit "synergies between e-services and their other activities".
- Diversification: the overwhelming majority of Posts say that they are looking to diversify into digital services to stay relevant and to help them generate new revenue to compensate for the decline in mail revenue.
- Protecting and strengthening the core business: Posts use digital services to protect market share, respond to competitive threats, enter new markets before competitors, add value to the core business, and lower the cost of providing access to information.

A call to action: increase the pace of digital transformation

From our research, 73% of Posts indicate that they have increased their investment in digital postal services over the past 5 years. Therefore, it is clear that the digital postal services landscape will continue to evolve in many directions.

Posts are, therefore, at an inflection point: they need to adapt to remain relevant, competing with digital native companies in different areas of their product portfolio. To be able to meet the market demands effectively, Posts need to speed up the digitalization of their products. Posts should continue to open digital channels to increase participation in e-commerce, e-payments, and e-government. A holistic approach towards collaborating with global platforms, financial services, and governmental institutions requires digital services to exchange information. Posts that have not fully digitalized need to do so urgently, or risk being unsuitable as relevant service providers for e-government, e-commerce, and e-finance services.

* Manager, Digital Economy and Trade Programme at Universal Postal Union

Recently the UPU published a new report on "The Digital Economy and Digital Postal Activities - a Global Panorama" which researches the digitization as well as digital opportunities of the postal ecosystem. What are the three most remarkable findings? What role do e-services, e-commerce, or e-government play in today's postal ecosystem?

Every two years, the UPU Digital Economy Team gathers deep insights on the development of digital services from over 210 designated operators within the 192 member countries. The report, which is based on survey results, provides a snapshot of e-services development in UPU member countries, and covers:

- The development of digital postal services in UPU member countries and their posts;
- The development and strategic importance of digital postal services at a global level over time (collected over 10 years);
- The impact of possible barriers and trends affecting the development of digital postal services;
- A framework for digital postal services strategies



Posts are essential digital inclusion players. A significant percentage of Posts (93% of Posts who responded to the survey) provide digital postal services, either directly or in partnership with other companies. Posts are comparatively well-positioned to provide e-government, e-commerce, and e-finance services to populations that tend to be excluded, such as women, the poor, the less well educated, and those in the informal economy.

Over the past five years, digital postal services have seen uninterrupted growth. The global spread of digital postal services measured in the survey has expanded during the period 2015-2019. E-government grew to over 53% in 2018 for industrialized countries, whereas in the Arab region, 43% of Posts offer E-government services. There is still room for development in Africa and Latin America where less than 20% of Posts are offering these services. There is a significant strategic opportunity for e-government services to complement the vast postal network.

When it comes to E-Commerce, the provision of e-commerce services such as online shops and marketplaces for their products as well as for SME products has significantly expanded. Integration of postal web services with e-merchants' sites using API services, across the UPU regions is also on the rise. Again African Posts have less activity in this space, which is also related to the nascent general e-commerce development in the region. We expect our next research to be released later this year to indicate a growth in this area in Africa as it is now the fastest-growing region for e-commerce.

Mobile e-services apps: Industrialized countries are early adopters of mobile applications for digital postal services, representing more than a quarter of the global total, followed by Europe and CIS, Asia-Pacific, and Africa. In terms of regional distribution in adopting mobile phone technology, no region appears to be far behind. Postal operators in the Arab and Latin America and Caribbean countries are also increasingly utilizing mobile app technology in their e-services. Despite smartphones being relatively expensive, and low mobile Internet penetration rates acting as a barrier to the adoption of mobile apps, interestingly, regional Posts in Africa are increasingly adopting mobile apps in their digital postal services.

Key success factors for Posts to advance on digitalization

Our study identified four critical factors which make the Post uniquely positioned, but which need to be reinforced:

- Complementing post offices with new digital services to enhance universal inclusion: The postal network worldwide comprises over 661,000 post offices, with 1.4 million postal workers: men and women providing last-mile services daily to all.

- **Partnerships:** Posts have transitioned from traditional postal administrations to corporations that have to balance their social contract and financial sustainability. To advance their digitalization, 70% of Posts indicate they are building partnerships with private companies and startups to innovate, be agile, share the risk, and reduce financial burdens.
- **Alignment with government's digital strategies:** To recognize the postal network as a tool for advancing digital inclusion: Posts must seek to be part of regional and national digital strategies where their role can be acknowledged, and resources mobilized.

The key conclusion is that postal networks can be an integral part of discussions in which governments, policymakers design strategies for fostering digital inclusion. This will lead to a more sustainable and profitable outlook going forward for Posts.

The UPU technology radar identifies trends that need to be further monitored and researched by posts and the UPU. Can you tell us which trends stand out and why?

My team is currently looking at the most recent analysis of the 2020 Postal Technology Radar research. This barometer of the most influential technology trends in the postal sector gives an interesting insight into the critical issues in the minds of Posts. The last radar identified handheld and mobile devices, digital payment technologies, Big data, Internet of Things, and Cybersecurity as the key issues, and these turned out to be on-point with developments over the past few years. We these still to be top of mind while also expecting blockchain technologies to join them as the technology trends for the coming year. The latest radar will be available in time for Parcel+Post Expo 2020.

Digital services change the way posts are providing their services or doing business. Do current government or regulatory policies reflect this change? What needs to happen in this respect?

The digital transformation of Posts not only depends on technology but also requires a comprehensive approach from Governments and regulators. In an increasing number of countries, the Post

is considered in national digital strategies – in recent months, both Ghana and Nigeria have announced new digital economy policies and plans with the Post as a key stakeholder. This is encouraging, and due recognition of the essential role Posts play in binding societies together across the country. While in many countries this awakening is occurring from the regulatory perspectives, the UPU has recently prepared some recommendations for further study by policymakers. The following proposals form the core of innovative ways of approaching a new framework:

- **Stakeholder engagement forums:** Public hearings, high-level roundtables and expert workshops, hackathons, can allow pooling resources and expertise to inform major regulatory decisions;
- **E-commerce regulations:** Establish the legal remedy for disruption created by e-commerce platforms, e.g., addressing competition issues;
- **A whole-of-government approach:** Collaboration among regulatory agencies can ensure consistency of the new regulatory framework with other regulatory frameworks, such as those on consumer rights customs, data protection, freight transport, and security of goods;
- **Regional and international cooperation:** Strengthen the institutional framework for ensuring cooperation between Posts and coherent implementation and application of the regulatory framework;
- **Regulatory Impact Assessment:** Enhanced with new benchmarks and data analysis, this allows for better decision making and should be introduced as a regular practice before major regulatory decisions are made, as well as throughout the regulatory lifecycle.

It is essential to create an environment that provides opportunities to stakeholders in different locations and areas of society to ensure a level playing field. A whole-of-government approach can alleviate the burden of inclusion, compliance, and enhance the competitiveness of the e-commerce market across all territories, countries, and regions.

Policymakers are encouraged to work together to ensure a framework that:

- Provides flexibility to adapt to changing technology services and evolving customer expectations;

- Enables e-commerce to deliver benefits to consumers, society and the economy;
- Is technologically viable to implement in practice;
- Address cross-sectorial issues – a whole of government approach;
- Provides clarity and reliability for consumers, citizens, and postal operators.

COVID-19 is changing our society, and Posts play a crucial role in keeping 'things going'. E-commerce is a vital pillar of supply, and posts are needed to provide this key supply function. Not all people can be easily reached; many don't even have an address. What can the UPU do in order to enable posts to perform their key role in society?

During this COVID-19 time, there has been an increase in e-commerce, which is particularly evident in online sales of medical supplies, household essentials, and food products. Faced with lockdown, social distancing, and store closures, consumers turned to online and mobile shopping to buy groceries, daily necessities, and other products. A recent European study shows that a double-digit share of online shoppers was buying more digitally due to COVID-19, and some of them used e-commerce for the first time during the outbreak.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led organisations and industries to accelerate digital transformation. What was planned as strategic development over 5 years, has been implemented in a matter of weeks to continue to do business. The Post had to evaluate which technologies can help them to not only keep operating during the period of social distancing but also to come out of the crisis at something like full speed

Along with the growth in e-commerce related deliveries, there was also a similar growth of 30% in digital services utilization. As social distancing kept many from visiting post outlets, Posts found their digital channels were more heavily utilized. COVID-19 has shown that digital services will play a key role in driving a more meaningful transformation of postal organizations. The fallout of the crisis will likely show that companies that were further along the road with things like cloud adoption and digital transformation, in general, were best positioned to withstand this kind of event.

As a critical infrastructure, the postal network is being used by many governments to provide additional social, financial, and business and trade sup-

port services to society during COVID-19 times. Posts offer a lifeline to those stuck at home who need access to medicines, food and cash, and to businesses to be able to continue to trade. The UPU has prepared case studies to showcase these services. These can be found at <http://www.upu.int/en/activities/postal-social-financial-and-trade-services-during-covid-19/about-postal-social-financial-and-trade-services-during-covid-19.html>

The UPU has several technical assistance and capacity building projects to enable Posts to keep performing this key e-commerce role: Digital Readiness for E-commerce, Operational Readiness for E-commerce, Payments Readiness for E-commerce and Sustainability Readiness for E-commerce. All of them detailed in our recent "UPU E-commerce Guide" publication, available on the UPU website at <http://www.upu.int/en/activities/e-commerce/publications.html>.

Going forward, the questions arise of whether the experiences from the COVID-19 pandemic will propel more consumers to change their behavior and patterns and increasingly resort to online services and purchases, and whether governments will prioritize and invest more in e-commerce and online-facilitating infrastructure and policies.

If this is the case, how will Postal services be implicated in these changes and respond and adapt to this accelerated digital economy playbook?

Interview with Paul Donohoe, Digital Economy and Trade Programme at Universal Postal Union
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Postal Union of the Mediterranean (PUMed)



Candan Senyüz *



Manale Azar *

Interview with Ms Candan Senyüz, Chairwoman of the Postal Union of the Mediterranean (PUMed) Board of Directors, and Ms Manale Azar, Secretary General of PUMed

PUMed has been growing constantly over the past few years and has implemented numerous projects and initiatives in the Mediterranean region. Could you explain a bit about the Postal Union of the Mediterranean and its objectives?

Candan

The Postal Union for the Mediterranean (PUMed) is a UPU Restricted Union established in Rome in 2011. It counts currently 22 active members composed of designated operators which are members of the Arab Permanent Postal Commission and PostEurop, two Restricted Unions surrounding the Mediterranean.

A new board was elected in November 2019 for the cycle 2020-2022. It's composed of 10 members, 5 from the European side and 5 from the Arab side.

For more information about the PUMed, it's possible to visit the website at the link <https://euromed-postal.org/>

Manale

In its mission statement, PUMed announces to "defend and promote the collective interests of its Members in the Euro-Mediterranean zone, to represent them collectively before international organizations, (...), to strengthen network integration and the inter-operability of services, (...)."

In fact, as global economy is evolving with digitalization and new technologies, Posts are making their own way to adapt to the changing climate. While the volumes of conventional postal services are decreasing globally, Posts reform their organizational and legal structure, improve their competitiveness, enter new sectors, expand their range of

services in order to recover and increase their revenues. This transformation process affects inevitably PUMed member countries.

Does its mission include postal regulation?

Candan

Indeed, PUMed does not aim to work or act at a postal regulatory level as not to duplicate the mission of the two other restricted unions to whom its members belong (Arab Permanent Postal Committee and PostEurop) but PUMed is committed in its Strategy to cover the aspects of *Globalization, Digitalization, Competitiveness and Sustainability* at a commercial and operational levels. Within this scope, PUMed devotes itself to continuously adapt and enhance its activities and projects to reach the financial and commercial objectives of its members while respecting the global regulation.

The membership has been growing constantly over the past few years. Is participation in the various activities limited to the region and its members?

Manale

PUMed is open to welcome, as community partners, other postal operators from outside the region as well as international organizations. These partners would have the reach to 22 postal operator's decision makers and would have the opportunity to conclude directly with them initiatives for their mutual benefits.

PUMed is also working on concluding partnership with PRIME Group aiming to leverage the quality of service within the Euromed's region. Different alternatives are under evaluation for the moment whether a special bonus scheme or a special SLA, in order to improve the e-commerce exchange among the Euromed countries and from-to outside the region.

Candan Senyüz, Chairwoman of PUMed
Manale Azar, Secretary General of PUMed

PUMed has become a driver for innovation and exchange of know-how and expertise in the wider Mediterranean region and the Postal Innovation Platform (PIP) has established strong ties with PUMed and its members.

Candan

PIP is a major partner of the PUMed. Indeed, the new board agreed to consider the postal innovation topic within its events calendar and PIP was named to support the objectives of this topic.

The Postal Innovation Platform (PIP) has been cooperating with PUMed for several years. This cooperation included so far the organization of a workshop, co-organization and planning of conferences, key-note speeches, conference moderation etc. PUMed and PIP is now bringing this cooperation to a new level, strengthening the partnership and allowing better planning and organization. PUMed will be organizing in close cooperation with PIP its annual conference and workshop by moderating those events and by bringing other partners on board which would provide additional value.

Beside the conferences, workshops and innovation competitions you are also implementing projects and initiatives which shall help the posts from the wider region to strengthen their cooperation and grasp revenue opportunities. Can you share some information about these initiatives and projects?

Manale

PUMed works to increase interaction among its members to ensure an efficient, reliable, accessible and affordable quality service within the region. It obviously acknowledges that taking action with a new global vision is prerequisite to achieve this goal.

Accordingly, under the umbrella of the PUMed, projects such as the creation of an International Postal Hub in Malta to convey mail items issued by ecommerce suppliers in the USA and other European countries to destinations such as Lebanon which is not supported logistically by their related e-marketplaces.

Candan

Another main project under development is the creation of a joint Euromed ecommerce marketplace aiming to expose articles locally produced from different countries in an interconnected manner so to provide additional reach to the SMEs and

VSMEs. It's a social corporate responsibility initiative taking profit from the integrated postal network different aspects: reach, commercial, logistics, financial.

PUMed is also proud of its philately activities. PUMed member countries issue on yearly basis a joint stamp holding a Mediterranean theme. This year's topic is "Traditional Gastronomy in the Mediterranean". A stamps booklet product is also under construction grouping the yearly stamps issues from all countries. Those philately projects have an interesting return on investment at all levels for the member countries: cultural but also commercial and financial. Another interesting philatelic activity is the annual online contest to elect the most beautiful Euromed's stamp. Following the online contest that gathered around 8000 public votes from 84 different countries, 2019 edition declared LaPoste, France stamp "Le Costume de l'Arlésienne" as the winning stamp

Key activities of PUMed have always been its conferences, workshops and seminars.

Candan

This is correct. PUMed plans and coordinates yearly conferences or workshops for the intention of its members covering different topics related to the postal sector. Subjects such as Sustainable development, E-commerce, Government Services, Postal Innovation and other received a good participation and interest levels.

Prominent experts in the related fields are invited to share their expertise. It's indeed a great opportunity to the member countries' operators, offering to them the possibilities of benchmark and networking at international level.

What role do innovation and new technologies play in joint member events?

Manale

The Union management is keen to put the postal innovation in the core of its priorities. Accordingly, it's organizing a yearly Postal Innovation Award Contest putting forward the best innovative projects developed and implemented by its member countries in the previous year. Projects are afterwards evaluated by the members and then judged by a panel of prominent postal experts from outside the Union.

In addition, in partnership with PIP, workshops on “Postal innovation” are considered in its yearly events calendar. In fact, via “thought-provoking” sessions, presentations on how emerging technologies would impact our life and work in the next 10 years are exposed with a concrete view on changes that will impact the postal and logistics industry, based on latest research from the Institute for the Future (ITF). In addition, participants learn about and experiment with techniques and tools that will help them to identify and analyze signals of change, leverage hindsight to discover patterns of innovation and disruption and build a “foresight mindset” for their own futures thinking.

Candan

Indeed, innovation and new technologies play a crucial role in our activities. In order to strengthen the Mediterranean Postal Industry and carry to a powerful position in global postal market driving a sustainable economic and social growth within the region, PUMed is determined to improve range and service quality of its Members by providing support as well to develop new and innovative services in response to ever-changing market conditions and customer needs, encourage them to reform and develop their infrastructure with digital transformation and new technologies, promote them to develop a global market approach and sustainable development understanding while guiding them to improve their competitiveness.

For more information about the Postal Union of the Mediterranean check out the organization’s website at <https://euromed-postal.org/>

For further questions, you can also contact Manale Azar directly at manale.azar@libanpost.com

Logistics-as-a-Service (LaaS) - is it a good idea?

Prof. Matthias Finger *



We all know about MaaS for Mobility-as-a-Service, an app to offer mobility solutions for people across modes as well as across public and private transport operators (urban commuter trains, metros, buses, trams, taxis, bicycles, and even parkings). Typically, this is done within an urban environment or more precisely within an urban agglomeration, owing basically to population density and thus sufficient demand. MaaS is the result of a combination of trends.

There is first the problem of private cars in cities: they are polluting, creating noise and congestion. Most people now agree that the private car in the city is a nuisance, not just for the city's inhabitants, but also for the car drivers (who waste their time in traffic) and the car owners (who cannot find parking space). In short, private car usage in cities has to be reduced, if need be by regulatory measures, a trend that seems to me unavoidable.

Secondly, this trend is paralleled, and has to be paralleled, by the development of public transport options, as private car usage can only be substituted if an actual substitute is available. Consequently, we see a lot of investments into public transport in many cities all over the world, namely metros, BRTs, trams, etc.

Thirdly, there is the megatrend of digitalization, which makes it now possible for digital platforms to position themselves above the physical offerings, bundle offers, offer integrated timetables, integrated ticketing and now also integrated mobility solutions from A to B. In other words, we now not only have UBER, but UBER-like apps that offer everything, from taxis, to UBERS, to buses, trams, metros, urban mass transit, as well as bike sharing and parking. So, if this is what we see in urban passenger transport, why not in urban transport of goods?

At a conceptual level, we already had the concept of "City Logistics", which was some sort of "one-stop-shop" for urban logistics solutions, but much less digitalization-driven and basically proprietary to the different logistics/postal operators, or, at times, a consortium of such operators. As a matter of fact, the drivers for city logistics were the same as the drivers for MaaS, namely congestion, pollution and noise in cities. Consequently, some city governments were teaming up with logistics operators to help find solutions to these problems. But this one-stop-shop idea turned out to be not very successful, owing probably mostly to the competition among the operators and the inability of cities to be able to enforce it. This in turn is due to the problem of city governance, given that most metropolitan areas, where such city logistics solutions would make sense, fall under multiple political jurisdictions which are impossible to coordinate. Indeed, in most urban agglomerations of the world, there is no metropolitan governance in place.

And this is where the idea of Logistics-a-a-Service (LaaS) could come in. How would it work? Actually, very much in the same way as MaaS: a single app would offer a one-stop-solution for any logistics problem in an urban area, combining different logistics solution suppliers, such as private operators, postal services, urban biking operators, etc. From the outset, this seems like a very attractive value proposition. If MaaS works, why should LaaS not work? So, why has it not been developed? There are of course plenty of proprietary apps. Most logistics solutions providers have their own apps for pick-up, tracking, tracing and delivery. But none of them has digital solutions that work across the different providers, simply because they are competing with one another. Also, we have not seen so far any important purely digital solutions provider à la UBER or MaaS. Why is that?

* Professor at EPFL, Florence School of Regulation/
European University Institute (EUI), and ITÜ

In my opinion, one of the main reasons stems from the fact that city logistics does not work like urban people mobility: people mostly move inside the city, whereas most of the goods to be delivered inside cities come from outside the city. Consequently, we are thrown back to a city logistics problem, digitalization or not: logistics providers have to be forced to deliver to a warehouse at the border of the city, from where goods are then distributed inside the city. This problem is difficult if not impossible to overcome by an app. It is actually a political problem, that could not be solved so far and that digitalization cannot solve either.

However, there may still be a way out if a city, or better a metropolitan area government would team up with a logistics provider to develop a city logistics solution, establish the rules for enforcement, build the warehousing space at the border of the city as well as perhaps develop a (co-branded?) LaaS App. And of course, a public postal operator would have a better chance, than a private operator, of teaming up with the public authorities of any given agglomeration. There would of course still be the problem of anticompetitive behavior, i.e., of excluding competitors. In order to overcome this, the lead would have to be taken by the city / metropolitan authorities, which can use the legal instrument available to them – namely the use of public domain – to attribute a concession or concessions, in case they want to have several logistics operators. And such concessions, which foreclose competition in the market, would probably avoid anti-trust concerns. It seems to me that such concessions could easily be justified on the grounds of a public interest in less congested, less polluted and less noisy cities.

Would digitalization – a LaaS App – actually add anything to such an after all very traditional city logistics solution? An App of the city offering its inhabitants the possibility to order goods? This does not seem feasible nor really desirable. An App of a logistics provider? That already exists. So after all, LaaS does not seem to be that good an idea, nor does it appear to be really feasible.

What is needed however, and what will come sooner or later are quite traditional city logistics solutions, whereby city governments will tender concessions for delivering goods, parcel and mail inside the city boundaries to one or a few logistics operators who will have the exclusive right to operate inside these boundaries. Digitalization will still play

a role, but it will mostly be an interface question between tracking and tracing apps of the various operators involved in the delivery and fulfillment chain. And such interfaces will have to be mandated and regulated in order to work, given the strong private interests and the fierce competition among logistics operators. And who would mandate and regulate that? Most probably the city could not do this and one would need national, if not EU regulatory intervention, in the case of Europe. This will raise the problem of coordinating cities with national governments, a true nightmare. So, after careful analysis, LaaS, while being a good idea is probably a “wrong good idea” (“fausse bonne idée”).

How Posts can offer value during uncertain times



Rodrigo Medgenberg *

Around the world, essential services are getting the recognition they deserve. Posts fall into that category of business.

Despite the pressures introduced by e-substitution, the Postal industry boasts some of the most impressive delivery networks in the world. With over 661,000 Post offices worldwide and a global workforce of 1.4 million, Posts offer a way to connect every address within a country. Today, some Posts are even providing consumers access to the most vital goods of all: food and medicine. Over the past month, medicine deliveries have increased and online grocery shopping rates have spiked as consumers practice social distancing.

The current crisis presents two elements to Postal business leaders. On the one hand, this global pandemic reveals the vulnerabilities within the Postal industry, namely the presence of outdated legacy systems. That said, it also presents opportunities for Posts to re-introduce themselves, not as an outdated system, but as a vital institution that keeps people connected and informed.

COVID-19 has forced Posts to reckon with current systems

COVID-19 has spurred changes that may have otherwise taken decades to manifest. For instance, companies all over the world are realizing just how much work can be done remotely, and it's a luxury that'll be hard to rescind from workers once things return to normal.

Posts are facing a similar reckoning. For quite some time, Posts have taken an incremental approach to digitalization. Ninety-three percent of posts offer digital postal services in some form, either directly

or through partnerships. But now, they face an urgent need for comprehensive digital-first systems that support contactless payments or allow customers to engage with Posts from home. While 73 percent of Posts indicate an increased investment in digital services, legacy systems can make it difficult for Posts to roll out these functionalities at scale.

Instead of trying to improvise with legacy systems, Posts need a strong platform built with an open architecture that allows them to add applications as needed without having to worry about integration or compatibility issues. Specifically, Posts need a system that offers:

Security: Posts need to ensure the security of their platform either by hiring an in-house team of cybersecurity experts or purchasing from a vendor that regularly monitors the platform. Sixty-eight percent of business leaders report an increase in cybersecurity risks, according to Accenture.

Scalability: Posts need a system they can quickly scale up. Without an in-house team of developers (with Postal subject matter expertise) the best approach is purchasing a purpose-built platform built with an open-architecture infrastructure. Developing custom applications from the ground up can prove risky when the need to scale arises. Purchasing from a vendor means Posts get access to new and updated Post-specific applications on a regular basis.

Stability: Posts have hundreds or thousands of locations, which means their system must be stable and reliable. It needs built-in redundancies that keep Posts functional even in emergencies. This is particularly important when offering online services or onboarding retail partners.

* Chief Sales Officer, Escher

Digital transformation will empower Posts to capitalize on the lucrative e-commerce industry

From a revenue standpoint, digital transformation instantly puts Posts in a better position to succeed in e-commerce. The global e-commerce industry will hit US\$6.54 trillion by 2022, and business's competitive advantage will come down to their ability to offer an exceptional customer experience.

Specifically, customers want digital-first experiences, self-serve options like kiosks and parcel lockers, fast in-store experiences, helpful cross-border shipping applications, and more. Again, Posts already understand this on some level. For example, 50 percent of Posts report using mobile technology to create Agency Networks to extend hours of operation.

As consumers under lockdowns rely on e-commerce for everything from fresh food and non-perishable items to medicine, toiletries and entertainment, Posts have an opportunity to step in and provide a customer-focused alternative to private providers.

Specifically, Posts have their local presence. Private carriers and retailers often rely on national Posts to manage the last mile. It's important that, moving forward, Posts ensure this arrangement benefits their own brand and long-term brands, rather than serving as a nameless service until private companies set up networks of their own.

And this encroachment on Posts' territory is happening as we speak. Amazon is increasing its logistics capacity while private equity firms pour hundreds of millions of dollars into the freight-services industry.

One way that Posts can differentiate themselves is by emphasizing their "glocal" advantages. Posts have a massive network, but they're also local brands trusted by communities. This works in their favor since many consumers want a safe "third place" (e.g. not their home or workplace) to pick up packages. This comes as no surprise considering 1.7 million packages in the U.S. are stolen every day.

While picking up packages from local businesses may not apply in the current climate, it'll be important when things return to normal, and now is an opportunity to start thinking about these service

delivery transformations.

Another way that Posts can take advantage of this "glocal" clout is by entering into partnerships with local retailers. With the right digital infrastructure, commonly frequented retailers like convenience stores and drugstores can carry out postal transactions as well.

Posts will learn how to use their digital infrastructure more efficiently

This crisis has put another feature of Postal systems into stark relief: The enormous fixed costs within the Postal network. Posts spend hundreds of millions of dollars on lease payments each year. With a unique economic situation causing businesses to take a closer look at their finances, Posts are also recognizing this huge fixed cost can't be easily scaled down based on usage.

Then there are the avoidable costs. Failed deliveries cost the industry an estimated \$2 billion per year, making reliable systems and solutions more important than ever.

In short: Posts' impressive physical infrastructure, processes, and distribution network are more relevant today than ever, considering how hyperaware people now are about access to deliveries. But Posts need to supplement this infrastructure with a digital infrastructure that allows them to use their resources more efficiently.

How can Posts successfully embrace digital transformation?

If Posts want a successful digital transformation effort, they need to choose to be "all-in". They either need to reassign employees to develop a new platform built with scalability, stability, and security in mind, or they need to purchase a purpose-built solution from a vendor. We recommend the latter option because Posts should be focused on their core business – making deliveries and focusing on core services – while using a proven suite of Post applications.

Interested in learning more about how your Post can undergo both digital and service delivery transformation? Book a consultation with Escher Group today.

Interview with Michel Heck*

Rethinking Packaging



In all logistic and supply chain processes we are confronted with packaging. The eCommerce boom has increased the amount of packaging considerably. However, it is only quite recently that packaging is becoming a key priority for postal, express & logistics companies. Why is that so?

Packaging is fundamental to the logistics industry. It makes products safer and easier to handle, and protects them during storage, transport, and delivery. Modern packaging is so ubiquitous that it is easy to forget just how remarkable it is. Centuries of innovation and refinement have produced packaging technologies that deliver high performance in a bewildering range of applications and at extremely low cost. Yet there is growing evidence that today's approaches to packaging are struggling to meet the changing needs of companies, consumers, and the wider environment. A survey conducted by DHL on its customers and partners shows that for nine out of 10 companies, packaging will play an even more important role in the next three to five years. The increasing speed, scale, and complexity of modern logistics processes – especially those driven by the growth of e-commerce and omni-channel retail – are driving up packaging costs and creating inefficiencies in the downstream supply chain. Fast-tracked deliveries and increasingly popular subscriptions services result in frequent single-item shipments, contributing to more carbon emissions and packaging waste. Looking ahead, we see new approaches and innovative solutions at the horizon which will shape future logistics operations and processes.

DHL has recently published a Trend Report on the challenges and opportunities in the context of packaging. Which trends have you identified that drive the need to rethink packaging?*

Today, there are signs that packaging is struggling to meet society's changing needs. In particular, existing packaging systems are being tested by three major trends. Firstly, the rise of e-commerce

and direct to consumer delivery. The journey taken by a product through the e-commerce supply chain couldn't be more different to traditional brick-and-mortar retail. A package is handled up to 20 times more frequently on a journey from the distribution center to the consumer's home than when it is transported on a pallet to a retail store. Therefore, e-commerce supply chains create much higher requirements for packaging robustness and product protection. Secondly, we see that the delivery experience has become a potential magic moment in the e-commerce journey. As e-commerce usurps traditional retail, the package on the doorstep is now a critical touchpoint between consumers and brands. And thirdly, we see a clear shift towards more environmentally friendly packaging driven by the public awareness from end-consumers and governments for greener supply chains.

Which are the main improvement opportunities for packaging in the logistics industry and how will these reshape the logistics industry?

Companies are likely to adopt approaches as unique as their supply chains, but we believe that certain common themes will emerge. The first of those is much greater use of data and analytics to support packaging decisions and better balance trade-offs between product protection, usability, and resource consumption. Further improvement opportunities will be unlocked by large-scale adoption of smarter packaging solutions enabled by IoT to monitor, understand and respond to the real-world conditions experienced by products in transit and storage. The second big theme is the implementation of greater levels of automation at every stage of the packaging lifecycle, from on-demand production of right-sized packaging to faster, more efficient personalization, box filling and handling operations.

* Innovation Manager, Trend Research, DHL Customer Solutions & Innovation

Third, we predict a significant increase in the use of closed-loop or circular packaging concepts, in which containers and materials are returned to their point of origin for re-use or recycling. Furthermore, new durable, cost-effective, and easy-to-use environmentally friendly packaging will be developed and widely implemented in the market. There are no simple, silver bullet solutions to today's packaging challenges. Instead, all industries need to pursue a transformational approach, adapting and rethinking multiple aspects of their supply chain and logistics operations, and considering end-to-end packaging handling from their factories, into the warehouse, and through the last mile.

You can find the "Rethinking Packaging" report under the following link:

<https://www.dhl.com/rethinking-packaging>

Michel Heck

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Interview with Kate Muth*

Disruption of Cross Border Price Setting



Last year, the US succeeded in arranging a new basis for price setting for international shipments under UPU rules, the so-called self declared rates model, which basically allows each country to self-declare its rates and deviate from the traditional uniform UPU rules. What does the self-declared rates model mean for posts and their customers?

As most will recall, the United States pushed for reform of the terminal dues system to remove the market distortions it created, especially for inbound packets to the United States from China. As an association, we supported reform of terminal dues system; however, we wanted those reforms to occur within the construct of the UPU and for the United States to remain in the UPU. We were pleased with the outcome of the Extraordinary Congress, which was a remarkable achievement given how far apart so many countries seemed at this time last year. IMAG also raised concerns from the beginning about the impact on U.S. outbound shippers as other countries reciprocated and set self-declared rates. We had hoped for a moderated schedule or transition period to absorb rate shock. However, the United States also insisted that self-declared rates take effect July 1, 2020, and 30 countries set self-declared rates reciprocally, so for U.S.-based outbound bulk shippers, prices will go up considerably on July 1. While the Postal Service is not raising its retail rates, commercial mailers and shippers (bulk shippers) will see significant increases on July 1 because the negotiated service agreements with consolidators and service providers are changing then to reflect self-declared rates and cost-coverage issues. This is especially difficult to communicate to end-users since there has been little general media coverage or announcements about the changes (which you would get with a retail rate change). And, of course, it's not easy to explain why the increases are occurring. The UPU outcome was almost a year ago and as many in this industry know, terminal dues is not a super easy subject to explain anyway, and certainly not in easily digestible news bites.

From 1 July onwards, the self-declared rates model will start to enter into force. Is all clear now and are the markets prepared for these changes?

I would say definitely not all clear. First, any rate increase is a tough sell and ultimately has an impact on volumes in a competitive market. But the timing for this one really couldn't be worse. I mean, really: in the history of rate changes, has there ever been a worse time to raise prices? We are in the middle of a pandemic and a worldwide economic crisis, suffering through a low point in service due to a loss of passenger airlift, slower ocean transport or costly charters, and staffing and workforce stresses. This is not the fault of the posts, of course, but the timing just stinks. Furthermore, most shippers and their consolidators have been consumed with daily operations during the COVID-19 pandemic – just putting out constant fires to keep the mail moving. Very few people have had time to focus on a whole new rate structure and how to adapt to it.

Shipping to the US from countries such as China will be more expensive, one of the key demands of the negotiations last year. On the other hand, shipping from the US to other destinations will also become more expensive. What will be the impact on the markets, in particular for eCommerce, with this overall price increase?

The increase on inbound postage is quite overdue and welcome (spoken like an American, I know). A concern of U.S. policymakers for years has been that domestic mailers do not subsidize shippers from China or other countries, and it appears the USPS's self-declared rates more than take care of that concern. Our estimates indicate that the increase on inbound self-declared rates from terminal dues for China are more than 100 percent and at some weights closer to 135 percent.

* Executive Director, International Mailers' Advisory Group (IMAG)

Of course, we know that terminal dues make up just a portion of postage rates and China Post could choose to subsidize what it charges its shippers, but for my members that compete with China Post in the inbound space, these changes are long overdue. On the outbound side, I suspect we will see movement from the USPS to other providers, where those options exist and are economical. The postage increases for consolidators and other contract-holders are reportedly quite high to certain destinations, so shippers are eyeing alternatives. However, the COVID impacts on transportation are likely limiting some alternatives, although the integrators have their own airlift, of course. But for other providers, there just isn't a lot of airlift at the moment and USPS holds a stronger hand in terms of securing lift with airlines or negotiating ocean transport. So this could delay some customer migration, but I expect migration will still happen.

How can the International Mailers Advisory Group (IMAG) support its members and what would you like to see happen?

IMAG's mission will continue to guide us: to address barriers to the efficient flow of information and goods across borders for companies utilizing postal services. At the moment, this means helping our members get through this difficult time in our history by working as partners with the USPS and other posts to find solutions to the operational challenges of COVID to "keep the mail moving" for the shared customer. While we work together to put out those fires, we look ahead and strategize on how best to serve the end-user customer. This is what I would like to see happen: postage rates be moderated in January 2021 and some creative solutions launched, such as the commercial solutions USPS is exploring to countries where this makes sense either from an economic standpoint or a service one. I'd like for the new Postmaster General to make the international side of USPS' business a priority and to engage with his partners in this

space, which includes all players in the ecommerce market from the consolidators and service providers to the platforms to the sellers. He can start with IMAG: We stand ready to work together to grow all of our businesses in what is by far the most exciting and innovative part of the postal world and the one with a biggest upside.

Katherine "Kate" Muth is executive director of the International Mailers' Advisory Group (IMAG), a trade association representing the interests of the U.S. international mailing sector. IMAG's core mission is to address barriers to the efficient flow of information and goods across borders.

Kate is also the president of Muth Communications, a small business that provides a wide range of editorial and communication services to clients, focusing on consulting, technical writing, white papers, and editing. She is considered an expert on postal and mailing industry issues having served for four years as vice president of the Association for Postal Commerce in the mid-2000s, and as the editor of the award-winning trade publication Business Mailers Review for nearly 10 years prior to joining PostCom. She has done editorial and consulting work for the Office of Inspector General, the Coalition for a 21st Century Postal Service, Mailing Systems Technology, Direct Marketing News, and the Prescott Report.

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WEBINAR
Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- opportunities and challenges for the postal and logistics industry
23 June, 2 - 3:15pm CEST
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AI has many advantages. It can help postal and logistics companies better understand processes and customer needs. It can predict events and help to better plan operations and delivery processes, making them more efficient. It can increase customer experience and thus offer solutions which respond to ongoing changes in society. AI is an integral part of the digital transformation process which posts and logistics companies are undergoing. It will change the business, making it more proactive, automated and predictive. Ideally, it will perfectly augment human capabilities.

However, there are many challenges and this webinar will not only focus on successful use cases and opportunities which AI may offer, but also on obstacles and challenges.

Join us at our webinar on 23 June and discuss with the speakers opportunities and challenges of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for the postal and logistics industry



Gregory Lukowski

Open Innovation
Swiss Post



Adam Houck

IBM Global Postal
Practice Leader
Academy of Technology Leadership
Team



Wayne Haubner

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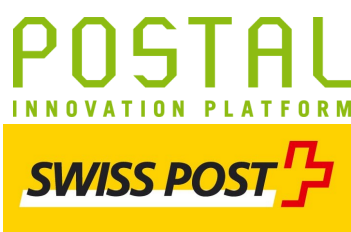
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In addition, participants will learn about and experiment with techniques and tools that will help them to identify and analyze signals of change, leverage hindsight to discover patterns of innovation and disruption and build a "foresight mindset" for their own futures thinking.



Mattia Crespi

Institute for the Future (ITF)



Bernhard Bukovc

Postal Innovation Platform (PIP)

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