

# the Communicator

Baltimore Postal Customer Council

Summer 2009 Volume 8.4

## A Letter from PMG Jack Potter

Over the past few weeks there has been an energetic debate in the news media and in public meetings throughout the country about the health care plan being considered by Congress. Unfortunately, an analogy about the Postal Service has become popular which suggests that government entities, such as a proposed government-run health insurance program, wouldn't pose a competitive threat to private companies. This analogy says that the Postal Service has trouble competing with FedEx and UPS. You know, as I do, this is not the case.

First of all, our Postal Service is the finest in the world. We deliver greater value for the dollar than any comparable Post or mail delivery organization globally. The reality is the Postal Service is very competitive against firms like UPS and FedEx in package delivery, where we have been gaining market share through competitive pricing and flat-rate shipping. We also partner exceptionally well with both — FedEx and UPS fly most of our domestic mail, and we provide the last mile of delivery for UPS and FedEx throughout rural America. It is a good model of efficient public-private service.

Secondly, we are experiencing a financial crisis that is due in part to a deep economic recession and in part to a federal mandate that we pre-fund our retiree health benefits. The recession has hit the mailing industry particularly hard, and we are not alone in seeing revenues decline in our business. We are taking aggressive steps to cut costs to match these declines, as any organization should do, but not at the expense of degrading the services our customers rely upon. Additionally, despite the fact that we have created a \$30 billion trust fund

for retiree benefits, we are also required to make annual retiree health benefit payments on a schedule that no other government or private organization is required to meet. If we did not have to make these advance contributions — and we are working with Congress and the Administration to relax this obligation — the Postal Service would have had a net profit throughout the recession.

Thirdly, as a government entity that is entirely self-funded and competes in a dynamic marketplace, we do an exceptional job given the constraints under which we operate. While we are not free to act as a private business would, we operate an organization that would be ranked 23rd on the 2009 Fortune 500 list if we were a private company. Our delivery performance scores have never been higher as we continue to excel in providing universal service and home delivery to every American household. It is a testament to every single employee that the Postal Service is consistently ranked by the Ponemon Institute as America's most trusted government agency, and in the top 10 of all corporations nationwide.

Finally, we should all be very proud of the Postal Service and of the work we do every day. While we may have to endure the occasional bad analogy or detractor in the news, they are far outweighed by our supporters among the American people.

One of the pleasures of my job is being able to talk about the Postal Service and its people and the great work you do. I highly recommend it as a regular practice. When you talk to friends, family and customers about the Postal Service, you'll find they

know and appreciate the role we play in every community.

While we are currently going through a rough patch due to the economy, and the news about our finances won't be good for a while, be assured that we are striving every day to become a better organization, and an even greater asset to the American public and all who count on our service.

### Baltimore District Customer Training 2009

The training sessions will be conducted at the Baltimore Main Post Office at 900 E. Fayette Street, Room 401 A and B. Please register for the following classes by calling 410-347-4436, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

<u>Sep 24</u>	PSW/Move Update
<u>Oct 22</u>	1 <sup>st</sup> Class/Standard Mail
<u>Nov 19</u>	Periodicals Eligibility
<u>Dec 17</u>	Non-Profit Mail Eligibility



## Events

Fall General Membership Meeting  
December 4, 2009  
Martin's East

# Baltimore Postal Customer Council Spring General Membership Meeting

The Baltimore PCC Spring General Membership meeting was held on June 5th, 2009 at Conrad's Ruth Villa in Middle River. Our guest speaker was Alixe Johnson, Manager - Customer & Industry Marketing from the U.S.P.S.

After the meeting over 120 attendees enjoyed a crab feast and bull roast. The rainy weather didn't dampen the festivities, as the membership spent the afternoon networking and speaking with representatives from the U.S.P.S.

Baltimore Postmaster Bill Ridenour closed the day with the traditional door prize drawing, and all attendees received a Baltimore PCC T-shirt. A great time was had by all!



*Bill Ridenour, Judy Antisdell, Joe Fetcho and Lisa Kline, as Mr. Fetcho receives the "PCC Lifetime Achievement" award.*



*Guests were able to enjoy a sheltered environment as the rain came steadily down...*



*Guest speaker Alexandra Johnson, Manager - Customer & Industry Marketing from the U.S.P.S.*



*Other members braved the unseasonably chilly air under the outdoor canopy, to enjoy the crab feast and other food and refreshments.*

*Continued on next page*



Board members Dana McCormick and Bill Sell hosted the always-popular door prize drawing.



Attendees received a cool limited-edition Baltimore PCC T-shirt!

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## Partnership Opportunities with the BPCC

It is our Partners' generous support that enables us to provide quality speakers, educational seminars, and special events throughout the year. As a BPCC Partner you will be afforded the following benefits:

### Platinum Partner - \$1000.00

- Includes a \$150 corporate membership for up to 7 members
- 2 free tickets to BPCC events
- Company recognition at BPCC events
- BPCC Executive Board opportunity
- ¼ page ad in BPCC newsletter\*
- Company name, logo, and link on BPCC web site
- Special Platinum Partner BPCC member plaque
- Reserved platinum table at BPCC events
- Submission of one article per year in BPCC newsletter
- Annual meeting with District Level Postal Executives

### Gold Partner - \$500.00

- Includes a \$100 membership for up to 3 members
- Company recognition at BPCC events
- Business card ad in BPCC newsletter\*
- 1 free ticket to BPCC events
- Company name and link on BPCC web site
- BPCC member certificate - gold seal
- Annual meeting with local Postmaster/station manager

### Silver Partner - \$250.00

- Includes a \$50 membership for one member
- Business card ad in PCC newsletter\*
- Company name on BPCC web site
- BPCC member certificate - silver seal

Special Corporate Sponsorships – contact the appropriate BPCC committee chairperson for details on sponsoring our web page, newsletter, or one of our annual events. Thank you for your support.

\* Please note that the ¼ page and business card ads refer to the same ad in all newsletters for that membership year.

## Coming Soon... Ask the Experts!

Do you have a technical question about Move Update, IMB, personalization, or any other issue that could use some clarification from experienced Postal experts?

If so, help is on the way! Coming soon, our new "Ask the Experts" feature will give you access to the latest knowledge base and personalized advice on any mailing issue that concerns you. Simply visit our website, [baltimorepcc.com](http://baltimorepcc.com), and link to our "Ask the Experts" page to submit a question. The questions will be promptly answered, plus we are instituting a forum-style message board which allows others to comment on the topics of discussion.

This is your opportunity to receive advice and guidance directly from the most qualified Postal industry professionals in the area. In future newsletters we will publish the questions that may be of most interest to the general membership.

Keep your eye on our website for this great new feature!

## USPS, FedEx Renew GXG Alliance

### By Patrick Murphy, Northern Virginia Postal Customer Council

USPS and FedEx Express have renewed their alliance for Global Express Guaranteed (GXG), the Postal Service's premier, date-certain international delivery service to more than 190 countries and territories.

"The Postal Service is pleased to renew this important agreement with FedEx," said Pranab Shah, vice president and managing director, USPS Global Business. "We plan to build on the accomplishments of the initial agreement, enhancing GXG's world-class service reliability by using the resources of both organizations to provide quality and value for our customers."

GXG packaging features Postal Service and FedEx logos.

"Global Express Guaranteed leverages the two great transportation networks of FedEx Express and the Postal Service to bring greater choice and convenience for customers," said T. Michael Glenn, FedEx executive vice president for Market Development. "This agreement combines the global reach, convenience, speed and reliability of the Postal Service and FedEx Express in a natural extension of our long-standing relationship."

USPS and FedEx began offering the co-branded GXG service in 2004. GXG is available at thousands of participating postal retail locations nationwide, and through Click-N-Ship online at [usps.com](http://usps.com).

## Member Spotlight

Autumn Cristofaro, T. Rowe Price



In each issue of our PCC Newsletter, we spotlight members to hear their insights into the rapidly-changing Postal environment, as well as to introduce the PCC community to fellow colleagues.

In this issue, we spotlight Autumn Cristofaro of T. Rowe Price.

### **Please describe your business and your role.**

I work for T. Rowe Price (Financial Industry) as a Print & Mail Production Consultant. I work on single component printed pieces along with direct mail packages for investors or potential investors

### **What is the role of mailing in your business (volume, frequency)?**

I work on mailing everyday, whether it is a simple postcard or a complex package with multiple inserts.

### **At this time, what is the most challenging or difficult aspect of your work?**

The most challenging aspects are keeping up with the ever changing items in direct mail. Anything from postal changes to variable data techniques, things are changing everyday and it is always a challenge to keep up to date.

### **How have you responded to recent Postal Regulation changes such as the Move Update?**

By trying to get as much knowledge as possible, so I can fully understand the change and be able to intelligently pass the information over to my client. As for the Move Update, we have been complying to the new regulations since the onset in November 2008. It has been a pretty smooth update and very little issues have occurred. Regarding the IMB Implementation, we have set up a committee to review all of our processes so we do not have any issues complying with the May 2011 date.

### **What advice would you give other companies relative to usage of Postal Services versus other avenues of delivery?**

The Post office is the main source of delivery that I use. I have not currently done any direct mail projects that were not mailed out via the USPS.

## USPS Proposes First Class Mail Incentive Program

Taking a page from its Summer Sale program, USPS now is proposing to offer postage rebates to customers who mail First-Class Mail presorted letters, cards or flat-sized mailpieces.

Describing the program to customers attending last week's Mailers' Technical Advisory Committee meeting, Bob Bernstock, president of Mailing and Shipping Services, said companies that mailed at least 500,000 pieces of First-Class Mail between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31 in each of the last two years would be eligible to participate.

The intent of the program, he said, is to provide an incentive for customers to increase non-parcel First-Class Mail presorted volume above the volume they would otherwise have sent.

Similar in concept to the Summer Sale program, the Postal Service would establish a company-specific threshold of mail volume each mailer would have to exceed to qualify. Customers then would be eligible for 20-percent postage rebates on mailings over that level entered into the mailstream between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31, 2009.

In accordance with the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act, the Postal Service filed a Notice with the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) on Aug. 11 regarding the First-Class Mail Incentive. The PRC review, approval and feedback will take 45 days from that date.

Bernstock said USPS plans to mail letters later this month inviting all qualified First-Class Mail presort customers to participate in the program.

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**Presort Services**

Dear Business Mailer:

The Baltimore Postal Customer Council (BPCC) is part of a vital network of business mailers and postal representatives working together toward creating cost effective mailings, increasing the efficiency of mail service, and communicating information on various topics related to the mailing industry.

Membership in the BPCC is the key to ensuring that your voice is heard on mailing matters of immediate and local concern. Through the BPCC newsletter and the BPCC website located at [www.baltimorepcc.com](http://www.baltimorepcc.com) council members are kept abreast of issues that may affect long range plans for their firm or the mailing industry as a whole. As USPS rates and regulations change, this information is vital to the success of all of us who rely upon the mail. The BPCC holds an annual education seminar that provides information on a variety of subjects related to the USPS and growing your business, and the BPCC keeps members informed of other educational opportunities available, such as the annual Executive Mail Center Manager Certification Program.

Participation in the BPCC is not all about education. It also includes networking events including an annual Spring membership meeting that is held at an outside location and a Fall membership meeting that is held in a banquet hall setting. Both events involve a relaxing afternoon of good food and valuable networking with fellow council members and industry representatives.

As in previous years we are also offering Partnership Opportunities for organizations within our industry. These partnerships offer increased membership benefits including advertising opportunities and networking with the USPS. This is a great way to increase your company's name recognition, industry knowledge, and exposure to potential clients.

Please take some time to visit the BPCC website and learn more about this worthwhile organization. The website includes contact information for key members of the BPCC and the USPS. For your convenience we have included a registration form. We are confident that you will find the BPCC to be a valuable resource for your company.

Thank you.

William L. Ridenour  
Postmaster Baltimore  
Postal Co-Chairman, BPCC

Lisa Kline  
Ivy Envelope  
Industry Co-Chair, BPCC



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**2009 CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION**

<b>PRICING:</b>	<b><u>Members</u></b>	<b><u>Annual Dues</u></b>
	1 member	\$ 50.00
	2 members	\$ 75.00
	3 members	\$ 100.00
	4-7 members	\$ 150.00

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**2009 CORPORATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM** - (See page 3 for details)

<b>PRICING:</b>	<b><u>Partnership Level</u></b>	<b><u>Annual Dues</u></b>
	Silver Partner	\$ 250.00
	Gold Partner	\$ 500.00
	Platinum Partner	\$ 1000.00

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