

Linking People, Delivering Business

HONGKONG POST



The Hongkong Post logo includes an abstract representation of a hummingbird known for its speed and purpose. The symbol conveys the image of a friendly, fast moving and busy organisation. The corporate colours, green and purple, reflect the new initiatives and progressive changes that have enabled Hongkong Post to brave out the rapid transformation of society into a fast-changing, knowledge-based economy, while at the same time continuing to successfully deliver outstanding postal services.

International acclaim

Through continuous innovation, coupled with its vigilance and excellence in providing outstanding postal services, Hongkong Post has been given due recognition worldwide. In 2002, it was awarded Gold Level in the Express Mail Service (EMS) Cooperative Certification by the authoritative Universal Postal Union (UPU). The department was the top performer among 193 EMS operators including countries like the United States, the United Kingdom and Japan.

Senior Manager (Public Relations) Mr Roy Siu, said: “We attained Silver Level Certification in both 2000 and 2001, and in 2002 we surged to Gold Level. These outstanding results were achieved through the dedication and team spirit of all staff engaged in the Speedpost service (the local brand name for EMS). This has undoubtedly enhanced Hongkong Post’s international standing among the EMS community, and clearly demonstrated our world-leading role in the service.”

Established in 1874 in Berne, Switzerland, the UPU is the second oldest international organisation and the primary forum for co-operation among countries in the provision of international postal services. It helps ensure a truly universal network of up-to-date products and services.

The EMS Cooperative Certification, awarded annually by the UPU, is based on the performance of the participating EMS operators and covers four service elements. They are:

- inbound delivery performance;
- inbound scanning performance;
- performance in providing delivery data; and
- data transmission performance.

Point values are allocated for each EMS operator according to its measured performance for each service element. In 2002, Hongkong Post attained full marks in all four elements, winning the award and achieving the highest level of performance in the programme.

Hongkong Post received its Gold Level Certificate from Mr Thomas Leavey, Director General of the UPU, at the 2003 EMS Cooperative General Assembly in Berne, Switzerland, in October 2003.

The Speedpost service provides for the rapid and reliable transmission of documents, samples and merchandise. Hongkong Post has pledged that Speedpost items from abroad will be delivered on the same or next working day, while outbound items posted before the specified latest times for posting are dispatched to outgoing flights on the same day.

Hongkong Post has recently improved the operational efficiency of Speedpost locally by a computerised Collection and Delivery Management System. It incorporates the use of mobile devices to facilitate effective communication between the control centre and the operation teams on the streets, and thereby enhance the flexibility of resource deployment. The new system applying the GPRS telecommunication technology provides the opportunity for business process re-engineering, resulting in substantial productivity improvement.

“With no room for complacency, we will continue our hard work in delivering quality services,” said Mr Siu.

Innovations in philately

In line with the department’s innovative culture, Hongkong Post has been promoting philately by designing appealing stamps conveying special meanings. Its expertise has received acclaim worldwide over the years.

Hong Kong’s \$1.30 “Personal Greetings” stamp issued on February 1, 2001, won fourth prize in “The World’s Most Beautiful Stamp” competition of the “7th Stamp World Cup” in 2002. In the same competition, the stamp also won the “The World’s Most Beautiful Stamp in ASIA” award.



The award presented by the French stamp magazine, Timbres Magazine.



The award-winning stamp issued in 2001.

The competition, organised by the leading French stamp magazine, Timbres Magazine, gained overwhelming support from more than 40 global leading postal administrations. Other winners were Finland, Canada, Fiji and Gabon.

More recently, the “Beijing-Kowloon Through Trains” special stamps issued in June 2002, won the Gold Medal in the “Pride in Print Awards 2003”, a competition co-hosted by 11 designers’ institutes and printers’ associations in New Zealand.



The award-winning special stamps.

Senior Manager (Philatelic Marketing), Ms Betty Chan said: “The stamp design features a railway train painted in rainbow hues running through the four stamps. The train sets off from the heart of Hong Kong and passes the green Wuhan Changjiang Bridge in Wuchang. The train then passes the Shaolin Monastery in Zhengzhou and ends its journey in Beijing. The designer uses Beijing’s Temple of Heaven to signify China’s longtime culture and history, in striking contrast to Hong Kong’s modernity and prosperity.”

“The award recognised the fine printing and excellent calibre of the stamps’ design. We feel very honoured, as Hong Kong is one of the few postal administrations in the world to be recognised with this prestigious award.”

Besides the world-renowned success in the design of stamps, affordability is another reason for the popularity of philately in Hong Kong.

“Hong Kong’s low postage rates make philately an interesting and inexpensive hobby,” Ms Chan said. “To encourage this hobby, a convenient online internet shopping service is provided for local and overseas philatelists to purchase philatelic products.”

Two kinds of postage stamps, namely definitive stamps and special stamps, are issued. Hong Kong postage stamps are designed to a consistently high standard reflecting history, life and development. Philatelic revenue in 2002/03 was \$201 million.

Professional services derived from successful training

Hongkong Post understands that a team of quality staff guarantees quality service. The “Care from the Heart Customer Service Training Programme” and the “To Excel Through Teamwork Competence Development Training Programme” have won Hongkong Post the Excellence in Practice Citation from the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) two years in a row, in 2002 and 2003.

Senior Manager (Training & Development), Ms Mary Chung said: “The theme ‘Care from the Heart’ reflected our intention to serve customers sincerely from our hearts.”

The programme began in 1998, promoting a customer-oriented culture from the directorate to frontline staff in order to serve the public in the best way possible.



The prestigious ASTD award.

Hongkong Post has a series of tailor-made programmes including foundation training, field coaching and workshops.

To sustain the customer service culture and a spirit of teamwork, Hongkong Post launched another training programme “To Excel Through Teamwork” in 2001. The programme played a vital role in strengthening the co-operation among staff, building teamwork and fostering positive working attitudes, including the adoption of “A Complaint is a Gift” philosophy in managing customer feedback.

Ms Chung said: “We are very happy to receive the awards from the renowned ASTD. Hongkong Post is the first government department to win this prestigious citation. This has reaffirmed that we are heading in the right direction in training and development. We will continue to invest in staff training and development to maintain staff alertness and improve skills in providing quality service to customers.”

Their working culture change has been rewarded with a positive response from the public. According to a public perception survey conducted in 2003 by an independent consultant, 97% of members of the public, 96% of business customers and 97% of philately group customers were satisfied or very satisfied with their service.

Coping with challenges

Hongkong Post has been serving the community since 1841. With the population growth and development of business activities in Hong Kong, the range and level of services provided by the department have expanded and upgraded. In 2002/03, the volume of mail handled reached a daily average of 3.5 million items.

Hongkong Post is operating in a turbulent environment characterised by aggressive global competition, cream-skimming by market niche operators, increasing use of electronic communication, and rapidly changing market demand and customer needs.

The Postmaster General, Mr Allan Chiang said: “Our response strategies are encapsulated in our corporate purpose statement: ‘Linking People, Delivering Business’. In Linking People, we continue to connect people locally and around the world by delivering correspondence and merchandise promptly, reliably, cost-effectively; and at uniform, affordable prices with universal coverage. In Delivering Business, we have adopted a commercial approach which emphasises innovation, productivity, profitability and customer service. We make use of new technologies to raise productivity and lower operation costs. By embracing technology, we venture into the area of electronic services, including the issuing of digital certificates to subscribers to ensure authentication, confidentiality and security of the electronic transactions made. We are capturing an increase in physical delivery requirement generated from the proliferation of internet trading. We are also providing counter agency services for the government and public utilities.”

In 2000, Hongkong Post launched the PayThruPost service, providing customers with the convenience of a one-stop-shop for payment of government and utility bills at all post offices. As the first recognised public Certification Authority in Hong Kong, it has an integral role to play in promoting secure e-business and e-government in Hong Kong. The digital certificates it issues, which could be embedded on the new smart identity card, are applied in a wide range of internet services including internet banking, online stock trading, online betting service, the government's Electronic Service Delivery, online shopping, online auction, online access to personal credit reports, secure data exchange and secure email communication. The launch of the Hongkong Post Mobile e-Cert service in 2001 made Hong Kong the first economy in the world to issue mobile e-Certs for community-wide adoption.

“Our vision is to be an outstanding service organisation in Hong Kong and an outstanding postal service worldwide,” said Mr Chiang.