

Global Connectivity through International Postal System

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Introduction

Monopoly is a rare commodity in today's world. With advancement of technology and development in means of communications and transportation, competition has become fierce. Customers have a variety of choices and there seems to be no indispensable producer or service provider. From the customers' point of view, this positive development has brought the former era of exploitation to an end. On the other hand, it has forced organizations to face cutthroat competition and colossal challenges. This reality has prompted organizations to improve and has enhanced customers' power that in turn has ushered in efficient service delivery and quality of service.

When product lines were limited and producers had monopolies, the users of goods and services were constrained. As customers gained more choices, producers and service providers had to modify products on the basis of users' demands. Users' likes and dislikes were now routinely taken into consideration when deciding what to produce and at what price to sell. This probably was the point where modern marketing was born.

Pakistan Post has long offered a host of products and services. Yet, like most public sector organizations, Pakistan Post does not take customer into account while developing a product or a service. Moreover, the people working in the organization are not convinced of the strengths of their own services and are, generally, shy of accepting organizational weaknesses.

Pakistan Post can be proud of having an enviable network with countrywide presence. There is no exaggeration in saying that Pakistan Post has a 100% footprint in the country. It is not just a national but rather an international organization that encompasses the globe through its partnership with the Universal Postal Union (UPU). The most developed and the best equipped postal administrations throughout the world are its partners. Accordingly, Pakistan Post is better placed for reliable delivery abroad. Unfortunately, it has not been able to exploit this strength due to its inability to inform customers about the real-time status of their mailed articles. This is just one example of an area for improvement.

On the other hand, being a part of the government and having a bureaucratic setup, stagnation crept into the organization. There is still no Marketing Wing in Pakistan

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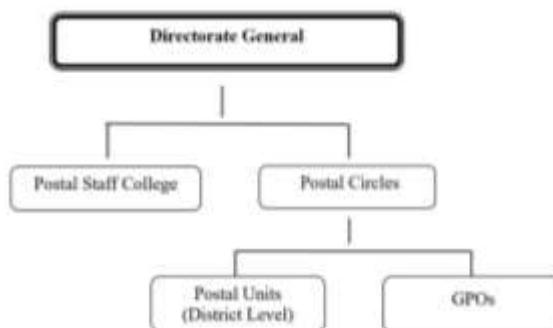
Post. No system is in place for product and services analysis, what to speak of market research and surveys before launching a new service or product or for improving existing services.

Pakistan Post's processing of international mail items was manual at all levels including booking, processing at domestic as well as international sorting centres and complaint handling. All forms and bag labels were also prepared manually. This was at a time when most postal administrations across the globe had started to use unique item identifiers popularly known as barcode labels for each type and category of mail. These systems were backed up by comprehensive track and trace systems which ensured visibility and traceability of postal items.

This case study highlights a new strategy that brought about a change in the public sector. The aim was to bring about transparency, predictability, and improved productivity. For achieving these policy objectives, the officer took his seniors into confidence, motivated and trained operational staff to implement change to not only fulfil an international obligation but also a requirement of customers.

Pakistan Post Structure

Pakistan Post is a public sector organization with following set up.



The Director General is the head of the Department and is also Chairman of Pakistan Postal Services Management Board (PPSMB). The Board was established to allow autonomy and freedom of action to Pakistan Post so as to revitalize the organization.

The PPSMB structure is detailed below:

- | | | |
|-------|--|-------------------|
| (i) | Director General, | Chairman |
| (ii) | 3 Senior Technical Officers of Pakistan Post | Members |
| (iii) | 3 suitable persons from the private sector | Members |
| (iv) | An officer of Joint Secy. level from M/o Finance | Financial Advisor |
| (v) | An officer of Jt. Secy level from M/o Postal Service | Member |

At the Directorate General Level, the D.G is assisted by three Additional Directors General:

- (i) Addl. Director General (Administration)
- (ii) Addl. Director General (Operations)
- (iii) Addl. Director General (Financial Services)

Scene Setter

Mr. Ahmar, Deputy Controller International Mail Office (IMO) Islamabad was in his office. Suddenly the door opened and a well-built, nicely dressed young man entered the room. In spite of his proper looks, he was shouting at the top of his voice. Mr. Ahmar asked him to calm down and sit down but he continued to shout, “What the hell are you doing here? This is the 21st century and you need to wait one month for a response. Are you still in the Stone Age? Why are you robbing us?”

Upon being calmed down, it transpired that he was a customer of the postal service who had sent a parcel to United Kingdom. Addressed to his sister, the parcel contained a bridal dress for his niece. Although the date of marriage was drawing near, he did not have a clue about the whereabouts of the parcel. The postmaster had informed him, as per practice in vogue that an inquiry would be generated and would be sent to the United Kingdom Post Office. As per rules they were supposed to respond within 60 days if the inquiry is sent by post and within 30 days if sent by email or fax.

Section I

1. Situation Analysis

1.1 Manual Processing of International Mail

In this unpleasant incident the customer was fully justified in complaining against the backwardness of Pakistan Post and the inability of Mr Ahmar, Deputy Controller International Mail Office (IMO), to respond to his query in a satisfactory manner. The customer was not asking for moon. He was just referring to a practice prevalent in postal services throughout world – which was also followed by local courier companies. With the introduction of computers and information technology, the speed of providing information had increased manifold.

Personal letters which had formed a major part of postal services had all but vanished as mobile phones and email proved to be a much cheaper and faster means of communicating and sending messages across. However, fortunately, it still stood relevant in the market due to its ability to move heavier material in the shape of packets and parcels around the globe. One of the demands of modern-day customers was to have end to end visibility of movement of dispatched packets and parcels which was

available with private courier companies and developed postal services. Pakistan Post had hesitated and delayed injecting technology and investing in the field of computerization and provision of track and trace facility. This is exactly what had led to the scene with Mr. Ahmar. Pakistan Post operations were being carried out without any computerization and digitization of movement.

1.2 The Process

To understand the process of handling of international mail items, let us see the steps involved therein at the time of the incident.

1.2.1 Booking at Counter: When an article was presented at a post office counter by a customer, its receipt and record keeping was done manually by the staff. The booking clerk weighed the article, affixed the appropriate postage, and wrote out a four digit number (according to the class of mail – letter, parcel or International Speed Post (ISP) which later became Express Mail Service (EMS) – and the serial of running booking journal. The customer was then handed a hand-written booking receipt for record purposes.

1.2.2 Preparation of manual manifest (lists) was done by the booking staff separately according to the class of mail, parcels on the parcel lists and registered letters.

1.2.3 Processing at District Hub: District Mail Office (DMO): From the booking offices, the mail items were sent to the district hub(s) known as District Mail Offices. The receipt of mail, sorting and dispatch was carried out by way of preparation of manual mail lists. Bundles of record relating to each day's receipt and dispatch were kept for each day.

1.2.4 At Offices of Exchange (OEs): Being governed by Universal Postal Union (UPU) treaty and World Customs Organization (WCO) Convention, specified unique documentation and procedures covered all international mail. Other agencies involved are Designated Postal Operators (DPOs) of each country, International Air Transport Association (IATA) and International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

Upon being received from DMOs, mail items were placed in receptacles and organized into dispatches. Dispatches were required to contain the same type of item (EMS items, letters, or parcels). The dispatches were then arranged into consignments which could be a mixture of item types. The consignments were then turned over to the carriers and sent to the destination country.

During manual processing of mail at OEs, prescribed UPU forms were prepared manually either by way of being type- or hand-written. The process of record keeping was the same as that prevailing in DMOs. In case of any inquiry regarding a postal item, these bundles would be opened, and confirmation of dispatch would be provided.

The International Mail Office (IMO) could only inform of a particular item having been forwarded to the country of destination.

There was no track & trace of outward international mail in manual processing. In case of discrepancy, CN-08 (Inquiry Form) was issued to the destination postal administration for searching out the missing items or to settle the disputes with a CN-43 (Verification Note) being issued for discrepancies. The time limit for responding to inquiries generated through issuance of CN 08 was sixty (60) days. Later it was reduced to thirty (30) days provided that the inquiry was sent by email or fax. This was usual time that was required for finding out articles through scrutiny of record that had been kept manually. From the customers' point of view, this must have been quite frustrating as they had to wait for 30 to 60 days for a response to their genuine complaints.

1.3 Dual Responsibility

While Pakistan Post was facing the threat of losing existing customers due to non-availability of a track and trace system, UPU had linked the payment of for delivering international postal items with the quality of service. Forty (40) percent of the payment was dependent on different quality of service features. The major portion was for track and trace system. Following is the detail of features that were made mandatory for all postal operators.

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Track & Trace System | 25% |
| Home Delivery | 05% |
| Delivery Standards | 05% |
| IBIS (95% on time response) | 05% |

The existing processing of international mail not only did not fulfil customers' demand but was also well short of meeting international obligations set by the UPU.

1.4 SWOT Analysis

Before moving towards a solution, Mr. Ahmar decided to carry out at SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis. The gist of this analysis is as follows.

A. Strengths:

- (i) Outreach - 100% footprint in the country and ability to connect internationally to any country and territory of the world;
- (ii) Lowest rates – by providing the most economical facility, especially for walk in customers and general public, Pakistan Post was the cost leader;
- (iii) Century old affiliation of the citizens;

- (iv) It was a national courier backed by a government guarantee.

B. Weaknesses:

- (i) Technology averse lower-level Human Resource (HR);
- (ii) Lack of strong technological team at central office;
- (iii) Lack of financial resources;
- (iv) Lack of central R & D wing;
- (v) Rigid bureaucratic structure – being part of government, Pakistan PPO had remained inflexible in many cases, unlike its competitors;
- (vi) Prolonged policy initiation and approval procedures.

C. Opportunities:

- (i) UPU's International Postal System (IPS) member;
- (ii) Quality of Service Fund of Universal Postal Union;
- (iii) Positive leadership;
- (iv) Regional Support Centre of UPU.

D. Threats:

- (i) Tech savvy new entrants in courier industry;
- (ii) Rising time sensitivity and visibility requirements of customers;
- (iii) Payment for Performance and Quality of Service (QoS) linked with terminal dues.

Section II

2. Solution and Road Taken

The only Solution was to equip Pakistan Post with technology so as to make track and trace facility available to ensure visibility of postal articles. Ensuring availability of end-to-end tracking was imperative and the only way to win the confidence of customers.

2.1 Introduction of Standard Barcodes Labels as Prelude to Change

The first step that was planned to be done was introduction of barcode labels. UPU had approved a standard unique identifier which is affixed on every postal item for track and trace service. As per specification detailed in UPU S-10 standard, the design of barcode was shared with the printer for experimentation. Following is the UPU standard barcode scheme.

| Service Indicator | Serial Number | Country Code | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|----|
| Registered Letter | RA-RZ | 123456789 | PK |
| Parcel | CA-CZ | 123456789 | PK |
| EMS | EA-EZ | 123456789 | PK |
| Examples: | Pakistan Post Registered Letter: | RA123456789PK | |
| | Korea Post Parcel: | CA123456785KR | |
| | Royal Mail UK Express Mail: | EA123456786GB | |

The labels were printed and affixed on selected registered letters that were then sent to Canada as a test case. Then the waiting time started. It was hoped that when these items reached the destination office of exchange (OE), Canada Post will scan these and upon scanning, these would be visible on Canada Post website.

These anxious moments lasted for at least 8 to 10 days. After dispatch of these registered letters, Mr. Ahmar tracked these daily on the Canada Post website. It was a great moment when the track showed arrival of the registered letters in Canada. The next day it showed the onward movement to the delivery office. This was a great moment for IMO Islamabad where the whole team was excited. Mr. Ahmar prepared a presentation for his Director General and included this whole scenario for the presentation at the headquarters. The requirement was placed before the top management showing that that was possible to extend IPS in all Offices of Exchange (OEs) starting from Islamabad as a pilot project. The management agreed and Mr. Ahmar was made Project Manager for implementation of IPS or International Postal System.

The IPS application allows postal organizations to store and exchange data relating to the mail handling process. The IPS has the capability to capture and show complete movement of mail items from booking to delivery. IPS item tracking records information about the mail events that happen to an item during each step of the international mail handling process. Postal organizations can use the IPS system to identify each mail event and keep track of each item from the time it is received from the customer until it is delivered and at any point in the process. It can automatically produce the required standard shipping documentation, such as receptacle (bag) and dispatch manifests, letter bill, and delivery bill.

2.2 Options Available

To implement the IPS, Mr. Amar listed the different options available, which were:

- (i) Get a software developed;
- (ii) Buy an off the shelf solution which could be customized and implemented;
- (iii) Utilize the UPU developed solution. The UPU had its technological arm Postal Technology Centre (PTC) which had developed the IPS that Pakistan was using

- on a limited scale in only one OE at Karachi and that too for the International Express Mail Service (EMS);
- (iv) Use IPS but implement it indigenously.

2.2.1 Develop or Purchase New Software

The first option i.e. development of an in-house software for processing of international mail was examined. Pakistan Post had already carried out this experiment when Express Mail Track and Trace System (EMTTS) was developed by Post Infotech, a subsidiary company of Pakistan Post Foundation (PPF). However, development or purchasing an off-the-shelf solution could be a time taking option. Moreover, in the presence of a tried and tested system of UPU, new development would have amounted to reinventing the wheel. Mr Ahmar decided to follow the route of utilising the UPU's IPS (International Postal System.)

2.2.2 IPS Implementation with UPU technical mission

Now the process of engagement with UPU and Regional Support Centre for Asia Pacific (RSCAP) started. The UPU was requested for implementation of IPS in all Offices of Exchange starting from International Mail Office (IMO) Islamabad as the pilot project. They were quick to respond and happy to get this information and sent Mr. Ahmar the requirements for implementation. Their email which contained the proposed plan. However, when the cost was noted, the excitement came down a great deal. For the PTC it was a SOP that it would send a mission to the interested country for a site survey to assess the requirements, especially the hardware. The consultancy from UPU was an essential part that included:

- (i) Site survey visit of the consultant for recommending the required hardware and preparation of the site;
- (ii) Implementation visit for installation of the software and training of the operational staff;
- (iii) A third optional visit to review the performance.

Each visit would have following cost components:

- (a) Round trip air ticket for consultant(s) (Berne, Switzerland to Islamabad).
- (b) Payment of 750 Swiss Francs (CHF) per day for the consultant. (7 days/ visit / site)

The estimated cost was Rs. PKR 2.6 million excluding the cost of hardware. This meant that for five locations the cost would be PKR 13 million. It was not possible to allocate this amount from the operational budget. But, on the other hand, a special demand could have taken quite a long time.

2.2.3 Road taken: Indigenous Implementation of IPS

So, Mr. Ahmar decided to concentrate on the indigenous implementation of UPU provided solution. This approach required support from the top management and ultimately from the UPU's Postal Technology Centre (PTC).

Section III

3. Challenges & Methodology Adopted

3.1 Enlisting the Requirements

The first step towards the selected route was to enlist the requirements. Mr Ahmar talked to his counterpart at Express Post Karachi, studied available literature on PTC's website. The implementation required workstations, servers, networking and most importantly software and capability to run that software.

3.2 Enlisting Stakeholders

The stakeholders to be taken on board included the management of Pakistan Post, technology partners who could provide IT support for networking and installation of a complicated software, a team of willing workers who would be ready to learn the operations of the software and most importantly the team which was already working in Karachi on the system.



3.3 Assigning Roles

The Director General had already notified Mr Ahmar as Project Manager for implementation of IPS. The technology partner of Pakistan Post was M/S Post Infotech. The company was given the role of backup support for pure technical issues that may crop up during implementation. The operational staff were the true stakeholders as their role was that of the implementers.

3.4 Meetings and Trainings at Karachi

Mr Ahmar proceeded to Karachi Express Post Centre and held a meeting with his counterpart who was running the administration and operations. The purpose of the visit was to acquaint and upgrade himself both technically and operationally. At the Karachi office a strange situation existed as Mr. Anum, the in-charge, was in the habit of keeping everything to himself so as to make himself important and indispensable. Although a supervising official of a lower rank, he was so assertive that even the much more senior, Deputy Controller could not get any useful information out of him. Not surprisingly, when Mr Ahmar reached the Karachi office, Mr. Anum showed a complete lack of support and willingness to share information. Accordingly, Mr Ahmar started working with the operational staff to get himself familiarised with the operational procedures and workflow. In three days, he learned the whole process and familiarised himself with different screens of the software and different roles for handling the processes.

Now came the harder part as Mr. Ahmar wanted to get hold of the installation CD and learn the process of installation. As the official in charge was not cooperating, Mr Ahmar approached the headquarters and sought help to push the gentleman for transfer of technology. With great difficulty the CD containing the software was retrieved from the gentleman; then the manuals were downloaded from PTC website and the process of learning the installation was undertaken.

3.5 Approvals, IT Technical Support

After the initial presentation and successful experimentation, a complete plan was presented to the Director General and approval was sought for visiting and examining Karachi OE for orientation and engagement of technology partner for implementation as well as the requirement of hardware – though initially only for the IMO Islamabad.

Keeping in view the importance of the project and the way it was presented, all approvals were granted. This made Mr. Ahmar not only more confident, but it also placed more responsibility on him. Initially Pakistan Post IT team had been requested to help, but keeping in view the shortage of human resources it was decided to engage technology partners to whom the domestic tracking system had been outsourced.

3.6 Motivating and Training the Operational Staff

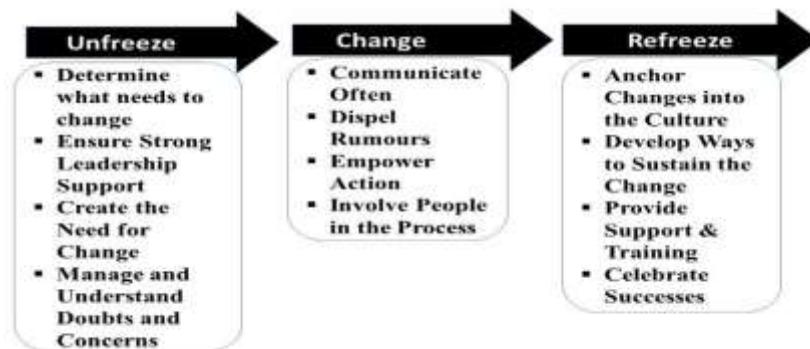
Change is always difficult to implement – and especially so in public sector organizations. The staff working in IMO Islamabad had vast experience of up to 20 years – but, unfortunately, their routine was dealing with manual processes. When they were asked to shift from manual record keeping and generation of forms to computerized processing of international mail, they thought this to be something impossible. However, they were informed about the practices across the globe and were

motivated to support the change. Since they were working in an environment where they would receive mail items from developed countries it was possible to show them practical examples and benefits of following the new route and path. The change in system was designed in collaboration with the RSCAP and in line with UPU guidelines.

3.7 Change Management Theory

With the staff having been motivated, change was introduced by using Planned Change Theory, based on the work of Kurt Lewin from the 1950s. His model is known as Unfreeze – Change – Refreeze, which refers to the three-stage process of change that he describes. The steps in Lewin's planned change theory are as follows:

- (i) **Frozen** (state): Lewin believed that people are comfortable with their existing state of affairs and are frozen in that comfort. They don't want to come out of their comfort zone.
- (ii) **Unfreezing**: In order to move them towards change they need to be unfrozen so that they are ready for change.
- (iii) **Transition**: After unfreezing, Lewin believes that stakeholders need to embark on a journey of transition which results in change; people may need support through this transition period to ensure that they are able to complete the transition and make the change. Once a person has successfully made the transition to change, they will need to refreeze.
- (iv) **Refreezing**: This involves nesting, laying down roots and regaining the stability experienced prior to the change. Without refreezing the change will not last. Through refreezing the change will become a permanent part of the organization.²



Source: Lewin K. (1951) 'Field Theory in Social Science', Harper and Row, New York.

² Lewin K. (1951) 'Field Theory in Social Science', Harper and Row, New York.

3.8 Setting up Goals and Targets – Result Framework

| Objective Statement | Indicators | Measurement Tool |
|---|---|---|
| Goal | | |
| To establish a world class international mail processing entity | International mail volume, Better Customer Experience (CX) | Annual Reports |
| Strategic Objectives (1 or 2) | | |
| 1. Customer Experience (CX)/Increased Customer Base | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inbound & outbound mail indicators • social media indicators | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visibility of mail/ • fewer complaints • increased volume of mail • likes & shares on social media |
| 2. Fulfil International Obligation | Better ranking in Quality of Service, transport and delivery standards | 4 Metrics of Postal Development Report , Monthly Performance Metrics of EMS, QCS Mail Big Data |
| Regional Connectivity (Asia Pacific) | Transit Hub for Afghanistan, Iran | Mail Volume of Transit |
| Intermediate Results (2 or 3) | | |
| 1. UPU compliance with International Postal System | Compliance with UPU EDI goals | Monthly and Quarterly Reports of EMS and Parcels |
| 2. Increased Customer Satisfaction | Visibility via EMTTS | Increased Revenue/Comparison of Inbound and Outbound Mail |
| Activities (any number) | | |
| Scanning of outbound and inbound mail | Scanning visualization of events in GCSS, I-Care and EMTTS | Weekly, Monthly and Quarterly Reports |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Integration of IPS with EMTTS | Visualization of IPS events in GCSS and I-Care | Results of integration in monthly EMS co-operative reports |
| Data Replication at Central Office Level in IPS | Visibility of Booking, transmission and Delivery in EMTTS | EMTTS Reports |
| Training of HR | Efficient and fast track scanning of all mail | Scanning of all outbound and inbound mail |
| Monitoring and Evaluation | Visits and Inspections | Bi-annual Performance Review of OEs |
| Inputs | | |
| IT Hardware and software | Availability and deployment | Physical inspection |
| Training workshops | Efficient and smooth transition | No backlog of mail items |
| Updation of data from IPS into local server | Availability of track on website | Practical random tracking |

Section IV

4. Final Outcome and Lessons Learnt

4.1 Successful Implementation

While this whole case may seem to be just an exaggerated description of implementing the introduction of a software, this is not the case. It is being narrated in so much detail as an achievement and as a success story because it was implemented by a non-technical bureaucrat who, quite truthfully, not only overcame departmental resistance to change but also saved a huge amount of money, especially foreign exchange, in the process. This development further strengthened a whole department and is now the backbone of current postal tracking system which continues to earn both money and respect for the country. Mr Ahmar was rightly happy on these developments. Followings is a description of IPS and detailed tasks that were completed for its implementation and provision of tracking to postal customers.

International Postal System (IPS)

IPS is an application for handling international mail developed by the Universal Postal Union. The IPS application allows postal organizations to store and exchange data related to the mail handling process. IPS keeps item tracking records and information about the mail events that an item passes through during the international mail handling process. Postal organizations can use IPS to identify every mail event that an item experiences from the time of being received from a customer until it is delivered.

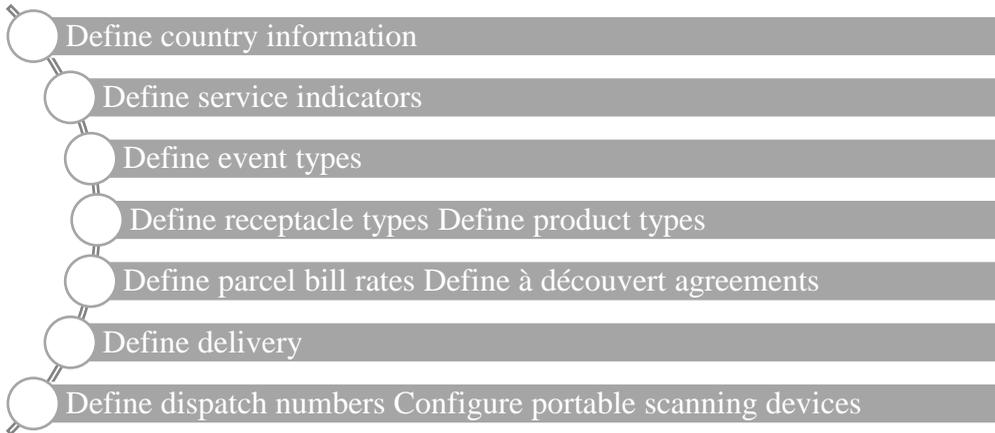
1. Acquisitions of hardware (one server 4 workstations); plus other accessories including one laser printer, bar code scanners, C.D writer, and external modem.
2. fully operational wireless network established.
3. IPS software with Web Tracking module received from UPU.
4. IPS installed and running without any outsourcing or foreign consultancy.
5. All data relating to incoming mails uploaded in the system.
6. Staff was provided functional training by Mr Ahmar (Dy. Controller) locally.
7. Mailboxes PK 330 for parcels, PK 350 for letters for TRAKIT and PK101 for PREDES/RESDES EDI messaging created in UPU server.
8. VPN connection established for Electronic Data Interchange (EDI).
9. Web Tracking module configured to provide tracking facility to customers.

To set up the national server, following steps were followed.

Technical Settings: The following settings were made in the application. Mr. Ahmar got it done with the help of technology partner of Pakistan Post and remote support from Regional Support Centre of Asia Pacific of UPU.

- Setting up National Server
- Registering IPS
- Updating registration key
- Configuring checklist of Mandatory and Recommended Tasks
- Defining the local configuration
- Defining operational parameters
- Defining the schedule
- Defining the national configuration
- Defining valid mail classes

- Defining next offices
- Adding new offices in your organization
- Configuring EDI services
- Viewing and defining exchanges with your EDI partners



4.2 Outcome of Implementation

4.2.1 Satisfied Management

The successful implementation of IPS was appreciated by the management of Pakistan Post. The Director General Pakistan Post (DG, PP) visited IMO Islamabad. Deputy Postmaster General (DPMG) Northern Punjab Rawalpindi who was the immediate boss of Mr Ahmar accompanied the DG. The practical demonstration was appreciated by the visiting officers. The DG PP directed Mr. Ahmar to collaborate with the technology partner for implementation of IPS in all OEs across Pakistan.

It was good news for the management from the customers' perspective as they now had better visibility of postal items. At the same time, it was a compliance of UPU's requirement of putting a tracking system in place for getting better payments upon delivery of incoming international postal items. So, this development not only proved beneficial to the customers, but it also enabled Pakistan Post to fulfil an international obligation.

4.2.2 Happy Operational Staff

Technology has consistently changed the way employees do their jobs. Technology has also improved working conditions by streamlining tedious and complicated processes, increasing work speed and accuracy and positively contributing to enhanced productivity. Technology's impact on the work environment is immeasurable. While

making work look easy, it makes all postal staff (from sorters to supervisors) more productive as their accuracy and speed increase. Computerized processing has exponentially increased productivity and speed at which both incoming and outgoing mail is now processed. Work that used to take hours is now finishing in minutes. Doing away with manual preparation of postal forms and bag tags has made life of staff easy and also brought accuracy in handling. The resulting satisfaction among the staff has positively impacted workplace environment and management. Customer-relationship has improved with readily available information. Instead of going through big bundles of working papers to find out the fate of a particular postal item, this information is now only a click away.

4.2.3 Something Good to be Shared with Customers

Booking offices and customers who used to approach the IMO after sending their postal items were accustomed to have typical response, “Let us check this and we will come back to you tomorrow or after a few hours.” Now they are pleasantly surprised when the officials at IMO say, “Please hold; let me check in the system.”

4.2.4 Developments Following IPS Implementation

The successful implementation of IPS in IMO Islamabad as a pilot project became a prelude to success introduction of different technological tools that improved the operational outlook and a better organizational perception of customers. This was a step towards Operational Readiness for E-Commerce (ORE).

4.3 Lessons Learnt

1. It is fallacious to presume that everybody is averse to change. People may be and are afraid of the unknown. But change agents are required to educate both implementers and stakeholders. They can be motivated, if only their reservations are addressed. There may always be a few who don't wish to change, but the vast majority do adopt changes subject to proper education and motivation.

Change does not always come from top. Even in hierarchical setups, it is possible to convince the top management for organisational improvement. What is required is that plans are supported by solid evidence. Change advocates need to convince and gain support of the top management for change. It is crucial to communicate that the actions are for the betterment of the organization and achievement of its goals, and not for personal gains. Trust is the key which is a must ingredient before asking for top management support.

2. Wheels must not be reinvented. Being part of the UPU, Pakistan Post was entitled to benefit from the latest technological developments taking place in the postal world. Unfortunately, the connection between the UPU and Pakistan Post was

mostly at the highest level. The operational tier(s) had never been exposed to UPU and its contribution to operations.

3. Failure is generally attributed to lengthy processes and unwieldy hierarchies in public sector organisations. If analysed closely, one can discover that the basic problem lies in a lack of initiative. Both top and lower tiers continue to wait for someone else to take the initiative. Thus the requirement for all organisations is to encourage initiatives at all levels. The common belief that should be communicated throughout the organisation is that everyone, irrespective of his rank and position, is entitled to take positive initiatives.
4. For the success of any initiative, the best way is to involve as many stakeholders as possible. Support of stakeholders is required at every step and stage: for initiation of a project, provision of resources, assigning key roles and not the least for smooth roll outs.

4.4 Recommendations – Tips for Future Endeavours

1. Organizations should not hesitate and delay implementation of change for fear of employees' inability to adopt change.
2. New ideas must be encouraged at all levels and incentivised. Monetary rewards are not always required; quite often just acknowledgement and appreciation can suffice.
3. The capacity of internal IT cadres must be enhanced so that they may implement improvements that are gained from other partners or at least they should be able to synchronise changes with the industry.
4. Team building should be supported and powers should be delegated to middle and lower tiers of organisations for successful public sector organisational change.
5. Most public sector organisations usually have international partnerships. Such partner organisations can be approached to provide support to organisations in developing countries. With UPU representing the global postal sector and Pakistan Post being one of its members, its technical support was available as a right and should have been sought earlier. Indeed, Pakistan Post should have been more connected to the UPU, soaking up different softwares and technical support for keeping pace with global players in the industry.

Glossary of Terms

| TERM | DETAIL |
|---------------|--|
| DMO | District Mail Office |
| DPMG | Deputy Postmaster General |
| EDI | Electronic Data Interchange |
| EMTTS | Express Mail Track and Trace System |
| GPO | General Post Office |
| IMO | International Mail Office |
| IPS | International Postal System |
| OE | Office of Exchange |
| PPSMB | Pakistan Postal Services Management board |
| PRECON | Pre-Consignment |
| PREDES | Pre- Dispatch |
| PTC | Postal Technology Centre |
| RESCON | Response to Consignment |
| RESDES | Response to Dispatch |
| RSCAP | Regional Support Centre for Asia and Pacific |
| UPU | Universal Postal Union |
| PFP | Pay for Performance |
| QSF | Quality of Service Fund |
| ORE | Operational Readiness for E-Commerce |
| EMS | Express Mail Service |

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