



Stephanie Hopson
President, CEO

Independent Hardware - The Premier Channel for PEC's Package Processing and Shipping Service National Network

When Package Express Centers first started in 1984, our locations were primarily found in local independent drug stores. In order to diversify our account base we looked at electronic stores, card and gift, video, floral, print shops, grocery stores, farm and ranch, variety, you name it.

In the early 1990's that diversity ended up mainly being filled by the independent hardware stores as our targets for long term partners. Since that time the small town hardware store has been the main channel of distribution for Package Express Centers, both in number of locations, and in package volume as well.

According to recent press releases from Ace Hardware, the independent hardware store is finding ways to not only survive in today's market, but grow. Ace Hardware reported its seventh consecutive increase in same store sales. CEO John Venhuizen states that they are positioned to fight Amazon due to "Amazon does not have 5,000 stores." Mr. Venhuizen also pointed out that "Amazon does not have local owners embedded in the communities they serve." Service, convenience and qualities, are three items he also expressed the importance to excel at.

True Value Company also announced outstanding 2016 results. True Value had it's 6th consecutive year of increase in 2016. CEO John Hartman said they are executing plans that will "make them relevant for generations to come."

Side Note: Does PEC only set-up hardware stores now? No - actually we have also been setting up some of the most diverse types of retail stores we have ever seen. Since 2006, when UPS stopped setting up retail stores to ship for the public, PEC has been setting up many different type of locations due to leads from UPS in communities that have a need for UPS service. We have now set-up fitness centers, motorcycle shops, storage centers, industrial/equipment supply stores, and tax preparers. We believe that any independent retail can qualify for service no matter the type of store.



Walgreens and FedEx Team Up to Offer FedEx Dropoff and Pickup at Thousands of Walgreens Locations Nationwide

Walgreens and FedEx customers to benefit from additional convenient and secure delivery locations
January 11, 2017



MEMPHIS, Tenn., and DEERFIELD, Ill., Jan 11, 2017—FedEx Corp. (NYSE: FDX) and Walgreen Co., one of the nation’s largest drugstore chains, announced a long-term alliance agreement that will offer convenient access to FedEx dropoff and pickup services at thousands of Walgreens locations across the United States beginning within the next several months.

“Walgreens, with its strong focus on customer care, is the perfect retailer to help us continue to meet the growing demand for convenient, secure dropoff and pickup options, and our research has shown that customers rank pharmacies as a preferred location for accessing their e-commerce shipments,” said Raj Subramaniam, executive vice president, chief marketing and communications officer, FedEx Corporation. “The addition of Walgreens locations to the existing network of FedEx retail offerings will substantially increase customer access to staffed pickup and dropoff locations and enhance convenient access to FedEx Ground and FedEx Express package shipment and dropoff options. We look forward to offering these capabilities to customers, and continuing to meet their e-commerce shipping needs with these flexible options.”

“Working with FedEx to provide safe and secure delivery locations while making it easy for customers to ship returns and other packages through the FedEx networks is another way we are becoming America’s most loved pharmacy-led health, wellbeing and beauty retailer,” said Reuben Slone, Walgreens senior vice president of supply chain. “We look forward to providing our customers with these convenient options that will be available whenever the store is open.”

Improving Convenience and Saving Time

By bringing together Walgreens convenient network of retail locations across the country and FedEx as one of the leading enablers of the rapidly growing e-commerce economy, this new alliance will significantly expand the options available to consumers to drop off and pick up their FedEx shipments and handle multiple tasks during a single store visit. As part of the FedEx Onsite™ program, customers will be able to drop off pre-packaged and pre-labeled shipments at Walgreens stores and pick up packages that they direct to their neighborhood Walgreens.

After an initial, small-scale rollout this spring, Walgreens and FedEx expect to have the program available at thousands of Walgreens locations later this calendar year and chainwide at nearly 8,000 Walgreens stores by the fall of 2018.

Side Note: How can Walgreens accepting Fed Ex packages be a good thing for your community and your PEC Service? Getting the average consumer in the mindset that stores can be the “go to” place for taking care of their packages is a great thing. Walgreens will not be shipping any packages, only accepting them. That in itself creates awareness for the community. Reach out to your local Walgreens to let them know if they have customers wanting to ship that your store is where they should come to. Since PEC centers only use UPS – Walgreens Fed Ex accepting drop off’s is not competition but underscores and emphasizes the need and suitability for consumers to get packages to the carriers.

Phishing for Information

The word **phishing** actually comes from the word fishing. Sending scam emails has been given this term, because **phishers** throw a piece of bait out to many users hoping for someone to bite. Phishing scams still remain a serious security concern today and show no evidence of slowing down. Phishing is so prevalent, because it is extremely easy and extremely effective. There are many different types of phishing attacks of which you need to be aware, but the most common type includes vague emails with threats to lure you into clicking a link or downloading an attachment. This is so successful, because it is very easy for phishers to spoof (or mask) the email address they are sending messages from to make it appear like it is coming from a reputable source. It is also easy to style an email to look similar to emails that company usually sends.



usually sends.

Phishing is such a common issue in businesses that some larger companies even have a department focused on prevention and education for employees. These departments will occasionally send common examples of phishing emails to their entire company and study what types of phishing messages the employees are susceptible to. This allows them to develop educational

materials for employees to help avoid such things in the future. This is extremely important and worth the cost for larger companies, because 1 simple download or link click in a phishing email could be enough to take down an entire network and/or compromise sensitive user data. A recent study, detailed on ZDnet.com, shows that as many as 24% of these emails are opened and a link is clicked. 54% of those people provided login credentials for the target website and 81% of those went on to download a file. This was all, simply, because a convincing email told them to do it.



Luckily, most phishing attacks are 100% avoidable simply by being smart and thinking before you click. Make sure you recognize the email address the message came from. Just because the company's name is in the domain of the email address does not mean it necessarily came from them. It is entirely too easy to create a domain with a common company's name and, with certain tools, phishers can make an email appear to have come from any email address they wish. Hover your mouse over links before clicking. This will show you the exact web address the link will be taking you to. If you get an email that appears to be from your bank that offers a link to their website to address an issue, you're much better off navigating to your bank's website manually from your browser than using a link provided to you. That small risk could turn into a major mistake. Junk/Spam filters can't catch all malicious emails, so it is up to you to be careful and knowledgeable.

How Did The Postal Service Do In 2016?

The U.S. Postal Service reported a **\$5.6 billion loss** in fiscal 2016, despite claiming a controllable income of \$610 million, with the net loss increasing by \$500 million over the previous fiscal year.

Despite the price drop, the Postal Service still brought in \$70.5 billion in fiscal 2016, up from \$68.9 billion in fiscal 2015. Expenses also grew, however, as growing package volume led to higher transportation and labor costs. Total work hours grew by 30 million this past fiscal year, and compensation and benefit costs increased by \$1.4 billion.

As it has for years, first-class mail volume -- which

represents USPS' most profitable offering -- dropped precipitously, falling 5.3 percent. Standard (what is often referred to as "junk") mail volume increased by 1 percent, while shipping and package volume jumped nearly 14 percent. Total volume dropped by just 100 million pieces, after falling by 1.3 billion pieces between fiscal years 2014 and 2015.

While USPS continues to report losses, its improving financial standing has allowed it to make investments in its business, spending \$1.4 billion on building improvements, vehicles, equipment and other capital projects.

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