

# THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION OF THE POST OF SERBIA WITH ITS CUSTOMERS

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**Abstract:** *Communication is the crucial thing to management in the last 20 years. Developed postal administrations around the world pay great importance to this because they know that poor communication in today's turbulent environment is very expensive. The subject of this paper is to show the importance of communication with the users of the Post of Serbia and its services, in order to achieve the ultimate goal of communication, i.e. the customer satisfaction. Therefore, it is important for the Post of Serbia to be familiar with its customers, their wants and needs; perform their segmentation; educate staff to communicate with each group of users; to constantly and periodically examines and analyzes the level of information available to users about the services it provides, the level of the usage of its services, the degree of customer satisfaction with the Post of Serbia, in order to be able to plan and improve communication with customers.*

**Keywords:** *communication, user, communication with the users of postal services, customer satisfaction, the Post of Serbia, postal services*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The subject of the research is to determine the importance of communication between the Post Office of Serbia and users of its services. Given the fact that the needs of users of postal services emerge from the needs of a changing society, it is necessary to examine whether the Post of Serbia monitor these changes. Status of the Post as a state company providing it monopoly position, and it can opposite to usual acting of business organizations in terms of competitiveness. It does not have to fight for its clients, which affect the quality of the relationship between the Post and the users of its services<sup>1</sup>. The question is whether people are sufficiently informed about the services provided by the Post of Serbia, what is their position on the postal services and whether they meet their needs and expectations.

The aim of this paper is to emphasize the importance of communication between the Post of Serbia and users of its services in order to fulfill the ultimate goal of communication, and that is customer satisfaction. Satisfied user has to be a priority for the station, because if the user is satisfied he/she becomes loyal, and thus affect other potential users by recommending service.

Improving communication provides:

- Increasing the level of information of users regarding the Post of Serbia services,
- Increased utilization of services the Post of Serbia,
- Increased level of customer satisfaction,
- Winning over new customers and retaining of the existing ones,

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<sup>1</sup> Milan Radosavljević, Života Radosavljević, „The Necessity of Professionalization of Public Sector Management“, u Zbornik sa MK „LEMiMA 2011“, ALFA University, FORKUP, Beograd, 2011., pp. 129-137.

- Promote the value of the services that fit the user's needs,
- Improve the quality of postal services,
- Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the use of postal services,
- Increase the volume of provided services,
- Enables better exploitation of the postal network,
- Plan and promote communication,
- developing of a "new image" of the Post of Serbia<sup>2</sup>

## 2. COMMUNICATION IN POSTAL TRAFFIC

Postal traffic is a special traffic branch that deals with the transfer of written and otherwise formatted reports, small quantities of goods in the form of postal parcels and remittances, between spatially separated entities in the public domestic and international traffic.<sup>3</sup>

A communications term originates from the Latin word *communicatio* that mean communication, relationships, behavior, communication, touch, traffic. Communication is the important necessity of life, because a man during its life spends too much time in communication. Its primary purpose is the exchange of messages (ideas, attitudes, values, opinions, facts, etc.) between the parties. Communication is also any purposeful and regulated information.<sup>4</sup>

We are going to discuss of communication on the postal traffic i.e. the Post of Serbia, specifically on organizational communication, which can be internal and external, but this time the focus will be on the external communication i.e. communication with users.

Postal administrations that can serve as role models and are leading in the world in terms of organizational communication are German Post (Deutsche Post World Net), UK Post (Royal Mail Group), and the U.S. Postal Service (The United States Postal Service). These postal units have clear business goals.

The objectives of German Post are to satisfy customers' needs, to increase service quality, to introduce new services based on new technologies, to gain global market, to create a reliable financial company, and to create a stimulating and attractive working environment.

Goals of the UK Post are quality, customer and business globalization.

The objectives of the U.S. Post are the user's voice, the voice of business, and the voice of employees

One can see that these postal administrations pay great attention to customers and communication with them.

While the targets of the Post of Serbia are creating the conditions for the provision of universal postal service while designing of the necessary infrastructure, redefining personnel policies, efficient use of capacity, the introduction of new services and improvement of existing universal service and commercial service portfolio, joining the mainstream of world postal integrations and gradual transformation of the ownership. Key issue is the fact that the Post of Serbia wants to provide universal service to universal user, and the fact it has never really met its customers and its needs, so the problem of immutability of the concept in terms of treating users is big.

It is obvious that people differ in terms of the needs. The assumption that all users must adapt to the universal postal service entirely excludes the development of their needs. The Post of Serbia

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<sup>2</sup> Stojanović-Višić B., *Značaj komunikacije Pošte Srbije sa korisnicima njenih usluga*, Magistarski rad, MEGATREND Univerzitet, Fakultet za menadžment, Zaječar, 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Grgurović B., *Poštanski saobraćaj I*, Viša tehnička PTT škola, Beograd, 2000

<sup>4</sup> Jovanović-Božinov M., Živković M., Cvetkovski T., *Organizaciono ponašanje*, Megatrend, Beograd, 2003

will have to exert a lot of effort to get to know its current customers and learn to manage relationships with customers, i.e. to communicate with them.

### 3. COMMUNICATION WITH POSTAL SERVICE USERS

Service users have become one of the most important segments for each company, so that relationship management has the highest share in the profits and is a major challenge for management.<sup>5</sup> It is similar with the Post of Serbia since it must build a modern business philosophy on meeting the needs of its users.

Based on the experiences of foreign postal administrations, and in order to develop communication in the Post of Serbia, users should be divided into two major target groups (and in subgroups):

#### Personal users

➤ **by age:**

- Young age users (less than 30 years)
- Mature age people (30 to 65), and
- Old age users (over 65 years)

➤ and the second separation could be by the type of needs:

- Users with standard requirements, and
- People with special needs

#### Business users (depending on the income they bring the company):

- Small business users, and
- Large business customers

### 4. RESEARCH: EXAMINING THE ATTITUDE OF THE USERS OF THE POST OF SERBIA

In Belgrade, in period 23 - 25 January 2013, a survey was conducted - testing the attitudes of the users of postal services using the survey techniques, dividing users into 5 groups (young people, adult and old age, users with special needs and business customers) by 20 respondents on a random basis.

Following postal services were included by the questionnaire: PostNet orders, Cash Express, remittances (Western Union), Post Express (courier service), Assortment of the Post Shop (postage stamps, different types of envelopes, packaging, forms, postcards and greeting cards, mailboxes, pre-paid cell phones, phone cards for calling abroad, address books and other stationery, various souvenirs, city plans, children's toys, educational books, many other products and various e-payment and internet coupons) and marketing services (advertising using poster display, holder advertising, handing out flyers at the post offices, displaying branded items, promotions and advertising in post offices on plasma screens).

The first question was about the level of information of users regarding the service of the Post. The second question was about the frequently used services.

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<sup>5</sup> Rajević D., Draganić T., „Customer Relationship Management“, *International journal of economics and law*, ALFA University, FORKUP, Vol.1, No. 2, August 2011, p. 148

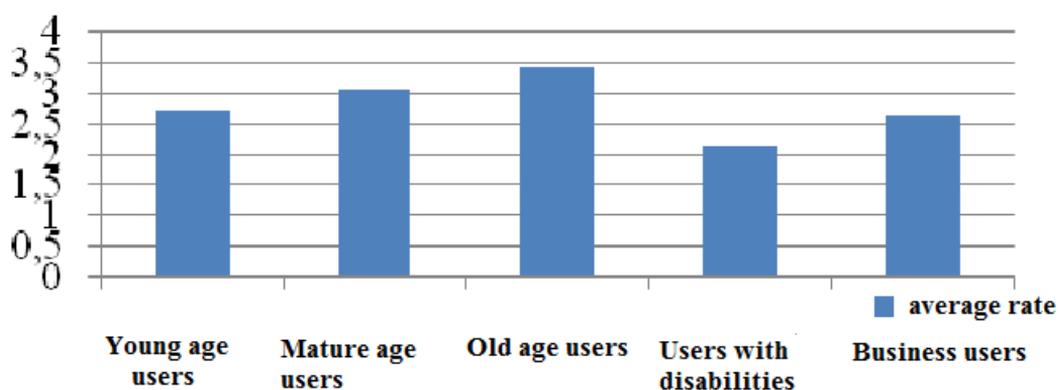
The third question was whether the services meet their expectations.  
 The fourth was the proposition to improve the delivery of postal services.  
 The fifth was to rate the Post of Serbia as service provider.

After collecting data, the processing was started and at the end, the analysis of the results through statistical methods (percentage and graph, the arithmetic mean) was performed, and through the analysis of the content and use of the comparative method.

The results showed that:

- The largest informativity and the biggest level of service usage achieved in using PostNet referrals and Post Express services;
- The biggest noninformativity and the smallest degree of usage are recorded in using Cash Express and marketing services;
- A higher level of usage of some services has to do with the age structure and the nature of their needs

Based on the chart A: Average rate of the Post of Serbia as a service provider by different user groups - the best grade to the Post of Serbia was given by the old age users, 3.4, and the people with disabilities 2.15 gave the lowest grade.



Graph A: Average rate of the Post of Serbia as a service provider by different user groups  
 (Source: The study of users' views of Serbian Post, January 2013)

Suggestions:

- The Post of Serbia should pay more attention to informing its customers about the Cash Express service and marketing services, as well as increasing the level of awareness and usage of other services.
- Suggestions by the users relating to the improvement of the process of providing postal services are more than realistic, and should be adopted as soon as possible.
- The most importantly is to made effort to increase customer satisfaction in all groups, because if the Post has not kept pace with the development of society and the needs of its customers, it is going to lose its primary reason for being (Figure 1: Correlation of changes).

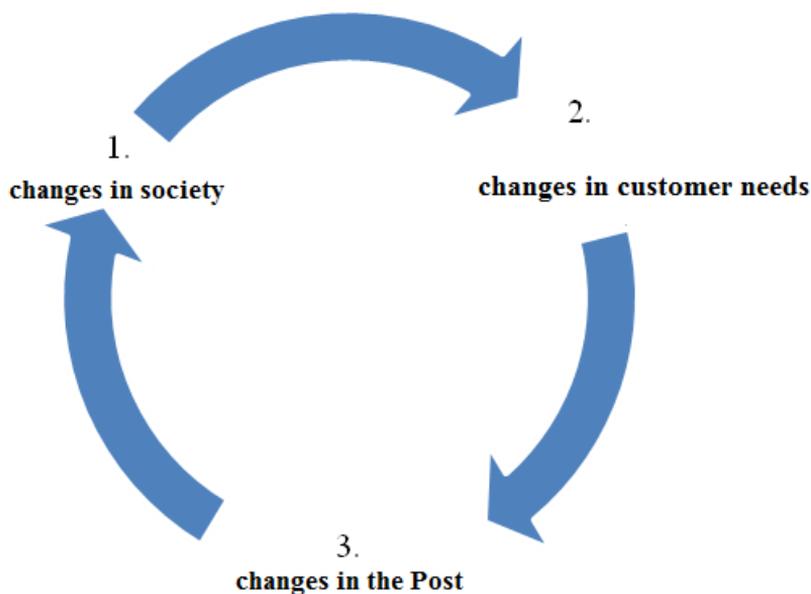


Figure 1: Correlation of changes

## 5. RESUME

Insight into the current state of the Post of Serbia has been concluded that the communication with users of postal services is weak and underdeveloped, and that not enough attention is given to this problem, which can be dangerous.

It is necessary to find the right way to meet the changing consumer's needs, and it is not enough just to put users to wait in the line, it is necessary to get to users.

Emphasis is placed on the necessity of successful communication between the Post of Serbia and the postal service users, as the most important element of the strategy of connecting with the world, in order to provide users with complete modern service they deserve in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

It is not only important the quantity of provided services, but also the quality, and more importantly, the customer satisfaction. The means of achieving this is definitely a communication with customers as a continuous process.

The user on the results of the provided services, in the form of feedback, which contribute to improving the quality of operations, and therefore better business results must inform the Post, as it would otherwise be left solely to their own ideas and assumptions.

It is necessary as soon as possible to adopt an appropriate strategy for the development of communication with users of postal services, because it is very important what type of image we create about the organization, and if the Post realize this, the better future would be possible.

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