postal technology international Awards 2016

THE 2016 WINNERS ARE ANNOUNCED!

Since its launch in 2009, the Postal Technology International Awards has gained great popularity year-on-year. This year was no exception. Nominations opened in May, and by the closing date in July, an unprecedented number of new products, technologies, projects and solutions had been put forward by posts and suppliers in the sector.

This year one new category was added and two were renamed to reflect the changing postal landscape. The Sorting Center Innovation of the Year category was introduced to recognize the new solutions being developed to meet changing needs. These include the shift from mainly lettermail handling to increasingly automated parcel handling. This new category saw nominations covering data protection and entry, OCR, mixed-mail sorting and completely re-engineered sorting centers. Warehouse robots also featured in this category – recognition of the industry's increasing investment in robotics to assist its manual workers.

The categories

Service Provider of the Year
Supplier of the Year
Environmental Achievement of the Year
New Business Diversification of the Year
Digital Innovation of the Year
Delivery Innovation of the Year
Sorting Center Innovation of the Year

The Last Mile Delivery Innovation of the Year category was renamed simply Delivery Innovation of the Year. This change was made in recognition of the fact that delivery is an end-to-end service, which should take consumers' needs into account throughout the whole chain – not just at the final mile. Nominations in this category covered crowdsourcing applications to find delivery drivers, mail notification services, apps for time-specific deliveries, smart parcel lockers and open network parcel lockers.

The Business Development Innovation of the Year category became New Business Diversification of the Year in 2016. As more posts look to alternative revenue streams to strengthen their bottom line, they are venturing into new areas of business. This category was amended to reflect this development. Nominations for this category were particularly numerous and highlighted some interesting developments, such as 3D-printing networks, lawn mowing services, home and health care, and grocery delivery.

Nominations for the awards were made by *Postal Technology International* readers. A shortlist was then drawn up according to the number of nominations and sent to the judging panel, which consisted of 18 decision makers and industry experts from posts, consultants and associations from around the world, including DHL, La Poste, UPU, IPC, SingPost, PostEurop and An Post. The judges then voted for their top choices. The winners of this year's awards are revealed over the next eight pages. ■

The judging panel

Thomas Baldry, senior vice president, mail import and international relations, Deutsche Post DHL

Ciprian Bolos, director of strategy and international relations, Romanian Post

Abdelilah Bousseta, director of operations and technology, Universal Postal Union

Tim Brown, CEO, Jersey Post

Joseph Gafa, CEO, Malta Post

Alan Gairns, chief operating officer, Qatar Postal Services Company

Herbert Götz, marketing director, International Post Corporation

Khaled Ibrahim Shahdoor, chief information officer, Emirates Post Group

Jan Kollar, head of international and regulatory affairs, Slovenska Posta

Woo Keng Leong, CEO, Postal Services, SingPost

Peter McIlroy, general manager, program management and engineering systems, Canada Post Corporation

Helen Norman, editor, *Postal Technology International*

Liam O'Sullivan, director of mail, An Post

Derek Osborn, business coach, Whatnext4u

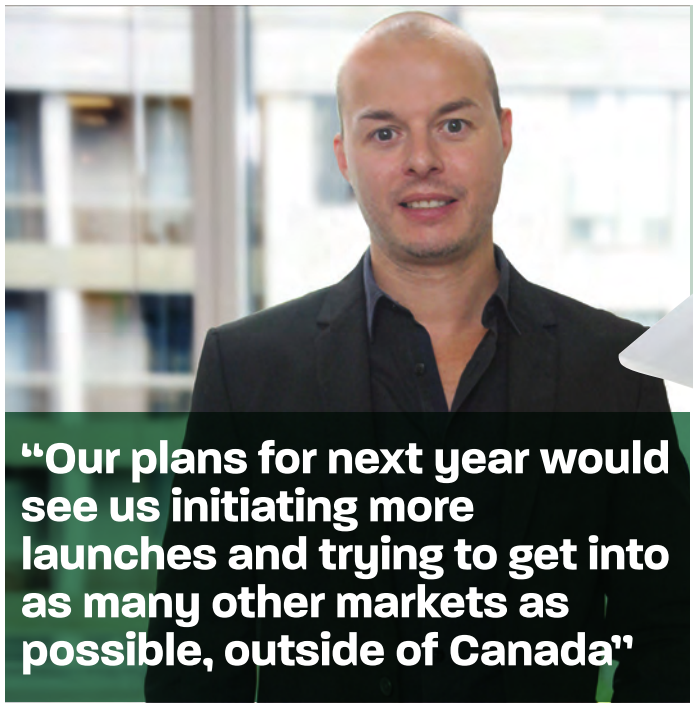
Alain Roset, digital research and development expert, La Poste

Gul Sabir, superintendent, Pakistan Post

Botond Szebeny, secretary general, PostEurop

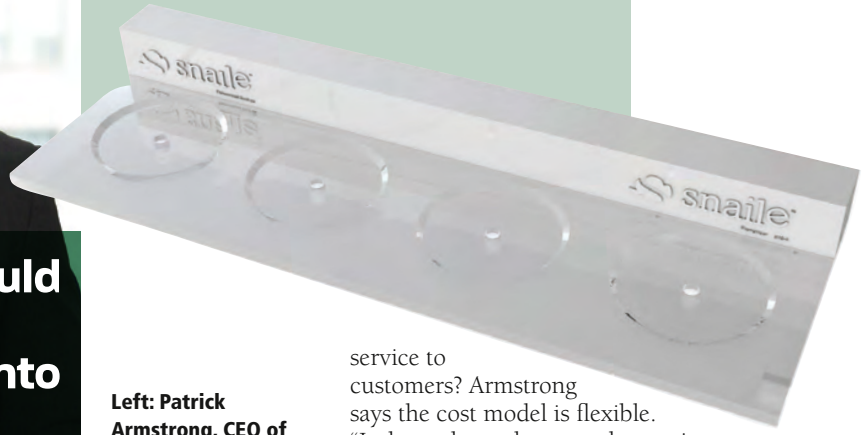
Elmar Toime, chairman, Postea, and postal industry consultant

CATEGORY: DIGITAL INNOVATION OF THE YEAR
WINNER: SNAILE'S MAIL NOTIFICATION TECHNOLOGY



Shortlist

USPS Informed Delivery
Snaile's mail notification technology
TrackerSense
Siemens' Production, Planning and Control (PPC) system



Left: Patrick Armstrong, CEO of Snaile, makers of mail notification devices (above)

The problem: From 2014, Canada Post decided to stop door-to-door delivery in some areas to save costs, instead placing everything in a single community mailbox (CMB). But how will people know when something has been delivered, or avoid a wasted journey if nothing is there at all? The solution: mail notification technology from Snaile, installed at the CMB and sending an alert when post arrives.

Canada Post's decision to cease its door-to-door service is expected to affect five million residents by 2018. Patrick Armstrong, Snaile CEO, says, "We have developed two solutions – one for the larger CMBs currently being rolled out as the initiative gets under way; and another for the smaller, regular-size versions that have been in use for some time – around 3.8 million of them. The modular design means that Snaile can be easily configured for other postal markets, such as the USA, which is 10 times larger than Canada's postal market, but where similar cost-cutting reforms might also take place."

The Snaile system uses patent-pending infrared detection technology, with LEDs that glow inside the mailbox, monitoring its use. Using wi-fi or a cellular network, data is sent to the Snaile cloud. "For items waiting to be picked up by the postal service, Snaile can provide operators with a list via a route-planning app, detailing which boxes need to be emptied on any given day, reducing the unnecessary expenses associated with checking empty ones," says Armstrong. "It also provides real data, so operators can organize fleet sizes and routes around the volume of mail.

"Snaile also detects the presence of mail delivered by the operator, then notifies the customer via email, SMS or through an app. The beauty of the system is there are no mechanical parts and no need for calibration. Each individual device has a two-year warranty, running on rechargeable batteries, with several months or even a year available from a full charge."

But who pays for the Snaile technology – is it the operator, or do they offer the service to customers? Armstrong says the cost model is flexible. "It depends, as there are the service costs and route-planning to factor in, which vary according to the volume," he says.

The technology has emerged slowly, applied to more areas in Canada as the postal service withdraws its door-to-door deliveries. "Our plans for next year would see us initiating more launches and trying to get into as many other markets as possible, outside of Canada," says Armstrong. "The technology works with a range of cellular networks, it's low cost, and it's easy to translate the user interface into other languages." ■

At a glance

- Snaile is a Canadian company that saw an opportunity when Canada Post decided to stop door-to-door mail delivery
- Its technology can be installed in personal mailboxes and locker boxes at post offices, and uses infrared to monitor the contents
- Delivery companies are alerted when there is something to collect, while the general public is notified when they have a delivery
- Snaile saves wasted trips to the mailbox when there is nothing present, and provides data to operators to help them plan collection routes and fleet sizes