

EANS-Adhoc: AUSTRIAN POST SIMPLIFIES ITS PRODUCT PORTFOLIO AS OF MAY 1, 2011 REGULATOR ACCEPTS NEW TARIFF STRUCTURE OFFERS ORIENTED TO CUSTOMER WISHES

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Austrian Post is making itself fit for the future, and is orienting itself even more strongly to the wishes of its customers. The first major step in this direction is the new product portfolio for mail presented by Austrian Post, which will take effect on May 1, 2011. More clearly structured postal tariff categories based on the dimensions of mail items, easier handling and greater availability are features of Austrian Post's newly unveiled offering. This will enable Austrian Post to operate even more competitively in a liberalised market vis-à-vis its competitors.

In order to optimally orient its product and services to the wishes of the Austrian population, Austrian Post launched a large-scale customer survey in the fall of last year, in which about 300,000 Austrians took part. The high response rate of eight percent (compared to one to two percent for surveys on average) demonstrates the importance attached by the Austrians to their postal deliveries. The respondents expressed their considerable satisfaction with the services provided by Austrian Post, with 94 percent saying that they are satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of delivery service, and 91 percent expressing the great confidence they have in the delivery staff.

The survey also revealed that customers want an easily understandable product portfolio. In the last eight years since the last reform took place, the offering of Austrian Post has been increasingly enlarged and thus more complex. This repeatedly led to customer uncertainty.

For this reason, Austrian Post's objective was to develop a new product portfolio tailored even more strongly to changing market and customer requirements, and embodying greater simplification and standardisation.

The new letter mail product portfolio of Austrian Post as of May 1, 2011:

SIMPLIFIED PRODUCT STRUCTURE

The new product structure is based on five standard sizes: Standard, Standard+, Maxi, Maxi+ and Grossbrief (Large letter). Postal customers can conveniently stick on the correct postage at home and then bring the letter to the nearest letterbox. Thus this new offering supports the self-service capabilities of people and facilitates the depositing of letters for pick-up e.g. in the 17,000 letterboxes throughout the country. The old system had 14 different postal rates.

EASIER HANDLING

The first four rate categories are designed to ensure that mail items fit into normal house letterboxes and thus create a closed cycle, from the simple depositing of letters for collection until letters are delivered to recipients. The fifth tariff category "Grossbrief" (Large letter) covers all special wishes. Moreover, the new portfolio is based on comprehensible and clearly structured postal rates for all worldwide destinations with only six price categories instead of the 15 categories up until now.

FREEDOM TO SELECT DIFFERENT DELIVERY SPEEDS

In line with international practices, business customers will increasingly be able to enjoy a greater freedom of choice between different delivery speeds. A so-called "Premium" product will guarantee delivery on the next working day, whereas a more favourably-priced "Economy" product for higher quantities will offer letter mail delivery within 2-3 days. Private customers will continue to enjoy the advantages of a Premium product with delivery on the next working day, in line with the legally stipulated universal service obligation.

INDIVIDUALISED DIRECT MAILINGS

In the field of dialogue marketing (direct mail), Austrian Post is offering the greatest possible individuality of communications using all the technological means at its disposal. This is particularly important with regards to maintaining customer loyalty and ensuring a precise target group-oriented approach.

The graduated pricing scale begins with standard domestic letters, which depending on delivery speed will cost 57 cents ("Economy - longer delivery time, starting with 1,000 mail items) or 62 cents ("Premium" - delivery on the next working day). Further products are Standard Plus - a letter costing 80 cents (Economy) and 90 cents (Premium), the Maxi-Letter at a cost of EUR 1.25 or EUR 1.45 to the "Maxi plus-Letter" at a rate of EUR 2.60 or EUR 2.90. Customers can also choose the "Grossbrief" (Large letter) at a rate of EUR 3.80, or 40 cents less than a conventional parcel (EUR 3.80 instead of EUR 4.20). This new system represents the first change in Austrian Post's domestic product and tariff structure since the year 2003.

With its new product portfolio Austrian Post will operate on the liberalized letter mail market in an even more customer-oriented and competitive manner. Furthermore it should help to ensure a stable development of the company and thus a continuation of universal postal services in Austria.

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