Interview: Chee Yaw Chek – Managing Director; Cindy Chan – Regional Customer Manager, DHL Express Taiwan



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02.06.2017

Tags: Taiwan, DHL, Logistics, Distribution, Pharma, Healthcare

Managing Director Chee Yaw Chek and Regional Customer Manager, Cindy Chan, discuss the importance of Taiwan for DHL, the customer-oriented service they nurture and their focus on ensuring Taiwanese companies get global exposure.

You have been the country manager of DHL Express Taiwan since 2010. As an introduction for our readers, please give an overview of where DHL Express Taiwan stands today and highlight some of your main achievements since you took over?

Chee Yaw Chek (CYC): In the past seven years, Taiwan has become a highly competitive market in terms of commercial price wars. This is due to cost control and reluctant investment. At DHL Taiwan, we are focusing on growing the market through adding value to our customers. Taiwan is a notable market in terms of the level of innovation. Whether it is the automotive or the IT industry, technological innovations must reach the global market. DHL adds value in this specific area. Being on the market for almost 45 years, makes us not only the most experienced company in this industry, but also the biggest by far. We have a very extensive network in Taiwan. As we use a “dual-gateway strategy” to offer direct air links from both the north and south, we also have a wider flexibility than our competitors. DHL is currently focused on investing in the necessary areas. Our customers appreciate that. Our market is constantly growing due to the fact we are able to

provide better service than our competitors. We have targeted the life science sector for over 20 years as there is a lot of innovation. We enable them to reach their customers and provide them with global geographic coverage while making sure their specific requirements are met.

In November 2016, DHL Express Inaugurates New NT97 Million Custom-Built State-of-the-Art Service Center in Kaohsiung, while the Deutsche Post DHL Group CEO Frank Appel announced in April 2015 will invest additional NT$337 mil. in Taiwan. What are the rationales that motivate DHL's investment to Taiwan and what is the importance of Taiwan within the regional strategy of the group?

CYC: In terms of volume the market is not growing, which can hinder investment. However, this is not the case if the business is performing well. DHL has been investing mostly in customer service with a focus on improving quality. Customer satisfaction has been improving steadily. Taking into account customer satisfaction, we believe in the importance of investing. Investment in facilities and planes is important, but in DHL we focus mostly on investing in people. Consequently, we get a lot of recognition. We got the award for the best employer due to spending a lot of time on developing our employees and their skills. Training employees is part of our managers' daily tasks at DHL.

At the moment, many countries are trying to position themselves as logistics hub in the region. Taiwan is well positioned geographically but holds a specific statehood status, while for imports, Taiwan has a tendency to set its own standards. How does this specificity impact your activities and strengthen the necessity for Taiwanese business to partner with a logistics expert for their import/export services?

CYC: Political sensitivities impact flight control and directions. Actually, we are the only company in Taiwan flying to Cuba. Having access to the global market, using our network, commercial airlines and being flexible makes us better than the competition.

DHL's Vision 2020 is "Focus- Connect-Grow", as the company looks at expanding its business in growth markets and segments. To what extent do healthcare-related services stand as a growth market niche for DHL Express Taiwan?

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CYC: Technology is rapidly evolving. For example, genomics is one of the technology fields we couldn't have imagined twenty years ago. Healthcare industry is not only bringing innovation, but is also showing growth. Taiwan is remaining an innovative economy and is showcasing it to the

world.

The healthcare industry has specific needs in terms of logistics such as time and temperature sensitivity. To cater to these needs, in 2004, DHL launched its Medical Express service; how is this service growing and how do you plan to expand your service offering in the coming years?

CYC: Innovators and start-ups need to reach a global market and global exposure is crucial for the survival of Taiwanese companies; DHL is focused on helping these companies achieve this. I would describe this process as mutual help; we help companies and in return they help us improve our business.

How do you differentiate yourself from competitors like UPS or FedEx, which also recently massively invested in healthcare logistic?

Cindy Chan (CC): DHL has an extensive network. We have been extending to many countries where our competitors are not able to go. Medical Express was first launched in 2004, but DHL started with medical services 20 years ago. Over the last 20 years we have continued to understand and serve the needs of healthcare and life science customers. We think of issues like compliance, temperature sensitivity, and time sensitivity. Our quality control center is monitoring 24/7 and reacting to any contingency.

CYC: We also have a lot of skill in Taiwan. Niche industries like pharmaceuticals, healthcare and life sciences make sure to collaborate with logistics companies that understand the distance and specific needs. We have a special product, special people, the right partners and we focus on specific needs. Consequently, our customers are confident in our ability to understand the product and distribute within the country and wider.

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Where do you want to take DHL and what is your objective for the next two to three years?

CYC: We want to make sure we are listening to our customers and acting upon what they tell us. Our investments are always specific and relevant to the customers. The most recent investment has been focused on addressing the healthcare and life sciences industries. Spending a lot of time with government and industry associations has helped us in receiving direction. Otherwise, we wouldn’t be able to invest in the healthcare system.

How would you like the pharmaceutical industry to think of DHL? What is your position?

CC: DHL is a reputable international logistics provider. The beauty of DHL is that we can offer a seamless supply chain, from warehousing, to express delivery and monitoring. We have a complete service, which is something our competitors can’t provide. Experience, knowledge, satisfying specific requirements, offering temperature control packaging, contingency plan activation and earliest delivery are our strengths. Consequently, we are able to ensure 100 percent integrity of the product.

You have been with DHL since 2007. What do you see as your biggest challenge and what has been your proudest achievement?

CYC: I am proud to have built something that matters. I used to work as a consultant

which was never rewarding enough, unlike the job in DHL. I personally think of it as the most rewarding job. Customers are showing more satisfaction with the service and employees are very happy to be working for DHL. As I have a great respect for my employees and customers, seeing their overall increasing satisfaction with our service and performance is something that makes me feel like I have the best job in the world.

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