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DHL and Blue Dart steer India's logistics in a new direction with the launch of Smart Truck

Written by TWB Corporate News Aug 10, 2011

Bengaluru pilot adapts successful innovations from the corporate unit DHL Solutions & Innovations to improve service quality, cut costs, reduce time and CO2 emissions in emerging market conditions



From Right to left - Christopher Ong, Vice President, Business Development, First Choice and GoGreen, DHL Asia Pacific, Dr Keith Ulrich, Vice President, DHL Solutions & Innovations, Jerry Hsu, Chief Executive Officer, DHL Express - Asia Pacific, Malcolm Monteiro, Senior VP & Area Director, DHL Express South Asia, Anil Khanna, Managing Director, Blue Dart, at the launch of Blue Dart DHL Smart Truck

Bengaluru- DHL, the world's leading logistics company, and Blue Dart, part of the DHL Group, are piloting Smart Truck technology in Bengaluru, India, the first deployment of this successful logistics innovation outside Germany. Created by DHL Solutions & Innovations (DSI), the DHL Smart Truck is an "intelligent" pick-up and delivery vehicle that combines a number of innovative technologies including a route planner. Launched in Germany in 2010, DHL Smart Truck reduced number of miles traveled by 15 per cent and length of average route by 8 per cent during its pilot stage, reducing both fuel consumption and CO2 emissions.

Piloted by Blue Dart in India, the Smart Truck technology is designed to provide solutions to urban logistic challenges such as traffic restrictions, density and clogging, while ensuring environmental protection and fulfilling customer need for on-time delivery. These "intelligent" pick-up and delivery vehicles compute delivery deadlines to calculate the ideal sequence for shipments, and use real-time GPS to avoid jams and optimise routings, thereby enabling flexibility and last-minute pick-ups. This allows the DHL Smart Truck to spend more time on the road to perform their pick-up and delivery services. The Smart Truck technology also enables a more efficient sorting process by synchronizing the data and physical flow, while real-time communications and visibility of services avoid 'missed' pickups and delayed deliveries. Together, this provides better customer service and a more cost-effective operation as a result of optimum use of vehicles with less wasted miles.

Mr. Jerry Hsu, CEO, DHL Express Asia Pacific, said: "DHL's GoGreen program commits us to continually address issues that affect the environment and seek innovative solutions to reduce our carbon footprint and provide better services to customers. In fast-growing, emerging markets such as India those needs are critical and will grow more so as the world continues to urbanize and megacities proliferate. To ease congestion, improve services and cut pollution, we need solutions that will make a

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positive impact on the environment, such as the DHL Smart Truck.”

Mr. Anil Khanna, Managing Director of Blue Dart Express, said: “Adapting Smart Truck technology to work in a city like Bengaluru will have far reaching positive benefits for our clients, the city’s economy, the environment, and in the long-term for all emerging markets. The Blue Dart Smart Truck pilot, as it is known in Bengaluru, will cover all Asia-Pacific inbound shipments on five routes in the city, with the system sorting deliveries to reduce errors and increase visibility. This gives customers an accurate delivery time. To successfully launch the pilot here, we have made adaptations to the original system to additionally overcome problems with consignees’ addresses and lack of postal codes.”

The Smart Truck solution was developed by DHL Solutions & Innovations in Germany, alongside the following partners: German Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology, Deutsches Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt (German Aerospace Center), Deutsches Forschungszentrum für Künstliche Intelligenz (German Research Center for Artificial Intelligence), Viaboxx, Motorola, Quintiq and Infoware.

Dr. Keith Ulrich, Vice President at DHL Solutions & Innovations (DSI), said: “What matters most to our customers is absolute punctuality in pick-up and delivery. We believe that as we pilot the system in more cities, and fine-tune the technology, the system will prove itself to be enormously valuable in fast changing cities in the emerging markets, and become an accurate planning tool for the megacities of today and tomorrow. By optimizing routes and cutting CO2 emissions, DHL is also contributing to improving the quality of city life.”

DHL Express India and Blue Dart are top performers in DHL’s annual global Carbon Footprint Assessment register. In 2010, DHL Express India’s CO2 efficiency managed to achieve 7.2% improvement as volume surged, even though total CO2 increased by 13.9%. CO2 efficiency improvement was also driven by DHL Express India’s increased use of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) for its ground transportation, replacing diesel.

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