

AllCovered NEWS

The news YOU need to grow your business and stay ahead of your competition

A weekly service for clients and friends of Allcovered.net and the Allen Insurance Group

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Monday, 21 March 2005 -- Edition #428

AllCovered-NEWS is sent via email to all who request it in "Plain Text" to limit your download times.

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NOTE: At the end of most stories excerpted within is a link to the full story at its source.

NOTE – British Summer Time Begins

UK offices move to British Summer Time this week... moving clocks ahead one-hour. That means the time difference between the US East Coast and London is 6 hours for this week only. The US moves ahead to Daylight Savings Time next weekend.

EASTER WEEK HOURS:

Our offices in the US are OPEN Friday, 25 March and Monday 28 March.
UK businesses are closed those days for Good Friday and Easter Monday.

SMALL BIZ – MARKETING - GET MORE SALES LEADS

--- Excerpted from an article by Vinod Gupta of Infousa.com ---

Sales professionals know it is a numbers game. The more people you approach, the more you sell. Creating a system to capture fresh, accurate sales leads will help you generate more revenue and set you apart from your competitors.

Prospecting for sales leads is a never ending job.

Here are ten tips to help you generate more sales leads and income growth.

ONE: FIND NEW CUSTOMERS JUST LIKE YOUR BEST CUSTOMERS

Profile existing customers, then find others like them.

Targeting prospects similar to existing customers provides a greater chance to grow faster and become more profitable.

TWO: DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS – TREAT CUSTOMERS LIKE GOLD

Stay in constant contact with your customers.

Check in with them regularly.

Get to know them as people. Keep them happy.

They are the foundation of your success.

THREE: BECOME TECHNOLOGICALLY SAVVY

The Internet continues to grow as a business channel. Web-based sales and marketing tools are becoming more prevalent and affordable for small businesses. They are great to use and easy to find.

FOUR: USE EFFECTIVE COLD-CALLING TECHNIQUES

Cold calling gives many salespeople chills.

Turn cold calls into fact-finding missions versus sales calls.

Prospects are better-qualified when they are asked questions about their business needs instead of being forced to listen to a sales pitch.

This way the prospect's needs are met, and the salesperson has a better understanding of the customer.

NOTE – See Cold-Calling Tips under “Training & Help” – “Sales Help” in allcovered.net

FIVE: TAKE TIER-2 AND TIER-3 LEADS

Marketing directors say a vast majority of sales leads are ignored.

Salespeople are often accused of cherry-picking leads for the quick sale and leaving as many as 80% of leads uncontacted.

A closer look at second-tier and third-tier prospects can lead you to an undiscovered gold mine.

SIX: WORK WITH THE MARKETING DEPARTMENT

A survey shows only 7% of marketing people think their sales staff works well with them.

Keep communication between marketers and salespeople open by having formal dialogues between them.

The more they work together, the better they will work together.

SEVEN: MAKE FOLLOW-UP PHONE CALLS

Whether it's a customer that buys only sporadically or a lead that asks you to call them in a few months, sales opportunities often are missed for lack of a simple phone call.

Track customer contact and schedule follow-up phone calls whether the customer asks for them or not.

EIGHT: DIFFERENTIATE YOURSELF FROM COMPETITORS

Salespeople are the face of your company.

It is easy to position your product against a competitor.
Make your salespeople stand out from the competition as well.
Be available for customer when needed. Solve problems quickly and communicate with the customer throughout the process.
Become indispensable for customers and they will reward great service with sales.

NINE: CREATE A REFERRAL PROGRAM

Forbes Magazine estimates that 60% of executives make buying decisions based on recommendations from friends and co-workers.

Your customers are one of your most under-used resources for sales leads.
It may be as simple as asking your customers to give you five sales leads.

TEN: BE A TRUSTED ADVISOR

The most successful salespeople will tell you that they do not sell... they help their customers solve a business problem.

Ask questions to better understand the customer's business and challenges.

SMALL BIZ - TOOLS TO HELP YOU ARE AT ALLCOVERED.NET

Allcovered.net has many tools to help you grow your business, protect your business, and protect your clients.

Under "Training & Help" are sub-links:

"What Do I Do?" has answers to common problems like how to teach shippers what is and is not protected under various situations... and how to protect yourself if they refuse to protect themselves.

"Sales Help" offers sales, marketing and advertising help and strategies.

"Video Training" offers instructional videos to help you better serve yourself and your clients.

"Ocean/Transport Terms" has almost 3,700 searchable transport, insurance and other terms.

There are many more tools within the site for you.

Is your current insurance provider helping you like this?

CALL US TODAY! We want to earn YOUR business.

www.allcovered.net We have logistics ALL covered!

SMALL BIZ – FIND & HIRE THE BEST PEOPLE: Business Week magazine has a column highlighting how to find and hire the very best people for your company... not just fill the position but get the best.

MORE: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=66&ncid=66&e=1&u=/bw/20050316/bs_bw/sb200503168366sb037

SMALL BIZ – HEALTH – ASSOCIATION HEALTH PLANS: Small business groups have re-launched an effort to push through association health plan legislation designed to allow them to band together to increase their negotiating power. Bipartisan legislation that would allow association health plans to be regulated under federal rather than state laws has been introduced in Congress with a nod from President Bush.

MORE: <http://www.ama-assn.org/amednews/2005/03/21/gvsc0321.htm>

MORE: www.kaisernetwork.org/daily_reports/print_report.cfm?DR_ID=28763&dr_cat=3

SMALL BIZ – HEALTH – CONSUMER DRIVEN NEEDS DRIVEN CONSUMER: Will a consumer-driven health plan save company money? Of course it will, just like raising deductible or office visit co-pay save money. The trick, of course, is sustained cost savings and, more importantly, changed behaviors.

MORE: <http://www.benefitnews.com/feedback/views35.cfm>

TECH BIZ – TESTING WIMAX: AT&T is embracing a new form of high-speed wireless technology, hoping to roll it out early next year to real customers. The test this year will deliver 6Mbps to each user, over a distance of two to five miles. Where will the pilot be? Will this actually save money? Our story has the details.

MORE: <http://ct.eletters.whatsnewnow.com/rd/cts?d=181-423-1-278-261855-19356-0-0-0-1>

PERSONAL TECH – COPY YOUR VIDEOTAPES TO DVD: Looking for an easy way to transfer those videotapes to DVD--before they fade away forever? We've found one, an innovative hardware box that combines DVD playback and recording with VHS and makes it simple to copy between the two.
MORE: <http://ct.eletters.whatsnewnow.com/rd/cts?d=181-423-1-278-261855-19377-0-0-0-1>

PERSONAL BIZ – SILLY BUNNY RAP: Someone had too much free time on their hands, but it's a cute way to wish all Happy Easter.
MORE: <http://www.grayace.com/dex/bunny.html>

GERMAN ECONOMY – GERMAN PPI JUMPS: The German producer price index (PPI), which measures the price of goods at the factory gate and is a key yardstick of pipeline inflation, rose by 0.4% in February and is 4.2% higher than it had been in February 2004,
MORE: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=1518&ncid=1518&e=6&u=/afp/20050318/bs_afp/germanyecconomyinflationproduction_050318111305

UK ECONOMY – STEADY GROWTH AHEAD IN 2005:
MORE: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=1518&ncid=1518&e=6&u=/afp/20050316/bs_afp/britaineconomybudgetgrowthforecast_050316134928

US ECONOMY – 2004 US TRADE DEFICIT \$665.9-BILLION: The US imported almost \$700-Billion more in goods than it exported. That cannot continue forever. Rebalancing of global trade and investment could be painful to US households, since as the US dollar deteriorates, inflation accelerates and interest rates are forced to rise. More dollar weakness in relation to other currencies is expected in 2005.
MORE: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=530&ncid=530&e=4&u=/ap/20050316/ap_on_bi_go_ec_fi/economy

>>>>>>> **TRUCKING SECTION** <<<<<<<<

AllCoveredNEWS - EASY TO READ & PRINT VERSION:
<http://www.allcovered.net/AC-News-PDF.htm>

TRUCKING – DIESEL UP 2-CENTS: The US national average price for a gallon of diesel increased again in the past week, up more than 2 cents to \$2.194, according to the US Department of Energy. That's nearly 58 cents more than the average price a year ago.
MORE: <http://www.etrucker.com/apps/news/article.asp?id=46682>

TRUCKING – PLANNING FOR HIGH OIL PRICES: See “Air & Ocean” Section

TRUCKING – HOUSES PASSES MANDATORY FUEL SURCHARGE

The US House of Representatives has passed a mandatory truckload fuel surcharge as part of the major highway bill (H.R. 3) working its way through Congress.

There is no guarantee that the truckload fuel surcharge will make it into the final version of the highway bill, however. If the Senate does not adopt the measure in its version, the surcharge will be subject to negotiation among House and Senate legislators who must agree on a single version of the highway bill.

As passed by the House, the surcharge would be mandatory in “any contract or agreement, providing for truckload transportation or service involving a motor carrier, broker, or freight forwarder subject to jurisdiction under chapter 135 of this title that regularly provides such transportation or service.”

The legislation requires that any carrier, broker or freight forwarder using fuel it didn't pay for – when an owner-operator provides actual transportation, for example – pass along the fuel surcharge to the person responsible for paying for fuel.

MORE: <http://www.etrucker.com/apps/news/article.asp?id=46698>

TRUCKING – STUDIES CONFLICT ON H-O-S IMPACT

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety says new House Of Service rules have led to more drowsy truckers.

A new report from the American Trucking Associations shows that the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety study is “bogus, as usual,” says ATA spokesman Mike Russell.

While the drivers responding to the IIHS study said their sleep time had increased under the new rule, they reported slightly more instances than when the old rule was in effect of driving drowsy or falling asleep at the wheel. When drivers were asked about dozing at the wheel at least once in the past month, the reported percentage increased from 13% in 2003 to 15% in 2004.

“The new rule was supposed to improve safety, but our survey shows the opposite,” says Anne McCartt, IIHS vice president for research. “Truckers are using the restart provision to squeeze even more driving hours into the week.”

A work week restart provision of the current rule, requiring 34 hours off, increases allowable driving hours in a seven-day period from 60 to 77. The rule lengthens the mandatory rest period by two hours but lets drivers stay on the road an extra hour every day.

MORE: <http://www.etrucker.com/apps/news/article.asp?id=46669>

MORE: http://www.thetrucker.com/stories/03_05/0315_more_drowsy.html

TRUCKING – MANIFEST MILESTONE

The Electronic Truck Manifest took a big step forward last Friday when ABF Freight System became the first carrier to electronically file its cargo data to US Customs and Border Protection and have the truck cleared through the border checkpoint in Blaine, Washington, using the submitted data.

Until the ABF transmission went through, CBP officers had to key in information from the paper manifest presented by the driver because virtually no trucking companies had a working Automated Manifest System account and hadn't had their system certified to communicate with CBP.

The truck manifest is supposed to speed up processing at the border by eliminating the use of paper documents and allowing CBP to automatically match up the truck manifest with the customs entry filed by a carrier or broker ahead of time.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/firm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20486>

TRUCKING – FIGHTING SCAM MOVERS: The American Moving and Storage Association has asked FMCSA to take action against illegitimate household movers, many of whom use the Internet to lure customers with low estimates. Once a customer's belongings are on a van, the scammers demand more money. FMCSA began ramping up enforcement of household goods consumer protection regulations last year.

MORE: www.promover.org.

MORE: http://www.truckinginfo.com/news/news-detail.asp?news_id=54189

TRUCKING – SWIFT ADDS TRAILER TRACKING: Swift Transportation has signed an agreement to equip its fleet of trailers with the Qualcomm's T2 Untethered TrailerTRACS asset management tool to track the location and status of each of its trailers at any time.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050317/sections/logis/w39974.asp>

SECURITY – CHARTERS & CHOPPERS TERROR TARGET?

Terrorists are eyeing charter aircraft rather than commercial airliners for a potential next strike because they would be easier to grab than commercial airliners.

The New York Times cites a confidential government report saying groups such as al Qaeda may try to target non-commercial planes and helicopters.

The report by the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security says the aviation industry is a tempting target for acts of terrorism due to the spectacular nature of such attacks.

Commercial airliners are likely to remain a target, but intelligence indicates al Qaeda may have discussed plans to hijack chartered planes, helicopters and other general aviation aircraft because they are less well-guarded.

"As security measures improve at large commercial airports, terrorists may choose to rent or steal general aviation aircraft housed at small airports with little or no security." The report continues, Al Qaeda "...has apparently considered the use of helicopters as an alternative to recruiting operatives for fixed-wing aircraft operations." The maneuverability and "non-threatening appearance" of helicopters make them attractive for those seeking to conduct suicide attacks on landmarks or to spray toxins below.

MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1110797466.html>

SO WHAT?

If an aircraft you charter is hijacked and used in a terror attack, are you protected for the financial and legal claims you will face?

If an aircraft you chartered is used to plow into a building or spray toxins over a city, how high could financial claims go?

If you are using chartered aircraft for cargo movements, be certain that the insurance you have, that the charter broker has, and/or that the aircraft owner has, is sufficient to pay any claims or damages that might arise from a hijacking and the use.

How much is enough?

"It Depends" is the best answer we can give as each situation is unique and requires study and risk assessment.

Call us before your next charter.

www.allcovered.net We have logistics ALL covered!

SECURITY – CBP EVALUATION C-TPAT IMPORTERS ON-SITE: US Customs and Border Protection is hiring more staff to conduct on-site visits in foreign countries to make sure importers and carriers are following through on voluntary promises to secure cargo containers during packing and transit. The companies want to be in the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism, (C-TPAT).

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20481>

SECURITY – CHINESE SHIPPERS SEE PAYING MORE BUT GET NO FASTER CLEARANCE: The Hong Kong Shippers' Council says Chinese shippers are bearing increasing costs for earlier manifest filings and longer dwell times at ports and more restrictive procedures due to transport security rules, but see no benefit from expedited clearance in the United States.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20450>

SECURITY – US SENATE BUDGETS \$150-MILLION FOR PORTS: The Senate approved an amendment to its 2006 budget resolution for \$150-million in funding for port security grants.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20507>

SECURITY FOCUS – SUPPLY CHAIN SECURITY... --- HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND PREPARE ---

----- Excerpted from an article by Monica Isbell – link at end -----

The Department of Homeland Security's biggest fear is that citizens have become complacent because no major terrorist attack has taken place on US territory since September 11, 2001.

Conventional wisdom assumes another major terrorist act will occur in America at some point in the not-too-distant future.

Air Force General Ed Eberhart, commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Northern Command, recently said, "I believe that it is just a matter of time until the terrorists try to use a seaborne attack, a maritime attack against us. The nation hasn't done enough work to prepare for a maritime threat compared to what's been accomplished in aviation."

--- WHAT ARE YOU DOING? ---

So the question is, what has your company done to get ready for the next terrorist strike?

Are you complacent, or are you engaged?

How will you defend your brand equity?

How will you keep your company's international supply chain functioning and service your customers when ports and airports are closed?

How will you contribute to a national solution?

--- 500,000 IMPORTERS NOT ACTIVE ---

It's good that over 8,300 companies have joined Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) Customs-Trade Partnership against Terrorism (C-TPAT) program... representing 50% of all imports.

But what about the other 500,000 or so importers that CBP says engage in international commerce?

As a Freight Forwarder you are probably working with a lot of non-C-TPAT certified companies.

What risks does this pose for you and your future?

--- WHAT YOU NEED TO DO NOW ---

Have you developed a corporate plan, or figuring you'll deal with the fallout when disaster strikes?

How will you compete with those proactive companies that already have well-defined strategies and contingency plans in place?

How are you coping with such mandatory regulations introduced to the trade in the past two years as the Advanced Manifest requirement, origin no-load notices, increased document and cargo examinations, and Vehicle and Cargo Inspection Systems (VACIS) inspections?

The US government is raising the bar on a daily basis.

Soon to come are such things as port user fees to pay for increased port security, fees assessed by ocean carriers to subsidize the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code, and the CBP Smart Container initiative that will mandate high-security container seals on all import containers.

--- YOU RISK IT ALL ---

Efficient supply chains are all about velocity and cost savings. Supply chain security is expensive for citizens, companies and America. But another September 11 will exact a far greater toll.

If a weapon of mass destruction were to be smuggled into one of your containers, your sales would be devastated and your brand equity forever tarnished, if not destroyed.

Should another terrorist attack occur in the near future, what you do in the next few months to get organized and develop a game plan might be far more important than the activities in which you're engaged today in terms of building shareholder value, brand equity and competitive position.

--- KEY FACT ---

It took five painful months for port operations to resume normalcy after the 10-day International Longshore and Warehouse Union lockout in the fall of 2002.

If the next terrorist attack involves an ocean container at a US port, expect that the government to shut down all ports, and one can only hypothesize as to how long ports might remain closed.

Can your company survive in the face of such a scenario?

--- PLAN NOW ---

Take half a day, sit your leaders down, perhaps bring in your top shippers, and map out strategies for various scenarios.

Write your plans down.

When (not If) the attack comes, grab the right plan and you will be days ahead of your competition.

MORE: http://www.sdexec.com/article_arch.asp?article_id=6830

TRADE – PLANNING FOR HIGH OIL PRICES

As the Shipping Season nears, what should you budget for fuel costs the rest of 2005?

Oil prices remain above US\$ 50 per barrel. Given the dollar's drop against other major currencies, that translates into roughly 40.00 Euro/barrel.

Airlines have raised fuel surcharges to \$0.35 per kilo.

In recent weeks you may have seen stories about OPEC's internal negotiations about raising the world output of oil. That sounds great, but in the short term, what is realistic?

Building out oil production infrastructure takes time.

World oil demand, led by China, India and others, is growing faster than production.

The US continues to consume a large portion of the world's oil supply.

Production from oil fields in the North Sea are peaking and expected to decline in coming years.

There are potential new oil fields off the coast of Africa, but no one can be sure when and if those will come on-line.

--- SO WHAT ---

You have choices.

You can lock-in fuel supply contracts now, despite high prices... While it locks you into high costs, it protects you if oil prices rise further and gives you a firm cost for fuel to use in budgeting and in developing your freight quotes for Shippers.

You can do nothing and hope prices fall.

You can work with Shippers to develop ways to trim freight shipping costs overall... through better coordination, volume buying, etc. so any fuel surcharges or costs are mitigated somewhat.

What other ideas do you have?

PLAN NOW – PROTECT YOURSELF & YOUR CLIENTS

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TRADE – CBP WANTS MORE IMPORT DATA: Importers and brokers will be forced to provide more data faster to US Customs and Border Protection (CBP). "Manifest data is good. Entry data is better. Entry summary data is even better," says Tom Bush, director of screening and targeting for CBP's Automated Commercial Environment. Bush said Customs wants "entry summary-type" data as far back in the supply chain as possible. Ideally, it would like to go a step further and receive the business-to-business type of data found in purchase orders and booking documents when the cargo is stuffed into a container at the overseas factory.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050317/sections/trade/w65676.asp>

TRADE – TARGET BUYS ACI: Target Logistics has acquired the stock of Air Cargo International and Domestic, a privately held third party logistics provider of freight forwarding services based in New Jersey, for cash and an earnout based on gross profit over five years.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/lede/20050316/sections/ecomm/w80289.asp>

TRADE – DUBAI LAUNCHING “LOGISTICS CITY: The Arabian Gulf emirate of Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates, is creating the world's first integrated logistics and multi-modal transport platform, with Dubai Logistics City (DLC), Jebel Ali Port and Free Zone and the new Jebel Ali International Airport (JXB) at its core. 'Dubai Logistics City and JXB will be the first phase of the new Jebel Ali Airport City, which eventually will span almost 140 square kilometres, featuring logistics, aviation, commercial, residential, educational, recreational, technology and entertainment facilities.

MORE: <http://www.ameinfo.com/news/Detailed/56037.html>

SHIPPING TO A DANGEROUS AREA OR WAR ZONE?

We have information you need to protect yourself and your client... and aggressive rates that save you money.

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CLICK: "Training & Help" ... then...

CLICK: "What Do I DO?"

-- #C1 deals with shipping to "Excluded" areas or "War Zones"

WE DO PROJECTS

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Step-by-Step help from www.Allcovered.net ... we have logistics Allcovered.

AIR – AIR CHINA / CATHAY DRAMA

You could almost here the dramatic music as the drama played out last week.

Was the suitor going to win the bride? Did she want to be won?

Seems it was all just a dramatic script... and they will remain friends, not lovers.

Early last week rumors flew that Swire would sell Cathay Pacific to Air China.

Late last week both Swire/Cathay and Air China denied it all.

Or were their carefully chosen words a "non-denial denial" where you deny the fact, the specifics, but don't rule out the idea?

"There is currently no agreement or arrangement between Air China, CNAC and Cathay Pacific which is discloseable under the Listing Rules," Air China said in a statement to the Hong Kong Stock Exchange Thursday, where it is listed.

The statement followed a report in the South China Morning Post that Air China would take over Cathay Pacific while the Hong Kong airline's British parent Swire Pacific would then take a large stake in the enlarged mainland carrier.

The report said the tie-up would see Hong Kong's second airline, Dragonair, taken over first by Cathay Pacific and in turn folded into the new company.

The Hong Kong Economic Times reported Cathay was also in talks with China-focused conglomerate CITIC Pacific, which holds 26 percent of Cathay, and Dragonair's main stakeholder China National Aviation Corporation.

A consolidation of the three carriers would create the world's largest airline by market value.

Sydney-based "Center for Asia Pacific Aviation" (CAPA) says such a tie-up would rock the entire global airline industry.

"A combination of Air China, Cathay and Dragonair would have sufficient impact to tilt not only the regional aviation balance, but also the global airline industry," it said in a statement.

MORE: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=1518&ncid=1518&e=16&u=afp/20050317/bs_afp/hongkongchinaaircathayairchina_050317064636

MORE: <http://www.atwonline.com/news/story.html?storyID=311>

AIR – CATHAY ADDS FLIGHTS: Cathay Pacific Airways plans to add seven more weekly flights from Hong Kong to Beijing and a third daily nonstop to Los Angeles. Service from Hong Kong to Amsterdam and Johannesburg, now at five and six flights a week respectively, will become daily, and flights to Ho Chi Minh City will rise from daily to double-daily.

AIR – DRAGONAIR LAUNCHES TRASPAC CARGO FLIGHTS: Dragonair Cargo is starting its first ever transpacific flights at the beginning of next week with the launch of a thrice-weekly Hong Kong/New York freighter service.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20516>

AIR – LH ADDS DC SERVICE: Lufthansa will expand service to Washington with a daily A340-300 flight from Munich scheduled to begin 2 May. The flight will complement its twice-daily flights to Washington from Frankfurt and daily service to Munich provided by Star Alliance partner United Airlines.

AIR - SIA CARGO DOWN: Singapore Airlines reports lower cargo load rates. Cargo capacity rose 2.8% in February compared with the same period a year earlier, while its cargo load factor was 62.6%, down 2.6% from last year.

MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1110880299.html>

AIR – LAN CHILE EYES ARGENTINE AIRLINE: LAN Airlines (formerly LanChile) has begun negotiations to acquire an unidentified Argentine airline in partnership with Argentine investors. The airline will use the name LAN Argentina and will be part of the LAN airline group.

AIR – MORE AIR CARGO SURCHARGES: As crude oil prices soar to all-time highs, air-cargo carriers are again imposing fuel surcharges to deal with the extra costs. Surcharges now are running from US \$0.35 to 0.47 per kilo for freight. If oil prices remain high or go even higher, watch for quick fuel surcharge hikes from air cargo carriers.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050314/sections/air/w74306.asp>

AIR – KITTY HAWK PROFITS UP: Kitty Hawk reports net income of \$5.4 million for the fourth quarter ended 31 December, which included a net one-time gain of \$3.6 million. This compares to net income of \$2.2 million in the prior-year period. Scheduled freight revenue for the year totaled \$154 million, an increase of 20.9% over 2003.

AIR – NWA TO GROUND 24 JETS: Northwest Airlines plans to ground 24 passenger jets in addition to six it had previously planned to stop flying, in moves that will see up to 930 job cuts. Northwest says most of the aircraft grounded will be McDonnell-Douglas DC-9s.

MORE: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=580&ncid=580&e=8&u=/nm/20050318/bs_nm/airlines_northwest_dc

AIR – LABOR STRIFE MAY KILL ALITALIA: Alitalia says a labor union threatened to tip the financially strapped airline into a tailspin after a wave of strikes that forced it to cancel hundreds of flights. "We are in an extremely delicate phase," Alitalia wrote in half-page advertisements in Italy's main newspapers on Thursday. Alitalia estimates 2004 losses of 850 million euros (\$1.1-Billion). Union sources estimate their recent strikes have cost Alitalia millions.

MORE: <http://edition.cnn.com/2005/TRAVEL/03/17/bt.alitalia.strikes.reut/index.html>

OCEAN – ASIA PORTS GROW – US PORTS TALK

Major ports in Asia are investing in larger container terminals and broadly keeping up with volume growth, allowing them to avoid the congestion that is increasingly plaguing many US and European ports. Shanghai alone is adding 25-million TEUs of capacity.

The ports of Hong Kong, Qingdao in northern China, and Gwangyang in South Korea, have reserves of capacity, while ports like Shanghai and Ningbo are adding capacity.

In the US, ports, roads, rails are all overflowing but no one is fixing it... just talking.

"The biggest congestion is on the West Coast of the US. Now, it's spreading to Europe," says Hans-Hermann Mohr, chief executive officer of Senator Lines. "The biggest problem is the land side (of terminal operations), not the sea side."

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20458>

OCEAN – US SHORE-SIDE INFRASTRUCTURE KEY

Want a glimpse of how busy US ports might be this year?

In the last week of February, shipping lines needed longshoremen to work 37,000 shifts on the docks of Southern California, says Steve Hennessy, vice president of labor relations for the Pacific Maritime Association.

During the peak of the ports' congestion crisis in fall 2004, with holiday cargo arriving en masse from Asia, those same shippers needed 38,000 shifts a week.

In other words, cargo volumes are growing, and growing fast, and they are threatening to swamp the transportation network.

6.5-million 40-foot containers (FEUs) arrived at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach last year. Half those boxes were sent on to destinations outside of Southern California.

With projections of a 12% to 15% increase in cargo volume this year, everyone is asking "What will be the crisis this year?"

Infrastructure, as in clogged roads, lack of rail capacity and lack of trucks is expected to be the crisis in 2005.

--- MEGA SHIPS CHALLENGE EVERYONE ---

What drives fears is the arrival of a new generation of ships capable of carrying 8,000 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs), or 4,000 40-foot containers.

Want perspective? That's equivalent to the number of containers on 137 mile-and-a-half-long trains, or 160 miles of trucks with containers... for each ship.

"The dynamics of working an 8,000-TEU ship are very different than two 4,000-TEU ships," says Doug Tilden, president and CEO of Marine Terminals Corporation.

Clogged terminals make it harder for truckers to pick up their containers, which forces ships to wait outside the harbor breakwater until docks were available.

A ship anchored outside the harbor costs the shipping lines \$50,000 to \$100,000 per day.

--- HOW WILL IT MOVE? ---

It is going to get worse because 10,000 TEU ships are under construction and 12,000 TEU ships are on the drawing board.

The Long Beach Freeway is at capacity.

Rail lines are near capacity despite the opening of the Alameda Corridor.

No new highways or rail lines are being built.

MORE: <http://www.pressestelegram.com/Stories/0,1413,204~21478~2763889,00.html#>

OCEAN – US FEBRUARY WEST COAST IMPORTS SOAR: Containerized imports were exceptionally strong in February, as volumes soared 40% to 60% at most West Coast ports compared to the same month a year ago. February's soaring imports for most ports equaled the volumes that moved in early summer of 2004, the beginning of last year's peak shipping season. This development indicates that the ports, railroads and trucking companies this year may once again have to contend with congestion and capacity constraints that hampered shipments.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050317/sections/ocean/w99866.asp>

OCEAN – GEAR UP FOR ASIAN CARGO: Ports and carriers have been advised to gear up for an onslaught of textile and wearing apparel shipments, since China, unfettered by quotas as of 1 January, is soon expected to dominate this sector of the US import market. China is expected to eventually capture more than 50% of the US import market, up from the current 22%.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050315/sections/trade/w16998.asp>

OCEAN – SHIPPERS WANT CONTRACT GUARANTEES: Shippers and cargo consolidators who are preparing to negotiate service contracts in the Asia-US trade are seeking service guarantees that ocean carriers will most likely be unwilling to give. Cargo interests would like carriers to sign specific guarantees for delivery of cargo, but carriers normally refuse to guarantee any move beyond the ocean voyage because they have little control of what happens from the terminal gate to the inland destination.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050316/sections/ocean/w30527.asp>

OCEAN – SO-CAL PORT TARIFFS UP 5%: The California Association of Port Authorities has approved a 5% increase of tariffs for its members effective 1 July. The tariff is the amount ports charge, per container, for shipping lines and terminal operators to use dock space to load and unload cargo.

MORE: <http://www.pressestelegram.com/Stories/0,1413,204~21478~2769339,00.html>

OCEAN – VANCOUVER CUTS FREE STORAGE: The backlog of 5000 TEUs at Vancouver's Deltaport terminal has been cut in half since the mid-January declaration of force majeure, citing a shortage of rail cars to handle surging imports. To keep the port cleared, the terminal is reducing free container storage to five working days from 14 following complete unloading of a vessel, for both import and export cargo.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050315/sections/ocean/w9983.asp>

OCEAN – HORIZON HIKES VESSEL & INTERMODAL SURCHARGES: Effective 8 April Horizon Lines is increasing bunker surcharges from \$260 to \$280. The intermodal surcharge will increase as follows based on location between \$30 and \$120.

MORE: <http://www.americanshipper.com/frm2001.asp?Target=NewsFrame.asp?news=20493>

OCEAN – BULK FREIGHT RATES MAY FALL: Freight rates for ships carrying iron ore and coal may slump 40% in the second quarter as China's steel mills cut imports in response to higher prices, says Nicolai Hansteen, chief economist at Oslo-based shipbroker Lorentzen & Stemoco. Revenue, minus costs such as fuel and port fees, may fall to \$50,000 a day after reaching about \$90,000 next month. Owners of so-called Capesize ships now make close to \$70,000 a day. Capesizes can load about 170,000 metric tons of cargo, fuel and crew.

MORE: <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=10000081&sid=aK.xsOLZBBN8&refer=australia>

OCEAN – HANJIN & COSCO EXPAND ASIA-EU SERVICE: Hanjin Shipping and Cosco Container Lines will rationalize their services between Asia and Europe starting in June by expanding their jointly operated loops to four from the current three, and deploying a total of 31 5,500-TEU vessels. As of June, there will be two sailings every week from Shanghai, Yantian, Hong Kong, Singapore and weekly sailings from other main Asian ports. In Europe there will be four weekly sailings from Hamburg and Felixstowe, three from Rotterdam, two from Antwerp and one from Le Havre.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050318/sections/ocean/w34225.asp>

OCEAN – COLOMBO BACK-UP: A dispute between customs, traders and the government in Sri Lanka is holding up containers at the Port of Colombo. Customs officials stopped work at the port to protest the government bringing in the Navy to inspect cargo under new security measures. The strike caused a backlog of more than 500 containers of essential commodities meant for tsunami relief.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050316/sections/ocean/w38607.asp>

OCEAN – EQUIPMENT SHORTAGE HITS LAGOS: Importers and agents last week experienced shortage of cargo handling equipment at the Container Terminal port of Lagos, Nigeria. Published reports say the Nigerian Ports Authority decided to stop buying new equipment because the ports are soon to be turned over to private operators.

MORE: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200503141198.html>

OCEAN – SAILING SHIPS COMING BACK?

Will the ocean cargo ship of the future be powered by sun, wind and waves as well as engines?

If Wallenius Wilhelmsen is right, the vessel will have no conventional engines, use no fossil fuels and release no harmful emissions into the atmosphere or pollution into the sea.

The first ship to use the technology, the Orcelle, names after the French term for dolphin, will be a cargo vessel that will transport up to 10,000 cars from Britain to Australia, New Zealand and other countries. If successful, it will be used on passenger ferries and cruise ships.

Wave energy is harnessed by 12 dolphin-like fins on the ship's hull, while sun and wind energy is collected by three giant, fin-like sails covered in solar panels.

The sails and fins will also help the ship to cruise at 15 knots, and stability will be provided by a slim monohull that will have two smaller support hulls, known as sponsons, on each side. Once harnessed, the sun, wind and wave energy will be combined with hydrogen and stored.

A spokesman for Wallenius Wilhelmsen, the ship's Scandinavian designers, says: "This will be the first truly environmentally friendly ship, protecting the atmosphere and marine species. It will transform ocean transport."

The ship's design means it will not need to carry ballast water, used to stabilize traditional vessels. The collection and disposal of ballast water has worried marine conservationists for years.

A ship with some of the Orcelle's "environmentally friendly characteristics" could be launched within five years, but the "complete version" might not be crossing the oceans until 2025.

MORE: <http://www.smh.com.au/news/National/Solar-ship-sails-the-ocean-green/2005/03/14/1110649129813.html?oneclick=true>

MORE: <http://www.wlna.com/www/newsFeatures/showNews.jsp?oid=3071>

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20050311/sections/ocean/w70252.asp>

(These are shared by readers – Please share yours. Thanks. Mike)

TRUE NEWS

Here is a fact to ponder you won't see on the evening news.

If you consider that there has been an average of 160,000 US and Coalition troops in Iraq during the last 22 months, that gives a firearm death rate of 60 per 100,000.

The rate in Washington, DC is 80.6 per 100,000.

That means that you are more likely to be shot and killed in the US Capitol, which has some of the strictest gun control laws in the nation, than you are in Iraq.

ABBOTT & COSTELLO BUY COMPUTERS

You have to be old enough to remember Abbott and Costello, and too old to REALLY understand computers, to fully appreciate this.

For those of us who sometimes get flustered by our computers, please read on...

If Bud Abbott and Lou Costello were alive today, their infamous sketch, "Who's on first?" might have turned out something like this:

COSTELLO CALLS TO BUY A COMPUTER FROM ABBOTT

ABBOTT: Super Duper computer store. Can I help you?

COSTELLO: Thanks. I'm setting up an office in my den and I'm thinking about buying a computer.

ABBOTT: Mac?

COSTELLO: No, the name's Lou.

ABBOTT: Your computer?

COSTELLO: I don't own a computer. I want to buy one.

ABBOTT: Mac?

COSTELLO: I told you, my name's Lou.

ABBOTT: What about Windows?

COSTELLO: Why? Will it get stuffy in here?

ABBOTT: Do you want a computer with Windows?

COSTELLO: I don't know. What will I see when I look at the windows?

ABBOTT: Wallpaper.

COSTELLO: Never mind the windows. I need a computer and software.

ABBOTT: Software for Windows?

COSTELLO: No. On the computer! I need something I can use to write proposals, track expenses and run my business. What do you have?

ABBOTT: Office.

COSTELLO: Yeah, for my office. Can you recommend anything?

ABBOTT: I just did.

COSTELLO: You just did what?

ABBOTT: Recommend something.

COSTELLO: You recommended something?

ABBOTT: Yes.

COSTELLO: For my office?

ABBOTT: Yes.

COSTELLO: OK, what did you recommend for my office?

ABBOTT: Office.

COSTELLO: Yes, for my office!

ABBOTT: I recommend Office with Windows.

COSTELLO: I already have an office with windows! OK, let's just say I'm sitting at my computer and I want to type a proposal. What do I need?

ABBOTT: Word.

COSTELLO: What word?

ABBOTT: Word in Office.

COSTELLO: The only word in office is office.

ABBOTT: The Word in Office for Windows.

COSTELLO: Which word in office for windows?

ABBOTT: The Word you get when you click the blue "W".

COSTELLO: I'm going to click your blue "w" if you don't start with some straight answers. OK, forget that. Can I watch movies on the Internet?

ABBOTT: Yes, you want Real One.

COSTELLO: Maybe a real one, maybe a cartoon. What I watch is none of your business. Just tell me what I need!

ABBOTT: Real One.

COSTELLO: If it's a long movie, I also want to watch reels 2, 3 and 4. Can I watch them?

ABBOTT: Of course.

COSTELLO: Great! With what?

ABBOTT: Real One.

COSTELLO: OK, I'm at my computer and I want to watch a movie. What do I do?

ABBOTT: You click the blue "1".

COSTELLO: I click the blue one what?

ABBOTT: The blue "1".

COSTELLO: Is that different from the blue w?

ABBOTT: The blue "1" is Real One and the blue "W" is Word.

COSTELLO: What word?

ABBOTT: The Word in Office for Windows.

COSTELLO: But there are three words in "office for windows"!

ABBOTT: No, just one. But it's the most popular Word in the world.

COSTELLO: It is?

ABBOTT: Yes, but to be fair, there aren't many other Words left. It pretty much wiped out all the other Words out there.

COSTELLO: And that word is real one?

ABBOTT: Real One has nothing to do with Word. Real One isn't even part of Office.

COSTELLO: STOP! Don't start that again. What about financial bookkeeping? You have anything I can track my money with?

ABBOTT: Money.

COSTELLO: That's right. What do you have?
ABBOTT: Money.
COSTELLO: I need money to track my money?
ABBOTT: It comes bundled with your computer.
COSTELLO: What's bundled with my computer?
ABBOTT: Money.
COSTELLO: Money comes with my computer?
ABBOTT: Yes. No extra charge.
COSTELLO: I get a bundle of money with my computer? How much?
ABBOTT: One copy.
COSTELLO: Isn't it illegal to copy money?
ABBOTT: Microsoft gave us a license to copy Money.
COSTELLO: They can give you a license to copy money?
ABBOTT: Why not? THEY OWN IT!
(A few days later)
ABBOTT: Super Duper computer store. Can I help you?
COSTELLO: How do I turn my computer off?
ABBOTT: Click on "START".....

If you have curious or interesting or funny or thoughtful items that might be good in "Just For Fun", Email them to mike.miller@allcovered.net . Thanks.

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