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HIGHLIGHTS TO HELP YOU THIS WEEK

- If 'Price Is Key' Means No Loyalty
- Meth Costs Bosses Billions
- Cargo Theft Law Could Save US Billions
- Air Cargo Surcharge Hikes

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>> SMALL BUSINESS SECTION <<



SMALL BIZ - IF CLIENT SAYS: "PRICE IF KEY" IT MEANS NO LOYALTY

Excerpted from an article by Jeffrey Gitomer - Link at end

Salespeople think price is all that matters these days. But I think price doesn't matter -- if the value and relationship are solid.

Is the dreaded statement "your price is too high" the force you're wrestling against? Or could all of this resistance be your own fear of rejection?

Let's face it: You're afraid of losing the deal to price. But the key is a profitable sale that also creates a repeat customer.

Some points to keep in mind:

- Be prepared to defend your price in such a way that you don't have to reduce it. Stop the price wrestling, and turn the match into negotiating the value. If you want to win on price, the customer has to perceive value.
- Your customers will accept and respect you if you accept and respect them first. Yes, they expect your honesty, and they expect great service. But they will be loyal to you if you enhance their profit margin and deliver the value you promised. If you do that consistently, they'll become loyal and ignore your price.
- Your self-confidence and your self-belief are at the core of your ability to create loyalty. This belief becomes transferable. You will gain their loyalty
- The final power rests with the quality of your relationship with customers. Are they satisfied or are they loyal? Satisfied customers negotiate price. Loyal customers pay the price because they understand and appreciate the value.
- Loyalty is not only the highest level of customer relationship; it's also the highest level of profit for you and your client.

MORE: http://www.bizjournals.com/extraedq/consultants/sales_moves/2006/01/23/column485.html?hbx=e_sol



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SMALL BIZ – METH ABUSERS COST BOSSES MILLIONS

It's known as "meth," or "crank" or "ice," and it could crank your business into bankruptcy.

The cost of the methamphetamine epidemic doesn't appear as a line item on profit and loss statements, but the hidden expense is hefty for employers.

A recent study funded by the Wal-Mart Foundation determined that each meth-using employee costs his or her employer \$47,500 a year in terms of lost productivity, absenteeism, higher health-care costs and higher workers' compensation costs.

"A lot of the questions on methamphetamine used to come about truck drivers or construction workers, but now it's from everywhere," says Bob Thompson, an Atlanta attorney. "It's so prevalent and so easy to get that it very quickly destroys their employees. You have bad performance on the job, poor quality of work, potential violence, and meth just makes people crazy."

If employers are ignorant about drug use in their workplace or turn a blind eye to it, they could face major liabilities, Thompson says.

"I think it's critical for employers to know about this because one person with a meth problem can cause the ruination of a company. It can affect their relationship with customers, the government or other employers, the company's finances, everything."

MORE: http://www.bizjournals.com/industries/business_services/employee_compensation_benefits/2006/01/30/atlanta_story3.html?e=et150&hbx=e_vert

SYMPTOMS

- Sleeplessness
- Loss of appetite or Rapid weight loss
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- Paranoia
- Depression
- Short temper
- Brittle hair
- Poor bathing habits

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Under the influence of the drug, users often become agitated and feel "wired."

Their behavior becomes unpredictable.

They may be friendly and calm one moment, angry and terrified the next.

Some feel compelled to repeat meaningless tasks, such as taking apart and reassembling bits of machinery.

Others may pick at imaginary bugs on their skin.

Physical affects include: increased heart rate, blood pressure, body temperature, and rate of breathing; it dilates the pupils and may cause tremors.

SMALL BIZ – HEALTH – NEW TAX BREAKS FOR MED EXPENSES: President Bush is proposing that Americans be allowed to take tax deductions on more of their out-of-pocket medical expenses, helping rein in soaring health costs by shifting responsibility to individuals.

MORE: <http://tinyurl.com/ac5yv>

MORE: http://search.csmonitor.com/search_content/0127/p02s01-uspo.html

SMALL BIZ – HEALTH – DOCTORS SAY PRIMARY CARE NEAR COLLAPSE:

Primary care -- the basic medical care that people get when they visit their doctors for routine physicals and minor problems -- could fall apart in the United States without immediate reforms, according to the American College of Physicians.

MORE: <http://www.chron.com/cs/CDA/printstory.mpl/headline/nation/3622861>

SMALL BIZ – HEALTH – PREMIUM HIKES SLOW: Health insurance premiums are growing at a reduced rate, despite increased utilization and higher costs.

MORE: <http://www.ahip.org/redirect/PwCCostOfHC2006.pdf>

US ECONOMY – CONSUMERS UPBEAT BUT WAGES LAG:

MORE: http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20060131/fs_nm/economy_consumers_dc_vlt=AiKF2oqyQpgKxAIBQDhPTw_vBHf_vlu=X3oDMTA5aHJMdJwBHNiYwN5bnNhdA-

US ECONOMY – FED HIKES RATE: The US Federal Reserve Board raised its benchmark "Fed Funds Rate," the rate it charges member banks for overnight loans, to 4.5%. This is the 14th straight 0.25% increase.

MORE: http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20060131/fs_nm/economy_fed_meeting1_dc_vlt=AlSjywCuehWVR5k_HzfNeaXv5rEF_vlu=X3oDMTBIMHvGmTQ4BHNIYwN5bnN1YmNhdA-



TRUCKING – WORST TRAFFIC BOTTLENECKS

Trucks idled for more than 243 million hours on bottlenecked US highways in 2004, costing trucking companies \$7.8-Billion, according to a study prepared for the Federal Highway Administration.

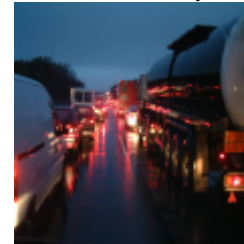
The study estimates a cost of \$32.15 per hour of delay.

“All levels of government are failing to focus their resources on the efficient movement of goods,” said Greg Cohen, president and CEO of the American Highway Users Alliance.

“Yet the societal benefits of a national plan to fix the worst freight chokepoints would be astounding. Not only money, time, and hundreds of millions of gallons of diesel fuel would be saved, but roads would be safer, air pollution would decrease dramatically.”

WORST BOTTLENECKS

- I-90 at I-290 in Buffalo, NY
- I-285 at I-85 (Spaghetti Junction) in Atlanta
- I-17 (Black Canyon Freeway) at I-10 in Phoenix
- I-90/94 at I-290 (Circle Interchange) in Chicago
- The San Bernardino Freeway in Los Angeles
- I-94 (Dan Ryan)/I-90 Skyway Split (Southside) in Chicago
- I-285 at I-75 in Atlanta
- SR134 at SR2 in Los Angeles
- I-77 at Tryon Road in Charlotte, NC
- Long Beach Freeway in Los Angeles
- I-20 at I-285 in Atlanta
- I-80/I-94 Split (Southside) in Chicago
- SR 60 at I-605 in Los Angeles
- Pulaski Road at I-55 in Chicago
- I-75 at I-85 in Atlanta
- I-93 at I-95 in Boston
- I-290 at I-355 in Chicago
- I-405 (San Diego Freeway) at I-605 in Los Angeles
- I-80 at Central in San Francisco
- The San Gabriel River Freeway in Los Angeles



“Ultimately, it is the consumer who will pay the price when increasing congestion forces the cost of goods on store shelves go up.”

Bill Graves
President and CEO
The American Trucking
Associations.

MORE: <http://www.etrucker.com/apps/news/article.asp?id=51515>

MORE: http://www.truckinginfo.com/news/news-detail.asp?news_id=56104

TRUCKING – FLORIDA TRUCKER AWAKE 34 HOURS: The truck driver who plowed into a car at a school bus stop last week, killing seven children, had been awake for 34 hours.

MORE: <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/chi-0602040100feb04.1.1204857.story?coll=chi-newsnationworld-hed>

TRUCKING – INTERNATIONAL RECALLS TRUCKS: International Truck and Engine is recalling 1,714 5000 and 9000 series trucks with Caterpillar C15 diesel engines manufactured in 2004 and 2005 because of the possibility of an oil-line break.

MORE: http://www.truckinginfo.com/news/news-detail.asp?news_id=56093

TRUCKING – DIESEL UP AGAIN: The US national average retail price of a gallon of diesel increased 1.7 cents for the week ending 30 January, to \$2.489.

MORE: <http://www.etrucker.com/apps/news/article.asp?id=51473>

MORE: <http://www.thetrucker.com/showstory.aspx?id=10610>

TRUCKING – TONNAGE INDEX DOWN 3% IN DECEMBER: The Truck Tonnage Index dropped 3.0% in December according to the American Trucking Associations. The December index was still 0.6% higher than for December 2004.

MORE: <http://www.etrucker.com/apps/news/article.asp?id=51424>

> > > SECURITY SECTION < < <

SECURITY – CARGO THEFT LAW COULD SAVE US BILLIONS

National cargo theft legislation that will help law enforcement fight the nation's most costly crime is part of the revamped Patriot Act before Congress.

Law enforcement officials around the country are starting to see that drug and human smuggling, terrorism and cargo theft are all connected.

For decades, law enforcement officers around the country have said they need a cargo theft crime reporting code, tough prison penalties for thieves and a national database for investigators. Accurate estimates are hard to find, but between \$12-Billion and \$25-Billion worth of goods are stolen from ocean containers, air cargo and trucking firms each year.

Congressman Cliff Stearns, (R-FL), drafted the Cargo Theft Prevention Act, which provides law enforcement those tools to fight the crime that costs every man, woman and child \$205 annually.

That legislation was folded into the newly crafted Patriot Act expected to become law once Congress hammers out differences and wording surrounding privacy issues.

--- KEY POINTS OF MEASURE ---

- + Minimum 3-year prison term for theft of cargo valued at under \$1,000
- + Minimum 15-year prison term for theft of cargo values at more than \$1,000

MORE: <http://www.ocala.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060127/NEWS/201270372/1001/news01>

SECURITY – FOLLOW-UP – STUN GUN MOBILE PHONES: Last week we ran a story and video about guns disguised as cell / mobile phones. (See 30 January 2006 Allcovered News: <http://www.allcovered.net/AC-News-PDF.htm>). There are also stun guns disguised as mobile phones.

MORE: http://www.safetyproductsunlimited.com/cell_phone_stun_gun.html

SECURITY – DHS PLANS 'SECURE FREIGHT' TEST: The US Department of Homeland Security plans to begin a pilot test of its Secure Freight initiative by the end of the year as it tries to gather more types of commercial data for risk-targeting of containerized imports, according to Elaine Dezenski, acting assistant secretary for policy development. Secure Freight would be a system in which the private sector plays a much larger role in collecting and potentially analyzing additional supply chain information about inbound shipments.

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=27668

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20060131/sections/ecom/w65750.asp>

> > > AIR & OCEAN SECTION < < <

AIR – NWA CARGO HIKES SURCHARGE: NWA Cargo, the cargo arm of Northwest Airlines, will raise its fuel surcharge for international and domestic shipments effective 16 February. NWA Cargo's surcharge will increase from 45 cents to 50 cents per kilogram for most US-origin international bulk shipments, while domestic bulk freight and VIP surcharges will rise from 19 cents to 21 cents per pound.

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=27673

AIR – CARGOLUX & MARTINAIR HIKE SURCHARGE: Cargolux and Martinair will raise their fuel surcharges to keep pace with rising oil prices. The new rates will be 50 cents a kilo, up from 45 cents.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/lede/20060203/sections/air/w5544.asp>

AIR – AIR FREIGHT GROWTH DISAPPOINTING: International air freight grew a "disappointingly low" 3.2% in 2005 according to the International Air Transport Association (IATA). Air freight growth, a prime indicator of the health of world trade, was 15.8% in 2004. Freight traffic growth is expected to pick up again in 2006 to reach 5% to 6%.

MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1138704895.html>

AIR – ASIAN AIRLINES CARGO UP 3.3% IN 2005: The Association of Asia Pacific Airlines reports its 17 member airlines transported 10 million tons of cargo in 2005, up 3.3%.
MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=27675

AIR – FOCUS - CARGO FACES INTERESTING TIMES

Last year's surge in new and conversion freighter programs confirms the confidence felt within the air transport community regarding the intermediate- and long-term outlook for air cargo. In May Boeing launched the 777 Freighter. At the end of October it moved forward with the 767-300 Boeing Converted Freighter and followed this in mid-November with the program launch of the 747-8, which is being offered in both freighter and passenger versions.

Airbus has not responded to the 777 program with a new mid-size freighter of its own, but does have the A380F.

Today's air cargo market is showing signs of weakness, with traffic growth slowing amid rising concern that soaring energy prices are putting a brake on global economic activity and dampening demand for air cargo. "There are a number of question marks out there [for 2006]."

Coming off the high of 2004 when international freight volumes rose 15.8%, air cargo performance disappointed last year. There are storm clouds ahead.

MUCH MORE: <http://atwonline.com/magazine/article.html?articleID=1497>

AIR – INDIAN AIRPORT WORKERS CALL OFF STRIKE

Indian airport workers called off a four-day anti-privatization strike that had created chaos at the nation's top airports. The move came after the government promised union leaders in writing none of the employees of the state-run Airports Authority of India would lose their jobs from privatization of the New Delhi and Mumbai airports, the nation's biggest.

Flights continued at India's two major airports during the strike, but other than that the airports were a mess. Rubbish bins were overflowing, toilets were left un-cleaned and passengers had to walk to terminals in the capital after protesters blockaded the main road to New Delhi Airport.

Nearly 23,000 members of the state-run Airports Authority of India declared an indefinite strike over the move to bring in private companies to take over and modernize the shabby, run-down airports.

In Mumbai, the financial hub, the airport was strewn with litter, and in the eastern city of Kolkata baggage handling came to a standstill with airline staff helping passengers disembark.

MORE: http://www.citizen.co.za/index/Article.aspx?pDesc=1.1.22&Type=top&File=060204130945_f0xi11ni.xml

MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1138918065.html>

MORE: <http://planetguru.com/Articles/ArticleDetail.aspx?ChannelId=Biz&ArticleId=24632>

AIR - WORLD AIRWAYS PILOTS STRIKE

Pilots for the biggest civilian carrier of troops began a "selective work stoppage" last week against World Airways after talks over job security broke down. The pilots said they would continue ferrying military personnel but wouldn't fly some civilian charters.

About nine of the company's 17 wide-body jets fly primarily for the military, taking troops from the United States to military installations in the Middle East and elsewhere.

World Airways also flies freighters for some airlines.

MORE: <http://www.tri-cityherald.com/24hour/business/story/3119457p-11824628c.html>

MORE: <http://news.moneycentral.msn.com/provider/providerarticle.asp?Feed=PR&Date=20060128&ID=5455397>

AIR – NWA PILOTS TO VOTE ON POSSIBLE STRIKE: Northwest Airlines' pilots' union approved a vote to authorize a strike according to a union leader. The pilots' union disagrees with the bankrupt airline on plans for a regional carrier, extent of pay cuts and other concessions sought by the company.

MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1139005164.html>

AIR – US AIRLINES LOSE \$10-BILLION IN 2005: The International Air Transport Association says US airlines lost a combined \$10-Billion in 2005, contrasted against a \$1.5-Billion profit for Asian carriers and \$1.3-Billion profit for European airlines.

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=27678

AIR - US AIRLINES CASH CRUNCH: United States airlines will lose between \$1-Billion and \$2-Billion this year.

MORE: http://www.aircargoworld.com/regions/northam_0206.htm

AIR – UNITED EXITS BANKRUPTCY: United Airlines formally exited bankruptcy after 1,150 days during which it cut annual costs by approximately \$7-Billion including more than \$3-Billion in concessions from labor unions, reduced and reconfigured its fleet to fly more profitable international routes and launched its low-cost subsidiary Ted.

MORE: <http://www.atwonline.com/news/story.html?storyID=3904>

AIR – UNITED'S \$17-BILLION LOSS HIDES IMPROVEMENTS: United lost \$16.9-Billion in the fourth quarter of 2005... lost \$21.18-Billion for the year, but there are signs of improvement.

MORE: <http://www.atwonline.com/news/story.html?storyID=3853>

AIR – WILL UNITED FAIL AGAIN?: United Airlines is poised to exit "Chapter 11" bankruptcy, but one editorial writer goes to great lengths to show that United and perhaps others among the "big six" US airlines may also fail over and over again.

MORE: http://www.usatoday.com/travel/columnist/brancatelli/2006-01-30-brancatelli_x.htm

AIR – US AIRLINES STRUGGLE WITH BANKRUPTCY: US Bankruptcy laws allow several types of bankruptcy filings. Chapter 7 is complete liquidation and closure. Chapter 11 is used for reorganization under a court's supervision. US airlines have used Chapter 11 bankruptcy... but it is a far cry from a great solution to the problems they face.

MORE: http://www.usatoday.com/travel/flights/2006-01-30-airline-bankruptcies_x.htm

AIR – 4-BILLION PEOPLE FLEW IN 2005:

MORE: <http://news.airwise.com/story/view/1138882044.html>

AIR – ANA TEAMS WITH JAPAN POST ON AIR CARGO: ANA's new cargo airline joint venture with Japan Post will operate as ANA & JP Express or AJV, with flights scheduled to begin in August with three 767Fs. AJV will add four aircraft, including three converted ANA 767s, by October 2008. It will be wholly owned by ANA until April, when Japan Post will take a 33.3% stake pending government approval. At the same time, Nippon Express, a global logistics company, will take 10% and shipping company Mitsui OSK Lines will take 5%. ANA will retain 51.7%.

MORE: <http://www.atwonline.com/news/story.html?storyID=3865>

AIR – SEATTLE'S FAMILY-OWNED NORTHERN AIR CARGO SOLD:

MORE: <http://www.adn.com/money/story/7413661p-7325353c.html>



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OCEAN FOCUS - CHINA TRADE UNBALANCES SHIPPING

From the port control tower in Hong Kong it's easy for Danny Law to see the problem, "Sometimes we get a vessel coming in where the whole thing is empty."

For the shippers that carry television sets, sneakers and other manufactured goods to the United States and Europe, trade with China is booming, but it is increasingly a one-way street.

Of every 100 containers that crossed the Pacific Ocean from Asia to North America last year, 60 came back empty on the 14-day Pacific crossing, according to Drewry Shipping Consultants.

On European routes, 41% came back to Asia empty last year.

"The cost of all this empty space on ships is a multibillion-dollar loss," says Philip Damas, research director at Drewry, "an extra cost of doing business for the shipping companies, exporters and importers."

Shippers are so eager to fill their vessels for the return voyage to East Asia that they accept many types of unprofitable cargo, like bales of hay.

"It's hard to believe, but it's one of the main US exports to Asia," Damas said, along with waste paper, scrap metal and cotton.

Damas calculates that shipping companies charge an average of \$1,400 to transport a 20-foot container from China to the United States. From the United States to China, the companies charge much less: \$400 or \$500. "In no way does that cover the full cost of shipping."

--- NOT A NEW PROBLEM ---

Shipping imbalances between China and the West are as ancient as the silk looms that drew foreigners to the Middle Kingdom centuries ago.

Europeans in the 17th and 18th centuries wanted Chinese silks, porcelains and teas, but few Chinese wanted to buy European wine or wool, according to Susan Perry, a China specialist at the American University of Paris.

The equation shifted to Europe's advantage with the export of Indian opium to China in the 18th and 19th centuries, a commodity that bred addiction and eventually resentment and unrest in China.

MORE: <http://www.iht.com/articles/2006/01/29/business/ships.php>

OCEAN – BOX VOLUME GROWTH FORECAST: Containerized trade is projected to grow 7.6% in 2006, more than double the projections for worldwide GDP growth of 3.4%, according to Paul Bingham, an economist with economic consulting firm Global Insight. It's not a new trend, but it's one that is stressing infrastructure in the United States. "The pattern of distributions center continue to evolve toward less centralized, less urban warehousing, yet are as dependent as ever on the transport network connected to urban markets," he says. That only exacerbates the situation "...because goods end up back in the urban markets and transit through urban freight gateways."

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=27812

OCEAN – STRIKE AT SOUTH AFRICAN PORTS: The Durban and Richards Bay ports were running at 60% and 50% capacity respectively last week as unions embarked on a strike at Transnet. The United Transport and Allied Trade Union (Utatu) said about 15 200 workers from all four unions involved in the dispute over restructuring were on strike at both ports.

MORE: <http://www.businessreport.co.za/index.php?fSectionId=&fArticleId=3088765>

OCEAN – USSEC HOLDS FUEL SURCHARGE: The United States South Europe Conference will extend the present Bunker Adjustment Factor through March. The charge is \$401 per 20-foot and \$802 per 40-foot container. All other freight is charged at 34% by weight and measure.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20060130/sections/ocean/w38944.asp>

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=27614

OCEAN – USSEC TO DISBAND NEXT WEEK: The US South Europe Conference will disband next Monday, 13 February, when its two remaining member lines, Maersk Sealand and P&O Nedlloyd become the single entity Maersk Line.

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=27880

OCEAN – SAFMARINE STARTS MULTI-PURPOSE US-AFRICA SERVICE: Safmarine Container Lines will start a multipurpose liner service between the United States and West

Africa by 1 March. With the start of the Angorex loop, Safmarine will offer three regular North America/Africa services.

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=27754

OCEAN – K-LINE ADDS SHANGHAI BULK DIVISION: Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha's subsidiary "K" Line (China) Ltd. Has started a bulk division at its Shanghai headquarters.

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=27753

OCEAN – HANJIN NET DROPS: Seoul-based Hanjin Shipping cited a more than 10% appreciation of the Korean won against the US dollar as a driver to its 25.2% decrease in its 2005 net income to US\$497 million.

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=27811

OCEAN – SHIPS COLLIDE IN ENGLISH CHANNEL: A 23,000 ton bulk carrier and a 10,000 ton chemical tanker carrying phosphoric acid have collided in the English Channel. The Maltese-registered "General Grot-Rowecki" had failed numerous safety checks around the world. The "General Grot-Rowecki" was built in 1985 and inspections in Canada, Norway and Belgium previously revealed "serious deficiencies," according to BBC. The vessel "Ece", which was carrying 10,000 tons of phosphoric acid, capsized under tow on the way to the port of Le Havre in the early hours Wednesday.

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=27755

MORE: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/quernsey/4666020.stm>

MORE: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/quernsey/4664564.stm>

OCEAN – HAMBURG PORT EXPANSION: The Port of Hamburg is planning to increase its container-handling capacity by 64% in the next five years by putting new handling technology to work at its four terminals. This will raise handling capacity to around 14 million TEUs by the year 2010, compared to 8.1 million TEUs handled in 2005.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/20060130/sections/ocean/w93668.asp>

OCEAN – TIDEWATER PORT EYES GROWTH: The Port of Hampton-Newport News in Virginia has seen containerized traffic double in the last ten years and expects another doubling within, at most, fifteen years.

MORE: http://www.dailypress.com/business/local/dp-62292sv0jan29_0.3274391_story?coll=dp-business-localheads

TRADE – US TRADE & TRANSPORT ON COLLISION COURSE: US dependency on just-in-time transportation is on a collision course with its aging port, road and rail infrastructure, according to a national organization that represents state transportation agencies. The American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials says the nation's goods movement infrastructure is struggling to handle the growth of international trade and rapid growth is expected.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/lede/20060202/sections/ecom/w48931.asp>

TRADE – D-BAHN COMPLETES BAX BUY: German state-owned rail operator Deutsche Bahn has completed the \$1.1-Billion takeover of BAX Global, the logistics unit of US security firm The Brink's Company. Deutsche Bahn is also the parent company of international forwarding giant Schenker.

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=27749

TRADE – TNT EXPANDS INDIA INVESTMENT: Dutch mail and global logistics provider TNT says it will invest about 100 million euros (\$88 million) developing integrated express services and its network in India.

MORE: http://www.americanshipper.com/SNW_story.asp?news=27750

TRADE – CSX HIKES FUEL CHARGE: CSX Intermodal's monthly fuel surcharge will be 16.5%, up 0.5% from January.

MORE: <http://www.joc.com/lede/20060202/sections/logis/w29363.asp>

>>>>> **JUST FOR FUN** <<<<<

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

TRUE NEWS – MOST IMPORTANT TRAITS IN A MATE

When it comes to romance, women prefer someone who tickles their funny bone while men opt for those who catch their eye, according to an international survey released on Wednesday.

The survey, conducted in 16 countries by Canadian romance publisher Harlequin Enterprises, asked men and women on six continents about traits they liked or disliked and how they went about trying to meet Mr. or Ms. Right.

The poll revealed differences between countries in the way people tried to impress the opposite sex.

--- SOME FINDINGS ---

Australians and British men frequently admitted drinking too much, while about half of German and Italian men said they had lied about their finances. Spaniards were the most likely to use sex to catch someone's attention.

80% of Brazilian and Mexican men said they had lied about their marital or relationship status, as did 70% of German women, the survey said.

When it came to meeting that special someone, a majority of respondents preferred to rely on friends for introductions. The Internet was not a popular hunting ground except in Portugal, where about half the surveyed men and women opted to find people online.

Both Spain and France suffered a gender gap.

30% of Spanish men, but no Spanish women, looked for love online.

In France, 40% of men but only 10% of women attended parties, bars and clubs to meet someone, but they did have one thing in common: both sexes rated looks as more important than their counterparts in other countries.

When it came to that first meeting, a majority of men polled said beauty was more important than brains, while women put a sense of humor at the top of their list.

Physical attraction was the top priority for men in France, Brazil, Greece, Japan and Britain. And while 40% of Portuguese men rated intelligence over looks in a first encounter, no Australian men did so.

In the United States and Canada, humor was considered the most important trait by both men and women, getting 63% and 73% of the vote respectively.

MORE: <http://my.netscape.com/corewidgets/news/story.psp?cat=50900&id=2006012709430002520709>

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