

scale of the company. UPS's IT Governance Committee oversees the direction of UPS technology and ensures new technology is in keeping with UPS business vision and strategy, and four groups (IT Finance Group, Advanced Technology Group, IT Governance Committee and IT Strategy Committee) all work closely together to evaluate IT investment and projects to ensure that spending is strategically focussed.

So how is UPS's investment in technology benefiting customers in Saudi Arabia?

UPS offers customers in Saudi Arabia a comprehensive set of tracking, tracing and proof of delivery services – free of charge.

UPS's redesigned Web site – UPS.com – makes it easier than ever for customers to find what they want. The design helps users quickly access the most frequently used features on the site. Package tracking, for example, which is used about 10 million times per day worldwide, can now be accessed directly from the home page. The site now organises UPS.com's features under three key tabs – Shipping, Tracking and Resources – which correspond to how customers would complete their shipping tasks. The redesigned site also has a new section on its home page – Business Solutions – where customers can find information on these UPS's smart technology solutions: UPS WorldShip™ and UPS Wireless Solutions.

UPS WorldShip™ is UPS's pioneering full-featured shipment processing software that meets modern communication requirements while simplifying shipment processing and is ideal for regular shippers. Available for both standalone PCs and LAN environments, UPS WorldShip™ generates all the required shipping documentation, automatically uploads the information to UPS and provides additional time-saving features. In fact, the latest 7.0 version of UPS WorldShip™ shipping software, which is also available to customers in Saudi Arabia allows them access to Quantum View Notify™. Quantum View Notify™ offers a suite of proactive notification options and is basically a secure e-mail message service that gives customers the ability to request notification of key events in the progress of their outbound shipments. Depending on the notification option the customer chooses, an e-mail is triggered automatically to up to five e-mail addresses containing the critical shipping, delivery or exception information. UPS WorldShip™ makes the process of shipping simpler, smarter and more efficient.

All of these technology solutions not only simplify the process of shipping for our customers in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere, saving them time and money, but also enable them to control and track their packages from the convenience of their own PC– 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The current trend in the market is for privately-owned companies to go public? Is UPS Saudi

Arabia considering this option in future?

EIRAD/UPS is not a publicly traded company and has no plans at present to become a listed company.

UPS is of course a public company and trades on the New York Stock Exchange in the US.

What are the future plans of your company in the courier business?

EIRAD/UPS will continue to grow and add value to the relationships it enjoys with its commercial and individual customers.

Continue developing our domestic network and investing in our service portfolio, so we can be more accessible to our customers and continue supplying customised solutions to suit their individual needs. Never overlooking our "customer services excellence" which is the essence of our business and is the foundation of our company's DNA.

What type of different services are you offering?

Today EIRAD Trading & Contracting Co. Ltd Authorized service contractor offers, UPS Worldwide Express, Domestic Express, Road Freight Service, Mailroom Management, Logistics, Freight forwarding (air, sea and land), Customs brokerage, Warehousing, Distribution management and Consulting solutions.

Today EIRAD / UPS help its customers to "deliver more" to their customers.

How many courier services are operating in the Kingdom?

Today there are many international and local distribution companies operating within Saudi Arabia, we are not able to give an exact number.

How do you see the possibility of courier service charges coming down in the light of the market competition?

The international courier rates have increased due to the growing oil prices and increased security surcharges globally, as these courier shipments travel to international destinations.

The domestic business-to-business rates have declined due to competition, however, the volume of the business has also increased.

Today, the major portion of the market still consists of customers who look for more value in the services they receive and do not select courier companies just based on low rates.

EIRAD/UPS competes on the value of its services and not on price alone.