

# Did you know?

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## Did you know that...?

1. DHL was the result of a chance meeting between Adrian Dalsey and Larry Hillblom at a food store parking lot in San Francisco. Colleagues at a company that offered limited delivery service, the two hatched a brilliant plan to start their own delivery company; real estate associate Robert Lynn joined the two and DHL began its first courier service between the West Coast of America and Hawaii.
2. Long before the advent of bar codes, DHL already developed a foolproof way to avoid the mis-sorting of shipments. In 1979, DHL started offering its customers multi-colored pouches which covered designated route sectors. Once sorted any odd color was immediately identified as wrongly sorted and corrected. Demand rose so fast that DHL opened its own pouch factory in Hong Kong.
3. In 2008, the warehouse space managed by DHL Supply Chain alone measures 22.8 million square meters. By comparison: St Peter's Square in Rome is 35.300 square meters (as of 31.12.2008)
4. DHL moved 2.9 million 20-foot container units in ocean freight in 2008. In terms of volume, this would be enough to fill the 381-meter high Empire State Building from top to bottom more than 87 times. Strung together, this line of containers would be 17,677 kilometers long – more than twice as long as the Nile River, the longest in the continent of Africa.
5. DHL pioneered the concept of on-board couriers by giving free airline ticket to employees, their families and associates in return for acting as couriers.
6. When the airport in Saudi Arabia was closed for three days in 1978, DHL used dhows, lateen rigged Arabic coastal boats, to make sure no delivery was missed.
7. The first DHL offices overseas were in Guam (1970), and then the Philippines (1971).
8. In the beginning, the three partners – Adrian Dalsey, Larry Hillblom and Robert Lynn – delivered shipping documents by air, carrying the documents themselves between San Francisco and Honolulu, Hawaii overnight, thus launching the international air express industry.
9. DHL's "Can-Do" spirit has been a trait of DHL since its humble beginnings. In 1974, the company's first worldwide meeting to deal with key operational issues lasted a straight 48 straight hours in a Honolulu hotel and didn't finish until solutions were found to every challenge identified.
10. The first aircraft DHL leased, which was an old Douglas DC-6 in 1975, was used to fly fresh fruits and vegetables between the islands of Hawaii.

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11. DHL's first delivery vehicle was a 1969 Plymouth Duster, bought by Adrian Dalsey for DHL in 1970.
12. In 1978 DHL Express was called upon to ship the luggage of the Queen of England from Washington to Miami. Tipping the scales at 2,316 kg, the royal delivery required a special DHL charter of a 727 aircraft to be successfully delivered.
13. U.S. Open Grand Slam winner John McEnroe used DHL in 1979 to deliver his favorite tennis racquets safely from the USA for him to compete at Wimbledon. Fifteen years later, colleagues from the DHL offices in the U.S. got the thrill of their lives when world-tennis champion Martina Navratilova dropped by for a short visit in 1984, the year she simultaneously held four Grand Slam singles titles.
14. DHL made early entries into the emerging markets. DHL was the first international express company to enter China in 1980, through an agency agreement with Sinotrans, one of the largest liner shipping companies in Asia that offers maritime, road, rail, pipeline and air transport.
15. In 1978, DHL became the first company to design and market English / Arabic language word processors. Initially sold with the name Rapid Data and subsequently the DHL 1000, the system was first used in DHL's own offices but proved to be so successful that it was sold to corporations throughout the Middle East and in parts of Asia. When Manifesting and Billing applications were added in 1980, the DHL1000 started to be deployed in DHL offices and by 1984 over 500 machines had been deployed in DHL offices across the Network. The computers were so innovative and visionary that some units were still operating in the 1990s.
16. In 1981, there were over 15 married couples on the staff of DHL Mexico – all of whom met at DHL. In Japan, at least six married couples met in DHL!
17. In 1983, DHL continued to stay ahead of the technological revolution with the launch of NetExpress, a new technology company that developed LaserNet, the first track and trace system. The system was installed in DHL offices in the US. In 1986 DHL started to build a global communications network to provide data for tracing and transit time analysis. Each region had its own network provider; Europe used GEISCO a store-and-forward network, Asia established a peer-to-peer network between its existing IBM Systems and the Americas used Lasernet. One DHL employee remarked: "We were doing things with those computers IBM didn't know they could do".
18. The first DHL TV ad was "Ain't no mountain high enough," which was made in 1979 to create branding and visibility.
19. In 1988, DHL France introduced innovative wine bottle packaging that could withstand a 20 meter fall. The container won an award from the French Institute of Packaging.

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20. DHL launched the world's first ever floating express distribution center in Amsterdam in November 1997. The canal boat solved the growing problem of traffic congestion by using Amsterdam's extensive canal network, doing the work of five DHL vans and saving over 3,000 litres of fuel a year.
21. In 2008, 4.3 million tons of air freight took to the skies with DHL. This is equivalent to the weight of 93 ships the size of the Titanic.
22. In 2006, a DHL-sponsored yacht, which was manned by a crew that included four DHL employees, sailed on to eight place in the grueling *2006 Rolex-Sydney Hobart Yacht Race*, becoming one of 69 yachts to complete the 628 nautical mile race touted as one of the most dangerous races in the world.
23. In 2007, DHL became the first express and logistics company to expand its geographic footprint to Tibet, also called the "Roof of the World." While the Tibetan capital Lhasa at 3,490 m is the highest location for DHL in Asia, El Alto in Bolivia holds the record for the highest DHL Service Center location worldwide at 4,200 m.
24. DHL is the first logistics company to have a reef named after it. In 2006, DHL deployed over 50 *Aquascape* units off Pulau Tioman in Malaysia as part of a marine conservation program that the company entered into and in addition to the 11 units planted in 2004 when the project began in what the Tioman Development Authority has officially named the "DHL Reef".
25. DHL Express has received the "Best Express Service" award at the prestigious Asian Freight and Supply Chain Awards for 21 consecutive years since its inception in 1987.
26. DHL's first three clients were shipping companies: Seatrain Lines, APL and Matson Navigation. Banks were also among DHL's earliest customers, using its overnight delivery service to beat the postal system and ensure safer transport.
27. When conventional transportation became unusable during the worst flooding in South Bandung, Indonesia, in 2005, DHL staff demonstrated creativity and their unwavering commitment to service fulfillment by employing other modes of delivering and picking-up packages – some walked for miles, others used small boats to cross flooded streets. One courier resorted to driving an *andong*, a small local horse-drawn carriage to pick up and deliver packages.
28. In 2005, a series of fashion shows and press events were lined up in each region where DHL operates to roll out the company's new uniforms in 2005. But the first job was for DHL to develop its own system, with 118 sizes, 19 widths and five lengths. To ensure that the mail carrier in Siberia would be warm and his colleague in tropical South America would be cool, the corporate wear consists of more than 60 various parts. The program was a springboard for the distribution of two million long- and short-sleeved shirts, trousers, skirts, jackets, ties, caps and scarves to some 110,000 couriers and office-based customer service colleagues in 200 countries and territories. The entire

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collection used 2,133 km of fabric, over 1.9 million zippers, 3.5 million buttons and 2,000 km of hem seams. The thread that holds everything together is 285,566 kms long and would go around the world seven times.

29. While helping with relief operations in earthquake-struck areas in Pakistan in 2005, DHL provided an innovative solution to getting aid to victims in remote towns and villages through the use of its polypropylene bags. Traditionally used for transporting shipments, the durable bags were packed with 9,000 tons of essentials like blankets and dried foods, and dropped from helicopters, from as high as 35 meters, to aid victims in inaccessible areas.
30. DHL is the first logistics company to have three global Disaster Response Teams – in Dubai, Singapore and Panama – who aid relief operations in affected countries within the Middle East and Africa, Asia Pacific and the Americas respectively immediately following a natural disaster. To date, DHL has managed about 25,000 tons of relief goods.
31. DHL concluded one of the world's biggest logistics contracts in 2006. The customer, the British government, appointed DHL Exel Supply Chain to manage the entire supply chain of the National Health Service (NHS). DHL optimizes the supply chain for 500,000 products, including medical equipment as well as bed linens and nursing uniforms.
32. The northernmost city that DHL delivers to is Hammerfest, Norway (70° 39' 50" N 23° 41' 24" E), while the southernmost city is Ushuaia, Argentina (54° 48' S 68°18' W).
33. DHL launched the world's first global SMS tracking service to allow customers to track DHL shipments via text messages wherever a mobile phone can be used
34. DHL was the official logistics partner and was featured on-screen in the 2006 blockbuster movie *Mission Impossible 3*
35. In 2006, DHL became the first company to offer a GOGREEN service to its customers, which aims to offset the company's carbon footprint. A year later, DHL promoted this service to an international audience by offering it to delegates in Davos, during the World Economic Forum in 2007.
36. DHL is the first logistics company to have its own dedicated innovation center. Inaugurated in March 2007, the DHL Innovation Center was established to continuously develop innovative logistics solutions aimed at addressing customers needs effectively.
37. DHL is the first major logistics company to make a GoGreen commitment – which is to improve the company's carbon efficiency by 30 percent by 2020, using 2007 figures as its baseline.
38. DHL has a branch in the most arid desert of the world, Atacama Desert, in Chile. The country is also the site of DHL's southernmost office in the world (Punta Arenas).

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39. Prime Minister Thatcher celebrated the opening of the Orbital Park Hub in London, UK, in 1987. In her speech Prime Minister Thatcher said: "DHL is the best in the world!"
40. Elmer Bernstein (film score composer, famous for writing the music for the classic films *The Ten Commandments* and *The Great Escape*) and Charlie Haden (one of the most respected jazz bassists today) previously both worked as DHL couriers.

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