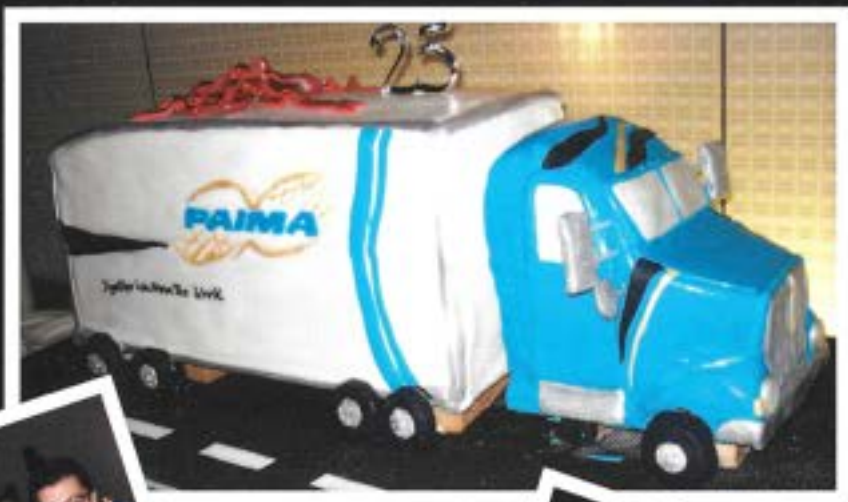


# PAIMA REPORT

The magazine of the Pan American  
International Movers Association

Spring 2010



## PAIMA 25



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# REPORT

The magazine of the Pan American  
International Movers Association.

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## FRONT COVER:

PAIMA's conference was excellent with everyone anxious to celebrate its 25th anniversary. Full report on inside pages!

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## PRICES - ARE WE PART OF THE PROBLEM?



*From Ramon Sierra - PAIMA President.*

*As we all know – have known for years – every time the economy clunks, clients use it as an opportunity to beat down prices. I am sure we're not alone in this - newspapers, magazines all yell at us to go cut a deal for a new car, TV or holiday when retailers are crying. Hit them while the recession is hurting, they tell us.*

What kind of message is that? The same message being used by the bosses of the HRs we deal with. So maybe we're all part of the problem. We're trying to cut the best deals for ourselves in just the same way our clients are for themselves. It's the way the world lives.

We've all seen how in the current recession employers are downsizing all aspects of their mobility policies. As part of this process some employers are offering employees lump sum payments to handle their own relocation costs. Naturally, the employee who is a consumer just like the rest of us, marches off to secure the lowest prices he or she can. When things go bad, they'll cause trouble but so do the majority of ordinary retail consumers.

We all know that the lump-sum deal is seen as a chance to either make up for losses or to mitigate the inconvenience of having to move for the job. It probably goes beyond that in many cases with some employees seeing this as a means of financing a holiday, but we'd probably best not go down that path – too depressing!

There was an interesting article in Mobility recently in which Michael Boone of Lytle's Transfer & Storage commented that "four records indicate a decrease in

satisfaction levels of 10 plus percent on moves in which the transferee is responsible for any portion of the costs. As a specific example, many of our corporate clients only authorize 30 days storage. We have found the claims frequency almost doubles when the transferee has to cover the excess charges. We have had success in reducing the claim filings by minimizing or eliminating the out-of-pocket expense on long-term storage in particular."

And there was a terrible (but not untypical story as we know) tale I read in a recent copy of a relocation magazine in which the author commented on the negative effects that come from employees paying out-of-pocket for mobility costs.

"We had a move recently where the employee verbally, as well as in an e-mail, stated how happy she was with our agents and our relocation specialist right after the move. The transferee was authorized for storage-in-transit, but after the corporate client realized the cost, it limited the storage to 60 days. When the employee went over 60 days and had to pay out-of-pocket, she later returned the quality survey as poor."

So if we – you and me as consumers – are part of the problem, this obsession with getting the best deal, how do we become part of the solution?

*I have no suggestions to make because this is about a complete shift in culture and I suspect the rot has set in too deep. But it's an interesting subject and one that maybe we could discuss at a conference some time. I*

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Languages: English/Spanish

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*Sherry's page....*



*It's  
Spring-  
time for  
PAIMA!*

Seems that everyone is talking about 'the long road to recovery' these days! And so are we!!

Ever since some enterprising movers decided to give PAIMA a new lease of life a year ago, we've seen real progress thanks to some inspiring individuals who wants to make a success of the organisation.

One of its first things was to get another conference in place in Orlando which was a great success - with members voting for a one-off payment to get programs going again and to revitalise the association.

This support was the best thing that could happen to PAIMA and its Board. But what does it mean to you? Well, this is the work in progress:

Plans for the next conference are wrapped up - put Sept 26-28, San Diego, in your diary now!

The new membership book is under way. Pocket sized and stylish, it will be perfect for office or briefcase.

The website is up and running. Not perfect yet, but we're slowly getting there.

Website development simply eats money and we're approaching it with one hand hanging on tight to the purse strings.

This is the second PAIMA Report and hopefully it is an improvement on the first. We'll try to make things better with each issue.

New members - well, we're slowly pulling them in! We are getting more recognition so getting more membership enquiries too - but obviously this takes more time in a recession. But the signs are good!

Finance - now under proper management with cost controls in place. Your money is safe!

## These are exciting times for PAIMA!

Tonnage reports - well, we've overhauled the system and in the coming months you should find it an even more effective tool.

It's fantastic that such a small group as PAIMA has this system and we want to make it bigger and better for you.

As you can read elsewhere, Noreen Hanson has joined the staff. She has already proved herself to be a great asset to PAIMA and I know you will all come

to like and respect her as much as I do.

I think you're very fortunate in your Board which is putting real energy into PAIMA.

Yes, you've seen bit of a bumpy ride in the past but PAIMA now is in great shape and we should all look forward to a really great meeting in San Diego when you will see and hear more about your 'new' PAIMA.

*These are exciting times!*

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# Around PAIMA

## Your new board

The PAIMA Board for 2010 is composed of the following:

**President** – Ramon Sierra,  
Sentry International.

**Vice President** - George O'Masta,  
Balboa International.

**Treasurer** – Christy Wickman,  
Wickman International.

**Secretary** – Elena Mari,  
Equixpress.

**Vocal** - Rafael Moreno,  
Moreno International.

**Vocal** – Diego Aguirre,  
Mercovan Argentina.

**Vocal** – Pat Toscano,  
Reliable Van Storage.

**Associate Director** - Gary Burke,  
Burke Bros Group.

**Associate Director** - George  
Naumann – Swiss Moving Service.

## NEW MEMBERS!

PAIMA is looking forward to welcoming three new members to its community. Supported by fellow members of PAIMA, this is good news for the entire membership. As PAIMA becomes stronger in numbers, so the level of traffic exchanged and the services offered can expand. We really hope this is just the beginning and that we will be able to introduce readers to more and more new members as the months go by.

Do give a big welcome to:

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Fax: 888-713-2139.  
E-Mail: [bill@relms.net](mailto:bill@relms.net).

## NEW MEMBERSHIP BOOK ON ITS WAY

PAIMA is well on its way with its new membership book.

It will be pocket sized, printed in full colour and contain all the contact details of the membership.

"The perfect travelling companion!" says Sherry Williams. "This will be a handy size so that you can slip it in your pocket and brief case wherever you travel!"

It will also be the first directory to offer members the chance to advertise next to their entry, so that their details literally jump off the page.

*More details from the PAIMA office.*



*Noreen Hanson (left) has joined PAIMA to give Sherry Williams a hand. "Ever since our members gave their support to making PAIMA a more meaningful organisation the work load has increased," says Sherry. "Thanks to Noreen, we can tackle a wider range of work for members - already Noreen has shown herself to be a real asset."*





# PAIMA - STILL THE GREEN PIONEER

*Never has the environmental question been more important.*

It doesn't matter whether you believe in global warming or not – the issue goes beyond that. And most of it comes down to common sense!

As an industry that operates in an environmentally sensitive area, we have to recognize that we will be judged by our 'green' credentials.

Amongst those judging you will be your customers who will want to be convinced that you take their concerns seriously.

They are not stupid – they know that you are using packing materials, fuel (road/air/sea), mains power and so on. They see your huge trucks leave their home, dwarfing the size of their Honda in the drive, and wonder how much fuel you're burning....

There is always more than one side to every argument, especially when it comes to the environment, but your customers probably only want to know about one side of it.

We are not scientists and we are all subject to the scare stories from the media, fed by 'experts' whether they really do know their stuff or are just publicity seekers!

In any case, it makes sense to be green because it goes right to the heart of your bottom line – being green is good for business.

Reduce your purchasing costs, lower your operating expenses, benefit from recycling, and reduce energy consumption in your buildings. It takes time, it takes patience, but it can be done.

And now PAIMA is going to give you an incentive! Dedicated to the memory of our distinguished colleague Juan Peralta, PAIMA has created the **PAIMA Ecology Award**.

This award will be presented to the PAIMA member that best meets the criteria set for this important award (see below).

"The criterion is perfectly straightforward!" says PAIMA Executive Director Sherry Williams. "First, we want to recognize and award a member that exceeds other members' level of commitment to the environment.

"Then we want to encourage other PAIMA members to become more aware of the environment

and the actions they need to take, and finally, we want to share amongst everyone all useful steps, measures and procedures that can be taken to operate an environmental programme."

"No, it's not going to be easy to get this going and keep it going – but the world is watching industries like us and we need to respond. Apart from anything else, this goes beyond being a business issue – it should be on everyone's personal agenda too."

What you have to do:

Each applicant should submit a correct PAIMA application form by 1 August 2010.

Every applicant should be able to substantiate its commitment to a 'green' work place for a minimum of two years.

Each applicant is required to document actions and results in the area of environmental responsibility within the company.

The application for the PAIMA Ecology Award is required to document efforts and achievements in maintaining environmental responsibility within the community.

Appropriate evidence and photographs should be submitted to substantiate the information supplied.

Please note that applications are subject to verification and that an especially composed Ecology Award Committee will review and consider all applications

received. In addition, all applications become the sole property of the PAIMA.



# RELIABLE OF NJ IS RELIABLY GREEN



*Pat Toscano of Reliable, New Jersey, receives his PAIMA Award from Sherry Williams.*

Going green is good for the soul, good for business and good for the bottom line.

And if you need proof, then just take a look at Reliable Van & Storage of New York, latest winners of the PAIMA Ecology Award. This is a company that doesn't just talk green, it invests in it - but it insists the payback is very fast.

It has made two significant purchases that have made an immediate impact. The first is a new state of the art cardboard baling machine.

Not just any machine either but a fully automated one that devours used packing material, paper, and other recyclable material in seconds.

And in just minutes, this machine produces full bales of bound, wrapped

and wired bundles of recycled material each weighing approximately 1600 lbs.

The baler has a hungry appetite and is ideal for large corrugated boxes, packing materials and other items that are common to the warehousing and moving industry.

The speed with which it consumes used packing materials and delivers

them back again in neatly packaged bundles is astonishing.

Before buying the new baler, Reliable employed two warehouse helpers, each working eight hours a day, six days a week to achieve the same results.

So the company has dramatically lowered its costs as well as improved the efficiency of the warehouse as it has eliminated all debris.



*Four generations of the Toscano family - in the background picture is company founder Peter Toscano, with Pat (centre) and sons Peter Toscano Jr and Peter Toscano III.*



*Reliable has made huge investment in recycling machinery.*

"Speed of operation is another of our baler's benefits. Trucks are emptied and made available for speedy redeployment much quicker," says Pat Toscano of Reliable. "In terms of next day availability, our trucks are loaded far more efficiently in the evening and ultimately sent on assigned rounds first thing in the morning with consistent on-time results."

In addition to the new baler, Reliable has also bought a very efficient wood auger. This tool easily consumes spent wood lift vans, pallets and crates at remarkably high speed.

Until this wonder machine came along, Reliable typically had four to six dumpster loads of wood removed from its facility on a weekly basis at considerable out of pocket expense.

It now has one dumpster load every two weeks due to the sheer chipping power of this machine!



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# ReIMS plans to make life easier for you!



Bill Carlson Jr, the US Operations Manager.

Ken Keys established ReIMS Holdings Pty Ltd in early 2003 to develop and market a suite of software tools to help modernize processes in the removals industry.

"Our goal has always been customer satisfaction and problem-solving to help our customers enjoy an even healthier bottom line. Our products not only integrate with each other but also with many other products that they may be using," says Bill Carlson Jr, the US Operations Manager.

Based in Australia but with branches in the USA, ReIMS has designed all its products so that they can be customised for any country – the system is entirely global. After 15 years of working closely with the removals industry, ReIMS is

convinced that it can not only help anyone with a removals business but raise the bar for the industry as a whole. Its products include:

**ReIMS Estimating** – Estimate and price out every move with a tablet PC. It includes an electronic cube sheet, reporting, scheduling, and sales tools such as pictures and video to help close the deal.

**Customer Web Portals** – Integrate a self service cube sheet for customers on your website. Once the customer hits 'submit' for the quote it will automatically be imported into ReIMS waiting for your follow-up.

**ReIMS Mailer** – software to integrate bulk email marketing from all your marketing leads.

You can contact Bill Carlson at: [bill@relms.net](mailto:bill@relms.net) or visit the ReIMS website at: <http://relms.net>, <http://relms.com.au>.

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Name: **Phaedra Nevitt Widney**.  
Company: **TG International Insurance Brokerage**.

Where were you raised and educated?

*Raised in San Juan Capistrano, California - went to St Margaret's Episcopal school through high school and received my BA at Chapman University.*

When did you first get into the moving industry?

*Part time after graduating high school - full time starting in 1999.*

How did it come about?

*Family business - my parents started TGI/Travel Guard 36 years ago!*

Who's your family, Phaedra?

*Married to Shaun Widney - two children: Athena age three and Austin age 11.*

What do you do at weekends when you're not working?

*Listening to music, reading, watching films, chasing after my three year old!*

What book are you reading this week?

*The Art of Chasing the Rain by Garth Stein - a story of a family from its dog's point of view. Funny and touching.*

What is your idea of a perfect holiday?

*Any time we have the family and our friends together.*

What couldn't you live without?

*Music or books - have to have both at all times!*

If you were granted one wish, what would it be?

*To have my cousin return to us - he died suddenly and very young - I'd wish for him to be here so I could*





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# 25 years young! PAIMA comes of age!



*A special association, a special celebration - and so a special cake to mark PAIMA's 25th anniversary!*

*Not a record, but attendance at the PAIMA conference jumped by over 45%!*

The New York meeting in 2007 was the highest ever (130) but this year's turnout of 113 was amazing!" says PAIMA President Ramon Sierra.



*Ramon Sierra - PAIMA President.*

There were more than 30 countries represented and PAIMA was grateful for a record level of sponsorship - thank you, everyone!

Given the new structure of PAIMA and the board's determination to develop the association even further, there was quite a lot of formal business, in addition to the panels and the social programme.

"Most heart-warming of all, was the voluntary donation by all members of US\$350 to put the association onto a secure footing," says Sherry Williams, its Executive Director. "This means we can maximize our potential and make PAIMA a serious player in the market place. It's a very

exciting time as the money will be used to develop on-line training, the website and of course, a new tonnage reporting system."

Those attending the General Assembly heard a report on the action being taken against the previous staff of PAIMA but on a more positive note, also supported the Board's recommendations for changes in its structure.

Joe Pauley has now retired from business so he has relinquished his position as Treasurer which has been taken over by Christy Wickman. In addition, Walter Galeckas has been succeeded by Rafael Moreno of Moreno International, Mexico. Finally, Pat Toscano of Reliable in New Jersey has joined the Board.

Two excellent business sessions were held - first a panel chaired by Joe Pauley which discussed Customer Service issues. On the panel were Gary Burke, Chip Withers, Laura May Carmack, Fran Vollaro and Rodger Kandetzke. Second, Laura May Carmack steered everyone through the new C-TPAT container and trailer requirements which will impact on our industry.

But of course, everyone was there to celebrate PAIMA's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary - a remarkable achievement for an organization that started off with such modest hopes!





*C-TPAT lecture gets a practical side. This was a really excellent session.*

Sherry Williams organized a super truck cake that soon disappeared (!) and organized a special lunch to honour the present and past presidents of PAIMA – to everyone's delight this was attended by **Raquel Castano of Mexico**, **Joe Pauley, USA**, **Abdel Cohn of Panama** and **George O'Masta from Panama**.

And just to remind us how fortunate we are to have some great members in PAIMA, we were able to visit the facility of **Suddath International** which was really fascinating.

One of the highlights of every PAIMA conference is the Awards Luncheon, and this one proved no exception, with all the tables packed! Presentations were to:

**PAIMA 2009 ECOLOGY AWARD** – Pat Toscano of Reliable Van and Storage, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

**TONNAGE AWARDS:**

**Overall Top Booker:**

Carl Hartmann GmbH – Germany

**European Top Booker:**

Burke Brothers Moving Group – UK

**Africa-Asia Top Booker:**

Magna Thompson International - South Africa

**North American Top Booker:**

Aloha International – Hawaii.

**South America Top Booker:**

Mudanzas International Global-Venezuela

**Mexico, Central America and Caribbean Top Booker:**



*From left (amongst others!) are Alicia Flores (Sancalsa), Caridad Aguilar (Panama International Packers), Joe Pauley of Coco's International and Rafael Moreno of Moreno International.*



*Left: PAIMA President Ramon Sierra is introduced. Above: Top European*





*Left: Conference panelist Fran Vollaro of Pasha group with Roger Kandetzke of Reliable.*



*Full of life - Rocio Munoz of Moreno International.*



*Conference delegates crowd round the shipping container provided for the C-TPAT business session.*



*Three Past Presidents of PAIMA: Abdel Cohn who was also the first full time employee of PAIMA, Raquel Castano and Joseph Pauley.*







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ZARAGOZA**





Business session underway at the PAIMA conference. From left: Laura May Carmack (AIReS), Gary Burke (Burke Bros), Fran Vollaro (Pasha Group), Roger Kandetske of Reliable and Chip Withers of Withers Worldwide.



Monica Silva of Remissa and (right) Alicia Flores of Sancalsa.



From left: Juan Bernal (Panama Intermoving & Relocation) Monica Pauley (Coco's International), Christy Wickman of Wickman International and Harm Meierdirks of Carl Hartmann.



From left are: Anoop Kumar of Raffles Movers, Vino Vallaydam (Australian Van Lines), Babu Bhargavan (Raffles Movers) and Sid Vallaydam.



From left: Martin Barrandeguy (Mudanzas Intermove), Aline Gerson (Gerson and Grey), Christy Wickman (Wickman International), Ramon Sierra and Jose Marrero (Sentry International).





## Business is great, but nothing beats family, says women!

tell you that we are almost 37 years in the moving business, that we began only with household moves, then fine arts, exhibits, trade shows, and commodities, writes Ma. del Carmen Lerdo de Tejada of Transcontainer in Mexico.

years ago the company moved into the hospitality industry working with hotels and now has facilities in Mexico City, Guadalajara, Monterrey, Cancun, Nuevo Laredo and Laredo Texas as well as a sales office in Houston.

what is really important is family! My husband Luis and I are blessed to be happy and proud grandparents. Here I present them to you: Camila 15, Alexia 13, Patty 11, Patty 5 and tiny Isabella who is aged two. Camila already told me some time ago: "I'm the Manager of the business!" And we very much hope that indeed, our grandchildren will one day continue the business of Transcontainer.



## FOUR GENERATIONS FOR CHRISTMAS!



Laura May Carmack, Quality Manager at AIRes in Pittsburgh who did such a GREAT job at the PAIMA conference celebrated a Christmas bake with four generations of her family involved! How amazing is that? From left to right are (front) Laura May Lion (aka. Grannynick); back row: Laura May Carmack, Malia Carmack (niece No.1), Savannah Carmack (niece No. 2), and Laura May Carmack (Laura's mother). And the day was the perfect way to welcome Christmas says Laura with sunshine AND snow!

## THE PAULEY GIRLS BREAK THE GLASS CEILING



After reading that only 3% of the 10 million women who are business owners are ever able to break the \$1 million in revenue I thought of my two daughters, writes Joseph Pauley.

Macarena (above) now only 34 years old has reached this mark and more. She now owns Coco's International Movers that serves all of Florida with full international HHG services.

Patricia, 29, (left) has now also accomplished this. She controls Portable Self Moving and Storage, a franchise of PODS Inc. that has already passed more than \$2 million in sales. Both have learned business working with their mother Monica who has now sold the business to each with minor participation of two male siblings (one each) as assistants.

And here the proud father Joseph Pauley is happy to share family album pictures of his girls when they took part in a beer



# Who am I?

*In which PAIMA Report introduces you to some of the people that make up the membership of its network!*



## PHYLISS ENCLUNA

Say hello to **Phyliss S. Encluna** of the Philippines moving company Goetz Moving & Storage.

Born and raised in Manila, he got into the moving business right after graduating in 1994.

"I was desperate for employment, you know," he recalls. "In the Philippines, your family and friends expect you to get employed as soon as you finish your degree. I needed to find something quick!"

He began by doing all usual administrative work in the company. But he was quick and lively so it wasn't long before he was promoted to become the company's supervisor.

Phyliss is still single and fancy-free but loves his friends (and if you want to be a pen pal then you can mail him at [phyliss\\_encluna@yahoo.com](mailto:phyliss_encluna@yahoo.com)). At weekends when he's not working he's usually visiting his parents and taking his nephews and nieces out for treats.

What would he do if he could take the perfect holiday? Well, given a free budget, he'd love to tour Europe

with his family but meanwhile he'll happily settle for a friendly resort and picnics with the family.

He's not sure he could go away without his mobile 'phone though which is central to his life – as are Lindt chocolates!!

So what would he do if he was granted a single wish?

"Well, I want to be a millionaire someday because by being one, I can help my family and friends and ease out their financial problems they might have - and put a smile on their faces at all time

## GEORGE NAUMANN

And here we have **George Naumann** of Swiss Moving Service AG who was born and raised in a small town close to Zurich where he still lives.

His career began with an apprenticeship in the ABB group as a businessman before switching in 1982 to a forwarding company. Later he switched to the company's moving division.

Like others before him, after studying English in Hastings, England, he came home broke and needed a job urgently – luckily, two weeks after he returned home, he landed the job with the forwarding company where he worked in the back office and in sales.

George is married to Christine and the couple have two daughters, Chantal (15) and Valerie who is 13. As you might expect from someone fortunate enough to be living in Switzerland, the weekends will find George sailing on Lake Zurich in the Summer and in the Winter up in the mountains for snow boarding and skiing.

His perfect holiday would be to look at the sea from a deck chair in the comfortable knowledge that just behind him is a bar, and when



he is facing the bar to know the sea is behind him.....not a bad thought for a man who likes to work hard and enjoy life.

## JANET ESPINOZA



And so to **Janet Espinoza** of Multi Transportes Mex SA de CV who was raised in Mexico City and got into the moving business when she was only 15!!

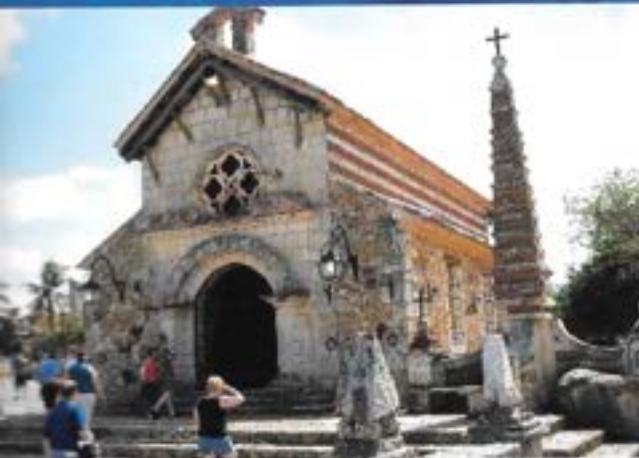
"It's a family business and my dad invited me to join the company – and I thought, why not?"

Married with two children she spends her weekends out of the city with her family – and her idea of a perfect holiday is to be as far away from any calls from her office with bad news!

So what couldn't you live without Janet?

"My computer and my mobile 'phone – especially my mobile!"





# THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC - THE HEART OF THE CARIBBEAN.

Jose M. Lopez, CEO of L&G International Movers, S.A.

The Dominican Republic is located in the greater Antilles, exactly between the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico.

Tourism is the principal source of hard currency (Euros and the USD) and is an area that is expanding all the time with little sign of slowing down. Amongst the best known destinations in the Northern Region are: Puerto Plata, Sosua, Cabarete, Rio San Juan, Samana and Las Arenas. In the South we have Boca Chica, Juan Dolio, La Romana, Bayahive, Punta Cana, Uvero Alto and now being developed is Miches. So first, let me take you on a tour of these regions!





La Romana

*One of the most popular regions of Dominican Republic is La Romana now ranked as the third biggest city in the whole island.*

As of 2005, it already has at least 240,000 inhabitants including locals and foreign immigrants. This region enjoys many stunning beaches which makes it a favourite destination for tourist leading to the building of a new international airport. Since then, all the local resorts are within easy reach and the visitors just keep coming!

One famous site in La Romana is the Altos de Chavon. This is an open air theatre made out stones and said to be a replica of the Mediterranean village in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

There are at least five-thousand seats in this amphitheatre, set in a semi-circle. Many people gather in Altos de Chavon – and for good reason! The local restaurants not only serve delicious food but you can enjoy it whilst admiring dramatic views of the Rio Chavón mountains.

Another place to visit (should you think about going to La Romana – and you should!) which is visited by celebrities such as Julio Iglesias or Juan Luis Guerra is La Marina. This is a pretty, bustling

area which has all modern conveniences and is a perfect place to stay – and as the hot temperatures warm you up, you can cool off with the magnificent local ice creams sold everywhere!

Golfers amongst you will be aware of the three huge golf courses at Casa de Campo – one of them famously known as “Teeth of the dog”. This place is truly a mecca for golfers and attracts them in their thousands.

## Bavaro

And so to Bavaro one of the best known areas in the province of Punta Cana. This beautiful area is on the eastern coast of Dominican Republic. And here you will also find popular resorts of Cap Cana (also known as Juanillo), El Cortecito, Cabeza de Toro, Arena Gorda, Uvero Alto and Macao. Nowadays, the beach area of the Dominican Republic's east coast is undoubtedly the favourite for all those people wanting the perfect vacation – with great beaches, plenty of water sports and of course, non-stop sunshine. Absolutely the perfect spot to relax.

The beaches of Bavaro are one of the most popular in Dominican Republic, and no wonder! The water



Bavaro

is very warm, very warm and very inviting for those who want to enjoy the sea all year round. There's something in the clear turquoise blue water that makes tourists and locals love to explore the depths of these incredible beaches. Few can resist its charms!

## Punta Cana



You will find this slice of paradise on the eastern most tip of The Dominican Republic. With an area of 1,100 acres, this region is part of the east coast beach area of the country, where some of the best white powdery sand and clear, warm waters are found. This is also known as the coconut coast because of the hundreds of swaying coconut palms that dot its 30-mile coastline. It is an amazing part of the world

and it is hard to do justice to its beauty just in words – you need to go there to see for yourself!

The country's spectacular growth is due to the equally spectacular growth of tourism here. There are now so many retirees living here and business people investing in the country that it has opened new markets for us. When you visit the Dominican Republic you will see our vehicles

everywhere serving the local community which is growing all the time.

And as the country grows, so will we – we are ready for it!! And should ever want to know more about the Dominican Republic for either business or personal reasons, just contact us at L&G International Movers, S.A.





# Customer service – how do we make it excellent?

*In these tough recessionary times, how do you improve your business opportunities?*

Everyone will have their own ideas on this, but even so, there seem to be a number of basic rules that will apply to every business. Basically, they fall into four categories, says Laura May Carmack of AiRES in Pittsburgh.

At the heart of customer service is the quality of people on board - so make sure you are happy with the people handling customer service and then empower them to make customer service-driven business decisions.

Work with your team (even if it is just one person) to establish an internal system that works for them. Include the basics such as preparing the client for the paperwork involved with an international move.

Remember that you are not just the first face but also the last face your client encounters during the

move process. These face-to-face interactions make a big difference to the customer - so don't rush the process.

Explain the paperwork to be signed at the beginning of the move, so that when they sign it at the end of the move, it's not a surprise.

Remember also that rewarding and recognizing the extra efforts made by staff - everyone from the driver and crew to the office staff - makes a difference.

It doesn't have to be about money - a pat on the back goes a long way. Share the good news, along with the not-so-good news. Try a segment "Don't let this happen to you" where mistakes are shared in a positive environment so that everyone learns from them.

But however good your customer service is, you still need to sell! And in these difficult times, you need to sell harder than ever - now is the time to get MORE sales folks in the field.

Here again, even if it's just you doing the selling, follow some basic rules:

1. **Identify the right client contact to sell to.** Finding the decision-maker can be a challenge. Dig deep to make sure you're not wasting time with someone who doesn't have authority to approve the move.

2. **Selling the benefits of PAIMA membership** - you know that PAIMA members are financially sound and experienced relocation professionals who invest in the industry, but you need to tell your client! Explain how PAIMA members offer:

- A. Innovating thinking
- B. Industry presence and communication with government branches to effect positive influence on security and trade requirements.
- C. Training and cutting edge industry knowledge.



# DON'T LEAVE IT ALL TO



D. Stress the environmentally focus - PAIMA is the only industry association with an Environmental Award for Best Business Practices.

And we were doing it long before Al Gore came along with his movie! So promote this aspect - and tell you customer about the PAIMA Ecology Award.

## Part of the trick of communicating with customers is simple - just listen!

Find out from them about their current concerns, think about the questions you hear most often from them and really think about your answers.

Note the comments they make about their mobility problems - take them

away and see how you can counter their concerns in your sales pitch.

The one thing most customers are good at giving away are clues about their concerns - look out for them and use them!

It's always a good idea to create a customer panel. This acts as a sounding board and helps you discover what's important to customers today, next year, and the year after.

It takes time and patience but this kind of informal panel is beneficial to both sides.

The big thing for the future though, is going to be security. Trust me, this is going up to the top of the agenda, even faster than the environment. As an industry we collect large amounts of personal data to move shipments in and out

of import/export Customs by air and sea. Customers are concerned how we are storing personal data and who has access to it.

So the latest issue when you are face to face with your customer is security - customers have lots of questions about it. You need not only to be seen to tighten office security, but you must make it a reality by involving your staff.

Stress the importance of security, develop a Security Team to develop ways to protect sensitive customer information. Then use this as another sales tool.

Technology doesn't stand still - and nor should your approach to it. The longer you ignore changes in the technical aspects of your business, the harder and more expensive it will be to catch up!

Make sure that you keep on top of training so that your staff can maximize all computer resources.

Remember that technology is only as good as its users - I read somewhere that on average most people only use 24% of the capacity of most software programs!

Also, conduct basic tests - for instance, when someone is out of the office, is there an adequate system to provide cover for attending to their e-mails?

These are simple routines to establish but they are very important.

From your own perspective, use electronic invoicing and payments to

reduce bank charges, save company time and improve cash flow.

For your customers - look at how web-based systems can give them access to move details and reports - the kind of thing most clients are now taking for granted.

*Special thanks  
to Laura May  
Carmack of  
AIReS for  
preparing  
this report  
based on a  
conference  
session.*

## LINKING PANAMA WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD



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*Make a date! Your next PAIMA conference will be held immediately before the IAM annual meeting in San Diego at Regency Grand Hyatt. Dates are: Sept 26-28.*

California's second largest city and the United States' eighth largest, San Diego boasts a citywide population of nearly 1.3 million residents and more than three million residents countywide.

Within its borders of 4,200 sq. miles, San Diego County encompasses 18 incorporated cities and numerous other charming neighbourhoods and communities, including downtown's historic Gaslamp Quarter, Little Italy, Coronado, La Jolla, Del Mar, Carlsbad, Escondido, La Mesa, Hillcrest, Barrio Logan, Chula Vista and more to name a few.

San Diego is renowned for its idyllic climate, 70 miles of pristine beaches and a dazzling array of family attractions. Popular attractions include the world-famous San Diego Zoo and Wild Animal Park, Sea World San Diego and Legoland California.

In San Diego's East County, the terrain varies from gentle foothills to mile-high mountains and the historic mining town, Julian, down to the 600,000-acre Anza Borrego Desert State Park, offering nature-conscious visitors endless opportunities to hike, camp, fish, observe wildlife and much more.

In San Diego's North County, the agricultural community produces quantities of flowers and magnificent produce. Wine growers are also making a mark by growing

Along the west, 70 miles of Pacific Ocean coastline not only supports year-round outdoor recreation, such as surfing, boating, sailing and swimming, but also important scientific research at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography. To the south, it's a whole different country, Mexico, featuring its own cultural offerings in various towns along the border and coastline, including Tijuana, Rosarito and Ensenada.



*Balboa Park, the largest urban cultural park in the U.S*

San Diego's arts and culture and culinary arts are booming. The hottest, new culinary arts talents prepare award-winning meals throughout the region's 6,400 eating establishments. Balboa Park, the largest urban cultural park in the U.S., is home to 15 museums, numerous art galleries, beautiful gardens, the Tony Award-winning The Globe Theatres and the world-famous San Diego Zoo.

San Diego County also features 92 golf courses and a variety of spectator sports, beachfront resorts and luxury spas, gaming, a dynamic downtown district, annual special events and unique holiday offerings, multicultural festivals and celebrations, colourful neighbourhoods and communities, a rich military history and much more.

## **LATINO EXPRESS, S.A.**

**Dominican Republic**

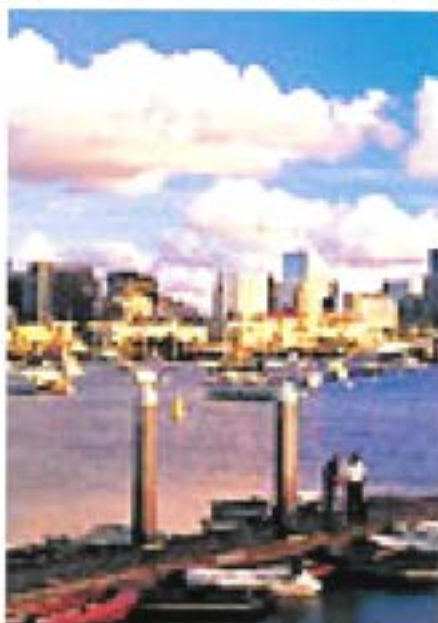
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