

# New technologies threaten Posta Uganda's existence

BY DESIRE MBABAALI  
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

**KAMPALA.** Posta Uganda is in a tense struggle to survive as the volume of letters it delivers continues to drop considerably due to the emergence of new information technologies.

According to Posta Uganda mail performance data sheets, domestic ordinary letters sent and received through Posta Uganda fell from 1,545,508 to 636,842 in the five-year period between 2010 and 2015, a 59 per cent decline.

During the same period, the volume of international in-coming ordinary letters reduced from 1,083,267 to 728,293, a drop of 33 per cent. International outgoing registered letters also registered a decline by 25 per cent, from 27,078 to 20,433 during the five-year period.

"As a result of technology substitution and changing consumer habits, letter volumes continue to go low while parcel volumes and weights are going up. This, we attribute to the increasing appreciation of e-Commerce in Uganda," Ms Jessica Uwera Ssenooba, the manager - corporate relations at Posta Uganda, said.

"New technologies have simplified communication in this digital era, where one only needs a digital device, say a phone, to be able to pass on and receive messages," Mr Gerald Businge, a multimedia communication specialist, said.

He added: "Have you noticed that only a few companies have post office addresses, and even when they do, no one will take notice? They are usually preoccupied with knowing the website address. So how does one beat solutions that are only a click away?"



**Less busy.** Customers transact business at Posta Uganda headquarters in Kampala recently. The volume of letters the company delivers has dropped considerably over the recent past due to new information technologies. PHOTO BY ALEX ESAGALA.

Ms Doreen Namuli, 68, a former Posta Uganda employee, recalls that in the past, to receive a message, one had to have a Post Office box number, or know someone with a number.

## Working to adapt

With 70,000 post boxes all over the country and 300 post offices, Posta Uganda ruled the information-sharing arena in Uganda. It has lost its dominance but it is keen to adapt to the changing environment.

Mr Andrew Stephen Kaweesa, the Posta Uganda manager for research and business development, said: "Posta Uganda is, however, taking

## BACKGROUND

**Diversifying.** In 1998, in a move to loosen control of Uganda's communication sector, three independent institutions: Uganda Communications Commission, Uganda Telecom Limited and Posta Uganda, were created when the former Uganda Posts and Telecommunications Corporation was unbundled.

advantage of these technologies and has embraced it by automating its processes from the counter to the back office, track and trace of items, pre-advance data on items mailed, among others."

"We are focusing on e-commerce to earn more revenues. We offer financial services, logistics and parcels, plus the Express Mail Service, courier services, among others," he said.

Other services Posta Uganda offers include Internet, philately for collectors, public transport through Post Bus, distribution of newspapers and magazines, as well as being an agent for telecommunications providers.