

Global industry delivers growth

SOPHIE FOSTER

NEW data shows Queenslanders' love of online shopping has continued unabated, with growth in international parcels activity soaring despite the dollar sitting about 7¢ below parity with the US currency.

Industry analysts IBIS-World expects the \$6.9 billion courier parcel industry will be worth \$8.2 billion by 2018-19, growing about 3.5 per cent a year.

But courier and logistics business Pack & Send, whose Queensland stores represent around a fifth of its overall volumes, has found an 18 per cent rise in freight so far this year, with international parcels to and from Australia jumping 39 per cent.

Chief executive Michael Paul said the scale of growth in Queensland was in those double digits, with a lower dollar failing to cut into the parcels business.

"We haven't seen any change in the amount of imports coming in," he said. "The indication to us is that it's still quite a good proposition for online shoppers to buy things overseas despite a fluctuating dollar. We haven't seen anything different (to previous online activity)."

Mr Paul said the hunt was on to nail down logistic solutions for consumers whose parcels arrive at home during work hours.

This, he said, could soon see higher numbers of kiosk-type services for parcels and after hours pick-up zones through

partnerships arranged with service stations and neighbourhood businesses.

Mr Paul said Pack & Send's 100 service centres across the country could soon see such "satellite outlets" added to the network.

"That's one of the changes that needs to occur," he said of the industry. "Clearly the parcel delivery landscape has changed significantly in last five years.

"It's a challenge for logistics industries, for retailers and frustrating for people who buy goods online. So there does need to be alternative delivery points as a way to solve that.

"We're already seeing big growth in people choosing Pack & Send stores to deliver to so they can choose when to pick it up."



SERVICE: Maria and Wayne Varkevisser at their Pack & Send courier operation in Aspley.