



## Many Services Working Together

The Makro Logistics Group Provides Distribution, Courier, and Logistics Services

Makro Logistics ships a variety of cargo internationally by keeping up on local customs and weather, and any factors causing changes in shipping lines schedules. With offices in different countries, Makro Logistics unifies its operations with technology and a skilled staff.



*We are selling customer service, not just price.*

Paul Mendoza, Owner and CEO, Makro Logistics Group





## At a Glance

**Makro Logistics Group, LLC**

www.makrologistics.com

**Industry**

Logistics Provider and Courier

**Solution**

Magaya Cargo System, AES, Bar Code Scanner

The Makro Logistics Group of Miami, FL, provides comprehensive logistics services through the four companies in its group: a courier Makro Express, distributors Lorali and GPM, and Makro Logistics. Offices in Colombia, Central America and the United States communicate via Magaya software and a VoIP phone system.

## Challenges

Get it done right and when promised – these are the challenges Makro Logistics faces every day. The Makro Logistics Group has offices in different countries, and they must exchange a high volume of shipment data, stay on top of international laws, changes in the weather, or other factors that can impact shipment schedules. Communication is a vital tool to ensure cargo is shipped and arrives when the customer expects it.

## Four in One: A Full-Service Logistics Group

The owner and CEO of Makro Logistics Group, Paul Mendoza, oversees four companies:

- Lorali is a distribution company that exports tobacco products from Paraguay into Central and South America and the U.S.
- GPM distributes drinks and snacks from the U.S.
- Makro Express is a courier service from Miami to Central America, South America and to Mexico that Mr. Mendoza started in 2010 to fulfill demand for small package delivery to Colombia.
- Makro Logistics provides all the logistics for these companies.

Combined, these four companies provide a complete array of logistics services for their customers. With Makro's main office located in Miami, FL, near the Miami International Airport, the courier company can deliver its packages to the airport efficiently.

Other offices in the U.S. are also located near ports, including an office in the New York/New Jersey area and a new office that they opened in 2010 near the port in Savannah, GA.

Outside the U.S., Makro Logistics has offices in Bogota, Colombia, and in San Salvador, El Salvador, and agents in other countries in Central America, South America and Mexico.

Mr. Mendoza runs his logistics group of companies using the experience he gained working for a shipping company in Hong Kong and in Beijing, China where he lived for many years. While there, he saw an opportunity to export aluminum wheels from Taiwan to Central and South America, and so he started a company to provide that service.

When he returned to the United States, he worked for a logistics provider based in Germany. Mr. Mendoza purchased the company from the owners when they decided to close the U.S. branch. His goal in running a logistics company himself was to provide quality customer service. "I didn't want anyone else handling my logistics that would not provide the level of care that I want," Mr. Mendoza said.

He decided to build Makro Logistics on the principles of good customer service, quality employees, and the Magaya Cargo System. He was already familiar with the software because he used it at a previous company. "It has everything we need for this business," he said. All his offices use the software, its online tracking tool, Magaya LiveTrack; the Magaya AES feature for exports; and the Magaya Bar Code Scanner.

## Providing More than Logistics

All the choices made at Makro Logistics are designed to provide better customer service. For example, to communicate better with customers, they use the Magaya LiveTrack online interactive tool.

"We can look up any shipment in the database, and we also give customers access to find their container numbers so they can see where their shipment is," Mr. Mendoza said. "They like to have this information. Some customers have said that other providers they used in the past did not tell them anything about their shipment. It's my job to provide the customers with everything that they need to know."

Magaya LiveTrack is included with the software and is connected to the database, displaying real-time information online. Permissions can be set to fine-tune customer and agent access to data such as shipment status, inventory quantities on hand, invoices due, and more.

Makro Logistics also sends their customers an email message via the Transaction Tracking feature that includes a link with a real-time update

Warehouse Racks



of their shipment status.

In addition to the customers staying informed, Mr. Mendoza uses the reporting features and accounting functions in the software to keep track of how the business is doing. "We use all the accounting features in the Magaya system," Mr. Mendoza said. "It's better to use one system instead of two. I can keep track of the Profit & Loss every week to see the profits per shipment."

To make receiving and shipping faster, they use the Magaya Bar Code Scanner plug-in. For example, when cases of bottled drinks arrive at the warehouse, a receiving label is printed with a bar code on it. The bar code is scanned to assign the case to a location in the warehouse. The information is updated instantly in the database.

When a shipment is created, cases of the bottles are packed on pallets. "We package 108 cases in a pallet and place a pallet sticker on it. The pallet is shrink wrapped and placed on a skid and sent out," Mr. Mendoza explained. "When the pallet arrives at its destination, the bar code stickers for the pallets are scanned and the pallets are broken down so the exact quantities of cases can be distributed to the final consignees."

Everyone at Makro uses the chat feature in the Magaya Community screen to send transactions such as air waybills and bills of lading back and forth between their global offices. As a result, the staff does not have to re-enter all the data, which eliminates redundant data entry and reduces the chance of errors.

Makro's traffic department is based in Colombia. "The call center is set up to route the calls to Colombia," Mr. Mendoza said. "They transfer the calls or look up the details in the Magaya system and tell the customer the information they need." With the software and a VoIP phone system, the staff in the Miami office and in Colombia work together as easily and inexpensively as if they were in the same room.

To file Customs documents quickly, they use the Magaya Automated Export System (AES). All the shipment data is automatically converted into the AES screen for validation before it is sent to Customs. Speed is extremely important, especially in the courier business. Makro Express has its own vans and trucks for the courier service. The courier company receives many small packages, and Makro Logistics consolidates them and sends them out by air.

"We ship by air because we have to be quick. Our courier website says we will get packages from the U.S. to Bogota, Colombia in 48 hours," he said. The small packages get a bar code in the Miami warehouse.

The staff prints the bar code labels from the Magaya system and places the label on the packages.

"Once a plane leaves the U.S., you have only a few hours to get all the air waybills for a consolidation input into the Customs system in Colombia," Mr. Mendoza explained. "If not, they can hold the whole shipment as contraband. We have to be fast and knowledgeable of the international laws. When the packages arrive in Bogota, the bar code labels are scanned so all the packages are tracked. We use a distribution company there that delivers all over the country." While the courier service is based out of the Miami office and warehouse, about 40% of the cargo the Makro Logistics Group handles does not come to the Miami warehouse. For example, they have some ocean containers going straight from Paraguay to Dubai, and others that originate in China and go straight to Colombia. "All the logistics are handled by us even though we did not load the container here," Mr. Mendoza said.

The courier service relies on air shipments for fast service, but the other companies in the group, GPM and Lorali, use ocean vessels to export from South America. Mr. Mendoza's knowledge of the region and its laws helps him provide better service. For example, he tells his customers up front what the expected transit time is for a cargo ship leaving Paraguay and going to Miami.

While a vessel can travel between Colombia and Miami in only four days, it can take 45 days for cargo to arrive from Paraguay because the cargo must travel over 400 miles down the Paraguay River from Asuncion, Paraguay's capital and an inland port, down the Parana River to Buenos Aires, Argentina. The ship also stops at ports in Brazil and up the East Coast of the U.S. before reaching Miami.

If there is a drought in Paraguay, the ships cannot carry as many containers. "We keep track of this information and adjust our shipping accordingly, or we contact our customers to let them know about it," Mr. Mendoza said. "We want to be the ones to tell them, not have them call us and ask where their cargo is."

## In Conclusion

Makro's use of all these features adds up to faster, more accurate service. "We are selling customer service, not just price. We follow through with the shipping line and give our customers all the information we can provide them. I can't control the shipping lines, the airlines, the weather or anything else. If a container will take 60 days to arrive, that's what I tell them. I am honest with my customers."