

Intelsat and Gilat Join Forces in Canada Delivering 3G Rural Cellular Connectivity

case study

The Challenge

In Western Canada, the Alaska Highway stretches 1,909 km from Dawson Creek, BC to the Alaska-Yukon border, the only land connection to Alaska. On the BC North Coast, the 480 km Inside Passage waterway is a key marine supply route to Alaska, attracting over one million cruise ship passengers a year. At times travel can be unpredictable, yet both of these areas remain without adequate cellular coverage.

Despite the remoteness of these locations, residents and travelers still desire smartphone connectivity for personal or business needs, and for emergency call services. The lack of available infrastructure to deliver connectivity creates challenging conditions.

RuralCom, a cellular carrier based in Vancouver, BC, is expanding in new geographic market areas such as underserved highway and waterway corridors to address

unmet consumer needs. The challenge was to rapidly deploy a reliable 3G service while minimizing the technical and business risks. Also, the business model needed to support the economics of a sparsely populated coverage area.

RuralCom was looking for partners with proven technological solutions and experience in providing extended cellular coverage in very remote locations. Satellite was the obvious choice for cost-effective and fast deployment over such a large area. Macrocell and small cell solutions were considered, and analysis proved that the small cell solution would optimize coverage at a far lower cost.

The Solution

Intelsat and Gilat's combined rural cellular solution consisting of IntelsatOne® managed services paired with Gilat's CellEdge 3G network, can be quickly deployed anywhere in the world. RuralCom relied on the joint solution to offer 3G HSPA+, including voice, SMS, MMS and data services to its subscribers and those of other cellular operators. The end-to-end solution enabled RuralCom to launch a high quality, high reliability, low CAPEX service within a few months. The power of the H-1 satellite Ku-band beam supports the use of small antennas which, combined with Gilat's small cell solution, and VSAT technology, efficiently optimizes the bandwidth. This results in a contained OPEX profile, which minimized the commercial risk for RuralCom as they launched their new service.

The network is a flexible combination of a number of network components set

in different locations. Gilat integrated its CellEdge gateway with the core network of a large mobile network operator, to extend network coverage and provide the roaming arrangements. Gilat's SkyEdge II hub resides in Intelsat's teleport. The IntelsatOne network connects all of the components through a hybrid satellite-terrestrial infrastructure.

Following a proof-of-concept demonstration in November 2014, the system was built to provide service to the Alaska Highway and BC North Coast. Initial sites have been deployed and revenue from roaming fees is already being generated. RuralCom is readying to deploy direct service to potential resident subscribers in these remote areas, thus enabling new offerings and the ability to enhance public safety for local residents and travelers. Further expansion is planned throughout 2015.

“There are vast stretches of the Alaska Highway and BC Coast which have no existing wireless service. We believe that providing such coverage greatly benefits the public safety and brings significant protection to life and property. We searched for the most contemporary technology and equipment and chose the Gilat-Intelsat solution for their innovative cost-effective offering coupled with their vast rural expertise in deploying under harsh environmental conditions.”

*Bob Hillman
President and CEO, RuralCom*



MISSION

Provide fast, reliable, cost-effective cellular coverage along vast stretches of rural highway and coastal waterway.

SOLUTION AT A GLANCE

- 3G cellular coverage in remote areas
- Flexible, turn-key solution rapidly deployed
- High quality and reliable connectivity through the combination of Intelsat's satellite and terrestrial network assets with Gilat's CellEdge 3G solution

BENEFITS OF THE SOLUTION

- Fast deployment
- Turnkey solution
- Profitable geographic expansion into unserved locations
- High network availability
- Low CAPEX and OPEX limit commercial risk



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The Intelsat-Gilat Partnership

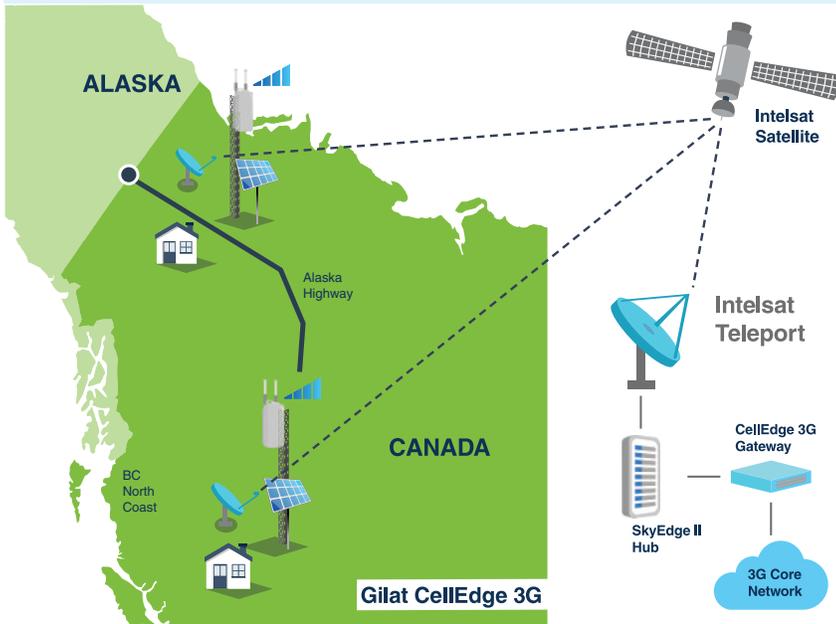
By joining forces, Intelsat and Gilat can provide mobile network operators with full connectivity to unserved areas on a global basis. Leveraging Gilat's rural expertise and its CellEdge small-cell-over-satellite solution together with IntelsatOne managed services, mobile operators simply need to decide where they require cellular coverage, and Gilat and Intelsat will deliver. Utilizing optimized capacity on a fleet of over 50 satellites and terrestrial points of presence in almost 40 cities worldwide, Intelsat can offer unparalleled coverage with industry leading class of service.

"Teaming up with Intelsat brings tremendous value to our joint customers. Intelsat's vast global array of managed services, together with our innovative all-inclusive solution, allows operators to extend their cellular coverage to virtually anywhere in the world within two to three months. In this instance, our experience deploying networks in difficult terrain was particularly helpful."

Erez Antebi
Chief Executive Officer, Gilat

"At Intelsat, our mission has always been to provide cost effective satellite solutions to help ensure that all people, regardless of location, have access to broadband connectivity. Our partnership with Gilat, whose technology has been optimized for the Intelsat Epic^{NG} platform, will provide mobile network operators with a seamless, and cost efficient way to deploy and expand their cellular networks in a rapid and easy manner. The innovation and collaboration occurring throughout the satellite ecosystem is providing a greater opportunity to simplify access to satellite solutions and equip the underserved regions of the world with the connectivity they need."

Stephen Spengler
Chief Executive Officer, Intelsat



About RuralCom

Founded in 2005, Vancouver-based RuralCom Corporation is an accredited cellular carrier with licenses to operate along the length of the Alaska Highway and the BC North Coast. The company is focused on expanding cellular telephone service to unserved or underserved rural areas across Canada.



About Gilat Satellite Networks

Gilat Satellite Networks Ltd (NASDAQ, TSE: GILT) is a leading provider of products and services for satellite-based broadband communications. Gilat develops and markets a wide range of high-performance satellite ground segment equipment and VSATs, with an increasing focus on the consumer and Ka-band market. With over 25 years of experience, and over a million products shipped to more than 90 countries, Gilat has provided enterprises, service providers and operators with efficient and reliable satellite-based connectivity solutions, including cellular backhaul, banking, retail, e-government and rural communication networks.

www.gilat.com

About Intelsat

Intelsat operates the world's first Globalized Network, delivering high-quality, cost-effective video and broadband services anywhere in the world. Intelsat's Globalized Network combines the world's largest satellite backbone with terrestrial infrastructure, managed services and an open, interoperable architecture to enable customers to drive revenue and reach through a new generation of network services.

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