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The latest in telecoms, sat-comms & ICT sectors of the Middle East, Asia and Africa

**Cannonball
Run or
Camel Trot**

**Intelsat CEO
appears
before the
U.S. Senate
Committee**

20th Anniversary

**Africa
Com**

**GITEX 2017
Trendier,
Innovative,
Smarter and
Bigger!**

SatComs

**is a cost-effective, tested,
reliable transmission solution**

Rob Cerbone, Intelsat's VP and GM Media Services

SatComs is a cost-effective, tested, reliable transmission solution

Viewing habits and market maturity differ from region to region

Rob Cerbone

Intelsat's VP and GM Media Services

Interview - Gulraiz Khalid

Gulraiz Khalid: How has the response from Intelsat 35e been so far?

Rob Cerbone: Intelsat 35e satellite – the fourth satellite of our high performance Intelsat EpicNG platform – was successfully launched on July 5 and we have conducted a number of tests to get the satellite operational.

Once operational, Intelsat 35e has enabled higher efficiency and improved throughput for demanding applications including wireless backhaul, enterprise and mobility services. With respect to video applications, one of our anchor customers is one of the largest direct to home (DTH) television service providers in the Caribbean. The satellite has an interesting payload which includes high performance C-band, and thus will appeal to existing satellite users from the wireless and data services community, as well as mobility and government customers in the footprint which covers Latin America, Europe and Africa.

We have recently launched our fifth Intelsat EpicNG satellite, Intelsat 37e, which features the highest throughput of the entire Intelsat EpicNG fleet. Intelsat 37e has unique power sharing technology and power sharing capabilities that will deliver optimized services for broadband, mobility and government customers in the Americas, Africa and Europe.

GK: How do you think the rise in IPTV and streaming is evolving the global broadcast market?

RC: Viewing habits and market maturity differ from region to region, but the primary



requirement for content owners and programmers alike remains the need to deliver content anytime, anywhere, in any format and to any device. We think the two biggest areas of change center around the development of new business models to distribute content that will monetize these alternate formats and increased emphasis on improving quality and streamlining costs, despite the increasing multi-format complexities.

As IPTV/OTT content grows in popularity and platforms like Netflix and Hulu attract more subscribers, the cost and quality of streaming could be impacted significantly. We've already seen how challenges with streaming the season opener of *Game of Thrones* or the Mayweather/McGregor bout caused quite the uproar. And we're also starting to learn that the OTT delivery model may not be as cost-efficient as we thought.

Satellite communications is a cost-effective, tested, reliable transmission solution that can deliver high quality content to multiple devices, whether there are thousands of viewers or millions. A hybrid satellite solution is a perfect complement to fiber and cable infrastructure, supplementing current content distribution network and fiber networks limitations. Satellite has a proven track record of delivering large scale transmissions that are high quality, reliable and secure regardless of the screen.

GK: What are the biggest challenges being faced in broadcasting and media distribution? How are you working to address these?

RC: Consumers' expectations are driving the need for higher speed connectivity, as non-linear, OTT, television on-the-go and multiscreen viewing became a vibrant complement to traditional program viewing. The pressures of changing consumer viewing behavior means media organizations need to adapt their operating and business models to ensure they can provide programming across all platforms, devices and formats. As a result, they need to shift their video technologies to IP, which can be a complex transition. IntelsatOne® Prism, a multimedia networking platform and portfolio of managed services, enables media organizations to easily upgrade a legacy satellite-based network to a next generation automated hybrid satellite

and terrestrial converged IP network, accommodating legacy and digital/multi-screen media.

Also, as the need for differentiated programming drives demand for creating reliable, high-quality live content, news gatherers struggle with the reliability and quality of relying strictly on wireless services for contribution feeds from events. In response to this, Intelsat recently partnered with a major provider of network blending technology, Dejero Labs, to create Dejero CellSat, a blended cellular and Ku-band satellite solution. Dejero CellSat's unique ability to combine both the convenience



Our video distribution neighborhoods are a big part of our success in the media services industry"

of cellular networks and the ubiquity and robustness of satellite networks assures that broadcasters have the bandwidth to cover an event with broadcast-ready quality and reliability.

GK: Please tell us about Intelsat's media services and the areas you consider to be most promising for Intelsat.

RC: Our video distribution neighborhoods are a big part of our success in the media services industry. We have more than 40 video neighborhoods that connect our customers to prime broadcast, cable and more than 30 DTH platforms around the world, delivering 6,300 channels, with more than 1,000 in HD. Our unmatched cable headend penetration enables our customers to maximize viewership of their content.

Our customers need solutions that will allow them to reach broader audiences, while staying within the budget. The IntelsatOne Multi-Channel Per Carrier (MCPC) platform was developed to help media customers achieve their growth goals, economically. MCPC offers a highly reliable and operationally efficient way to

distribute a single or small group of channels while leasing only the exact amount of bandwidth required. The MCPC platform enables our customers to enter new markets and leverage the power of fully saturated transponders to effectively expand their business globally while keeping risks to a minimum.

Lastly, our partnership with Dejero presents great opportunities of growth for us in the broadcast industry. Introducing a new blended cellular and Ku-band IP solution, Dejero CellSat, demonstrates the reliability and ubiquity of satellite technology and gives broadcasters greater confidence that they will have connectivity when going live from the field or from a highly-congested area.

GK: Please tell us about IntelsatOne® Prism Full-time Services in detail.

RC: IntelsatOne Prism, an IP media platform uses two-way VSAT technology to contribute and share video with network affiliates while simultaneously establishing voice, data and Internet connectivity using the same satellite capacity. With IntelsatOne Prism, customers can easily upgrade a legacy satellite-based network to a next-generation automated hybrid satellite and terrestrial converged IP network. IntelsatOne Prism accommodates legacy and digital/multi-screen media, and optimizes network efficiency to enable customers to do much more for less cost. From automated SNG to broadcast network connectivity, digital cinema delivery and DTT, IntelsatOne Prism enables media organizations to manage their bandwidth more efficiently, add new applications and features to their network and upgrade to an IP-based operation.

IntelsatOne Prism's Network Management System (NMS) enables customers to book, provision and manage satellite capacity. The NMS also provides a global view of active transmissions using capacity on the satellite as well visibility into the health and performance of the terminals.

GK: When do you expect UHD to become a general standard for the media industry? How have things evolved in this aspect over the past years?

RC: It is too early to tell if or when UHD will become the general standard in the media

CEO of Intelsat, appears before the U.S. Senate Committee

Intelsat CEO, Stephen Spengler has recently appeared before the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation (the "Committee"), to deliver prepared remarks and answer questions from Chairman John Thune, Ranking Member Nelson and Committee members regarding the commercial satellite industry and next-generation services impacting consumers.

Answering questions during a session entitled "The Commercial Satellite Industry: What's Up and What's on the Horizon," Mr. Spengler discussed Intelsat's next-generation satellite technology and the future of the satellite industry. He highlighted the critical role that satellite technology plays in providing disaster relief, rural telecommunications infrastructure, enabling connected cars and broadcast programming to millions of American every day.

In his testimony to the Committee, Mr. Spengler said, "This is an exciting time for the satellite industry. Given the insatiable demand for affordable connectivity, everywhere and at all times, satellite is converging with other telecommunications



technologies to build one common telecommunications infrastructure. At a time when access to secure and reliable communications impacts everything from the economy to national security, Intelsat is playing a major role innovating our nation's infrastructure."

Mr. Spengler commented, "We are also very proud to partner with the U.S. military to bring the nation's soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines the critical communications capabilities they need to successfully carry out their mission around the globe and here

at home, in the sky, in the sea, and on the ground. Whether it's manned or unmanned aerial vehicles, communications on the move, or social and recreational welfare, Intelsat satellites carry the signal for our military and our troops."

On the topic of Intelsat's innovative initiative to share C-band spectrum, Mr. Spengler said, "We all know that with this ubiquitous connectivity demand comes a relentless demand for access to more spectrum. Spectrum is key to all communication services – satellite included. Intelsat has recently taken a leadership role on an initiative that could bring more reliable and faster broadband services to millions more Americans. In response to a recent FCC proceeding, we have proposed a market-based solution that would pave the way for joint use of C-band radio spectrum. This spectrum is highly prized for both satellite television distribution and 5G wireless services. Adoption of our proposal would provide our broadcast and cable programmer customers, as well as the satellite sector, necessary certainty with respect to continued quality, use of, and investment in this band." ■

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industry. There are several steps that need to occur first. The most important step is the wide adoption of an improved video compression format, for example HEVC. There also needs to be spectrum availability for the live and/or linear program that is being televised. Lastly, there should be a financial incentive for programmers to invest in UHD and HDR equipment for broadcasters, which can be gained by increased subscriber viewership and/or an incremental monthly fee for UHD programming.

From an international perspective, in Japan there is a focus on having 8K UHD and HDR programming available by the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo. Germany and the UK are providing their top-tier soccer matches in 4K this year. If there is a strong customer demand, then it will spur further UHD adoption as the standard for live sports in those countries. Given the spectrum constraints in the U.S., if there is widespread HEVC/improved video compression



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adoption and subscribers are willing to pay incrementally more, chances are HD and HDR will become the most prevalent format for live events and linear sports programs.

GK: What other on-going trends can you identify in the satellite space today that will shape the market over the coming years? How do you plan to capitalize on these?

RC: High throughput satellite technology such as Intelsat EpicNG is already

transforming the way media organizations operate, as they respond to OTT and multiscreen viewing requirements. The Intelsat EpicNG platform's higher performance reduces the cost per-bit for operators and its wide and spot beams provide the combined benefits of broadcast and high throughput connectivity. In some cases, DTH operators have taken advantage of well-placed spot beams to develop customized platforms for small countries or regions.

In the not too distant future, satellite payloads will be software definable. This will usher in a new level of performance and flexibility for satellite users. See a market opening for a new DTH platform? No longer will there be a three-year wait for your customized satellite to arrive on station... instead satellite operators will deliver a custom beam from a satellite already on orbit. That will allow our customers to react quickly to opportunities in the marketplace, improving differentiation and capturing audience. ■