



Islander November 2014

Technology Update

USA – FLIBS the gateway to the winter season

Having returned from Fort Lauderdale I can report that I didn't see much wrong with the interest in "Boating" in the USA! From the hoards attending FLIBS, the queues, the traffic, the 90-minute wait to get a water taxi, there didn't seem to be a waning of interest but I wonder how much of that was converted into business?

We were there to run our "Connecting You to Your Future" seminar for the first time in the USA and to launch the opening of our new office. We have been operating in the US for a couple of years but we have just opened a new office, workshop and stores of our own in Coral Springs.

The Show has always straddled the weekend, as it is primarily a consumer and retail show. For our type of business in the super yacht sector the first two days on Thursday and Friday are the best days and the weekend and Monday are best left to the general public. For that reason we would not have a booth at FLIBS.

The focus of our Seminar worked well with a full house in the afternoon session. One super yacht captain, when asked afterwards what he thought said, "the seminars were fantastic!" We couldn't ask for a better commendation than that.



By the time you read this we will have completed our fifth and last Seminar of this year at METS in Amsterdam. If any reader would like a pdf copy of any of the presentations please email me.

Volvo Ocean Race – congratulations to Abu Dhabi and SCA

Following on from my report last month from the start of the Volvo it was pretty tight, for all the 8,500 nautical miles to Cape Town and all yachts finished within 48 hours of each other! Abu Dhabi won, skippered by Ian Walker, but the shock was that Mapfre, the rock star crewed Spanish entry, came last having been beaten by the girls on SCA. The Dongfeng Race Team covered the shortest distance of 8,363.9 nautical miles and clocked the best 24 hour run of 541 nautical miles, averaging 22.5 knots for the period. All the Cobham communication systems performed as expected.

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Pay TV subscriptions are predicted to top 1 billion by the end of the decade despite the growth in Video On Demand (VOD).

As reported in Via Satellite at the end of last month the number of pay-TV subscribers is expected to reach 1.1 billion worldwide by 2019, according to ABI Research. Growth in this sector has not been easy as competition from online services increasingly chips away would-be subscribers. As a result of these online services viewing habits are changing for many and in particular the younger generations.

Alternative viewing options such as Netflix and Hulu are big drivers, though the research group noted the World Cup helped stem this decline for 2014.

“Availability of service and choice of content are contributing to the growth of the pay-TV market,” Khin Sandi Lynn, industry analyst at ABI Research said. “In addition, bundled packages that consumers can get from pay-TV operators are the drivers for growth too.”

The components included in these bundles, such as from Sky UK, now include VOD services such as Sky on Demand, Sky Go and all the various services from the main broadcasting companies such as BBC



iPlayer. Thus the broadcasting companies are effectively hedging their bets by combining both types of content in one bundle. So it's difficult to know which one is selling the other.

The pay-TV market in North America is quite mature with penetration of over 80 percent of households. Europe and Asia Pacific also have pretty high penetration whereas the high potential markets are Latin America and the Middle East.

Satellite pay-TV provider DirecTV illustrates this point. The company lost approximately 39,000 subscribers in North America during Q2 this year, while at the same time gaining 532,000 subscribers in Latin America. In October the company added more capacity over Latin America with the launch of its DL1 A payload on Intelsat 30 as a way to continue growing in this market which is incorporated in our e3 DirecTV service for the Caribbean.

The top drivers for pay-TV growth, according to ABI Research, are sporting events and an increase in the number of High Definition (HD) channel broadcasts. Ultra-HD/4K is also an upcoming driver for growth, with both broadcasters and satellite companies taking steps in this direction. Many operators have announced the delivery

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of 4K services. Sky Italia plans to provide 4K service around 2016; other operators who are planning for 4K services include Comcast, DirecTV and Sky.

Satellite capacity growth update:

Airbus doubles capacity in Caribbean

Airbus Defence and Space has doubled its Ku band satellite capacity to provide increased throughput and service availability for yachts transiting back to and operating in the Caribbean over the winter.

Many yachts have sung the praises of Airbus this summer with comments such as "**never missed a beat**", "**never suffered a single period without service for any reason**" and "**no need for time consuming NOC contact to resolve issues**".

By doubling the capacity in the Caribbean they are illustrating their commitment to continue this level of service over the winter.

The enhanced satellite coverage over the Caribbean consists of multiple satellites beams. As Pharostar VSAT services dynamically switch the connection to the next available satellite, this maximizes the VSAT link availability when the vessel position changes or external obstacles block the VSAT antenna.

Inmarsat completes Global Xpress (GX) ground network

GX is the new Ka band VSAT service from Inmarsat that will deliver high-throughput broadband connectivity on land, at sea and in the air; provided by a single operator with seamless access anywhere in the world. Inmarsat currently have one satellite in orbit and are delayed in the launch of their next two due to the Proton launch vehicle failures.

In the meantime Inmarsat has completed construction of the final four Satellite Access Stations (SAS) for its Global Xpress (GX) fleet. This represents a significant milestone in the rollout of GX, which is scheduled for global commercial service introduction early in the second half of 2015 assuming the launches take place.

All six GX SAS will act as gateways between the broadband traffic routed via the three Inmarsat 5 (I-5) satellites and terrestrial fixed networks. Each SAS delivers full ground segment redundancy for GX services, providing high quality resiliency, reliability and availability, for example at times of adverse weather, and offering a powerful differentiator to traditional regional Ku-band networks.

Telenor Thor 7 Ka band satellite set to launch in first quarter 2015

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When Thor 7 is launched, Telenor Satellite Broadcasting's network and data services will undertake a business shift, focusing further on increasing their market share in the maritime and offshore sector. The Thor 7 [High Throughput Satellite] HTS Ka band has been specifically designed for the mobility VSAT market and adds vital growth capacity for their long-standing maritime customers who are currently using their Ku-band broadband networks. It will be located at 1 degree West and will be perfect for yachts in the Mediterranean and Gulf and will offer services at a significantly lower cost per Meg than current Ku band services.

I hope everyone has a fantastic Christmas and New Year holiday and comes back refreshed so we can all make 2015 an excellent year.

Roger Horner of e3 Systems

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