

Measat adapts to evolving communications landscape

Can you share with us your vision for Measat, and your plans in shaping the long-term technology strategy for the company?

Edmund Kong: Measat is at the forefront of the satellite communications industry. We have strong market presence in direct-to-home (DTH) and video distribution in Asia-Pacific, operating the region's premier HD and 4K/Ultra HD (UHD) C-band neighbourhood, and one of the region's strongest Ku-band DTH neighbourhoods.

It is our intent to retain this leadership position.

But the communication landscape in which we are operating is changing rapidly. We need to understand how consumer needs are evolving and their impact on various market segments. In parallel, we need to understand the technologies that can best meet these evolving needs. Some of these technologies can be extremely disruptive to our industry as evident with the emergence of High Throughput Satellite (HTS) systems.

We need to understand these technologies and how they are likely to evolve such that we are in position to (i) address the challenges and (ii) take advantage of the opportunities.

How would you access the general direction that video broadcasting is heading towards, particularly in Asia-Pacific?

Kong: In the DTH markets in which we operate in today, only satellite has the capability of providing a comprehensive distribution network for television. This is particularly true when it comes to HD and 4K/UHD content with data rates in excess of 10Mbps.

We don't see this situation changing dramatically over the next 10 years.

While in areas where other technologies (fibre-to-the-home /4G/5G) are available, DTH operators will likely supplement their

Appointed this February as Measat's Chief Technology Officer, Dr Edmund Kong has been tasked with developing Measat's long-term technology strategy. Speaking with **APB**, he shares his vision for the company and explains how Measat is ready to support emerging technologies

linear TV content with non-linear content. For the foreseeable future, this will be around core Ku-band satellite services.

With the region's growing affluence, and growth of both HD and 4K/UHD content, we see healthy growth in DTH and video distribution. With our leading 91.5°E video neighbourhood, we have positioned ourselves to be a key supporter of this growth.

Measat has been involved in a number of 4K/UHD initiatives in the past two years. While the company is ready to provide the platform for its customers to deliver 4K/UHD content, in your opinion, how ready is Asia for 4K/UHD?

Kong: In 2007, Measat led the region with the introduction of the first commercial platform to deliver HD content to Asia. Adopting an innovative business model, we have since led the growth in HD content distribution, today supporting almost 60 HD channels on our 91.5°E video neighbourhood.

Based on discussions with our partners and on our own research, we have no doubt that Asia is ready for 4K/UHD. Measat launched the first 4K/UHD channel in Asia in 2015 and recently added a second. Over the next 10 years, we foresee considerable growth in 4K/UHD channels similar to the growth we saw in HD channels.

We plan to support this growth with 4K/UHD ready platforms providing efficient

delivery and innovative business models.

What other technologies do you expect to have a significant impact on the satellite broadcast industry this year?

Kong: We do not see any particular technology having a significant impact on the broadcast industry in our region in the next year or two. In the longer term, however, you will see the emergence of broadband capable platforms such as HTS. These platforms are designed to deliver 500-1,000Gbps as compared to traditional broadcast satellites, which are able to deliver 3-5Gbps.

Such capabilities will enable media companies to supplement their core broadcast services with services, which allow viewers to watch what they want, when they want



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Chief Technology Officer,
Measat

to watch it.

Measat is equipping itself to adapt to these changing demands with the launch of HTS satellites capable of supporting these services.