



Quality is key...

With the commissioning of MEASAT-3 early in 2007, the company's primary focus has been on expanding support for its key DTH, Pay TV and broadcasting customers. *Television Asia Plus* catches up with MEASAT COO Paul Brown-Kenyon

THE launch of MEASAT-3 (M3) allowed MEASAT to support the growth of core DTH customers in Malaysia and Indonesia. In addition, towards the end of 2007 we reached agreement with Antrix, the commercial arm of the ISRO, to support the launch of the Reliance DTH platform in India. Reliance have now finalized their testing on the satellite, and are preparing their commercial launch."

Brown-Kenyon says that, with the signing of an agreement with Antrix / Reliance, all the Ku-Band capacity on M3 has now been allocated as has all the Ku-Band capacity on MEASAT-3a (M3a) which is due for launch later this year.

"In addition to DTH, MEASAT-3 has also been designed to provide a high quality C-Band video distribution platform for international broadcasters. Since the launch of the satellite, we have been steadily building the satellite's video distribution neighborhood with a number of notable contracts."

And MEASAT's KL-based COO explains that of particular focus has been the High Definition (HD) video segment. "Looking into the potential for this segment some 18 months ago we concluded that, while it had become an established

video segment in the US, there were a series of challenges in launching HD services into Asia-Pacific. These included a limited number of PayTV platforms carrying the content; a small number of HD channels available; and, a limited viewership – the proverbial chicken and egg quandary."

"To help address these challenges, and support the development of a vibrant HD segment in the region, MEASAT spent significant time over the last 12 months working with partners across the value chain to create what we think is a viable satellite distribution model for HD content. As a result of these efforts, November 2007 saw us announce the first satellite agreement to distribute an HD channel, VOOOM HD, in the region." Brown-Kenyon adds that further agreements can be expected over the next few months.

"In addition to building our customer base, MEASAT has been seeking opportunities to expand the reach of the network. As an example, with the launch of MEASAT-3 we took the opportunity to relocate MEASAT-1 to an orbital location at 46E and re-commission the satellite as AFRICASAT-1 to serve customers in Africa and Southern Europe. The expansion of the network into this new region has been very successful with 50% of the capacity on the satellite sold within a number of months. We are also managing a strong pipeline for

the remaining capacity and are evaluating the business case for a follow-on satellite."

Brown-Kenyon says that, with MEASAT-3 now approaching 80% utilization, MEASAT's current attention is on the growth of the network to meet increasing customer requirements. The immediate focus is on the successful launch of the MEASAT-3a satellite, scheduled for Q3 2008.

"As a satellite, MEASAT-3a has been designed to be collocated with MEASAT-3 at the 91.5E orbital location. Designed with identical footprints to MEASAT-3, the satellite has been built to expand capacity at our key video hotspot and, importantly, provide satellite network redundancy for our core broadcasting customers. While satellites are an inherently reliable technology, when a customer's business uses a single satellite they are faced with a single point of failure. The MEASAT strategy is to co-locate multiple satellites at 91.5E to support our customers thereby providing added security to our DTH and broadcasting customers who need to mitigate this risk.

In addition to the launch of MEASAT-3a, the company is also looking at the longer term expansion of the MEASAT network. Today we support a strong and growing customer base across three orbital slots – we need to ensure that we continue to invest in our satellite fleet to support these customers moving forward."



MEASAT

Overall, Brown-Kenyon says MEASAT sees the development of PayTV as one of the most important growth drivers for region's satellite industry. "As an example, for MEASAT we have seen DTH capacity at 91.5E increase from 4 transponders in 2006 to 24 transponders today. With the launch of MEASAT-3a later this year, this will expand further to 36 transponders. The growth in PayTV is having a knock-on effect on the content distribution segment where we have seen the entry of new channels and new types of channels. Of particular focus are High Definition channels - where we believe that HD will become a key video segment in the region over the next 12 to 18 months.

Beyond DTH and video distribution, there are a series of technologies which are looking at new ways to deliver video content to customers such as IPTV, HiTs (Headend in the Sky) and Mobile TV. Over the longer term we see these as driving further growth in the industry."

TV Aplus



MEASAT, as a company, is focused on providing the highest quality satellite capacity to our key customer segments. This is achieved through an emphasis on the development and launch of quality spacecraft; excellent ground operations; and the development of a customer responsive organization. This is where we have been focused and where we're going to continue to focus.

Paul Brown-Kenyon COO, MEASAT