

Measat meets content delivery needs in Asia-Pacific – and more

While continuing to place emphasis on its direct-to-home (DTH) constellation in Asia-Pacific, Measat is also ready to help its customers deliver 4K Ultra HD content to homes in the region. Jarod Lopez, vice-president, Broadcast Sales, Measat Satellite Systems, reveals more to the **APB Satellite Special**.



“As with HDTV, the media industry will have to decide on the best business model for UHDTV. A number of content owners have already begun producing UHD content, which should accelerate the take up of UHD content in the [Asia-Pacific] region.”

— Jarod Lopez, Vice-President, Broadcast Sales, Measat Satellite Systems

Last September saw the launch of the Measat-3b satellite, which Measat says will help to create the strongest direct-to-home (DTH) orbital slot in Asia-Pacific. Can you provide us with an update of Measat-3b and how the planned launch of the Measat-3c and Measat-3d satellites will move Measat another step closer to creating this DTH orbital slot?

Jarod Lopez: Measat-3b was launched on 12 September 2014. The satellite successfully completed in-orbit testing and has now been brought into commercial service.

Measat-3b is designed to be co-located with Measat-3 and Measat-3a at Measat's 91.5°E orbital location. Equipped with a 48 Ku-band transponder payload, the satellite supports video and data services across Malaysia, India, Indonesia and Australia.

The satellite has added additional capacity to Measat's core DTH hot slot and increased the amount of transponder redundancy at this location. With the Measat-3 satellite constellation providing the core TV distribution platform for almost 20 million viewers across India, Malaysia and Indonesia, and with satellites providing a single point of failure, being able to provide capacity across three spacecraft is a significant advantage for our DTH partners.

The planned launch of Measat-3c and Measat-3d in 2016 and 2019 respectively continues the development of the 91.5°E orbital location with additional capacity for existing customers. This would allow the DTH platforms to continue the transition of content from SD to HD to UHD as well as support additional services such as broadband data.

Why do you think DTH remains one of the most effective platforms to deliver content to audiences in Asia-Pacific?

Lopez: Satellites have a number of advantages compared to other forms of communication technologies. In particular:

- A satellite footprint can be designed to cover a country or region as required. Its coverage would include remote or challenging terrain, which would consume too

much time or effort to reach with other forms of distribution technology.

- Satellite is cost-effective in that the cost of service is irrespective of the number of DTH subscribers or distance from broadcast stations to homes within the footprint.

- Satellites are extremely reliable and designed with multiple redundancies to ensure high service availability, which is critical when addressing a large customer base.

For the markets in which Measat currently supports DTH platforms (Malaysia, India and Indonesia), satellites continue to provide the most effective distribution platform for the delivery of TV services. Given the geography of these countries, a population spread over wide areas, and patchy terrestrial communication infrastructure, this is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future.

2014 also saw Measat participate in a number of 4K UHDTV demonstrations across Asia-Pacific. When does Measat expect to carry its first 4K UHD channel in this region, and which technology trends or developments do you see as being key to 4K UHD taking off in Asia-Pacific?

Lopez: Technologically, the industry is already well positioned for UHDTV. Content production, delivery, management, storage and consumption concerns have been addressed with the rapid development of UHD standards, cameras, production equipment and TVs. Economic factors and consumer demand will likely have greater influence on how fast UHDTV takes off in Asia-Pacific.

Measat's UHDTV demonstrations were undertaken to demonstrate that the Measat fleet is ready to distribute UHD content. We are already in discussion with a number of customers and are hopeful to be carrying the region's first UHD regional feed towards end-2015 or early 2016.

With 4K seemingly on the horizon, and with the region still in the midst of the

transition to digital, as well as the evolving changes in content consumption, what challenges do you think are being faced by the media and broadcast industries in Asia-Pacific?

Lopez: From the perspective of a satellite operator, the media and broadcast industries face a number of challenges.

Firstly, and crucially, the International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT) community is requesting C-band spectrum currently used by satellite operators to distribute video content to be reallocated for telecom services. This will be addressed in the World Radio Conference 2015 (WRC-15). If the IMT community is successful in their plans, it will have a severe impact on not only the satellite industry, but also our customers in the media and broadcast industries.

A second challenge concerns the pay-TV business model, as consumers are increasingly demanding and wanting to view what they want, when they want it and where they want it. Given this, the current pay-TV landscape needs to address the growth of alternative delivery platforms with OTT (over-the-top) continuing to threaten to pull viewers away from traditional broadcast pay-TV.

A third challenge concerns the development of UHDTV. As with HDTV, the media industry will have to decide on the best business model for UHDTV. A number of content owners have already begun producing UHD content, which should accelerate the take-up of UHD content in the region. **APB**

The Measat-3 satellite constellation provides the core TV distribution platform for almost 20 million viewers across India, Malaysia and Indonesia, while Measat is ready to help its customers launch 4K UHD channels in Asia-Pacific.

