



Julian Crudge, Director, Datacomms Division, Telenor Satellite ●●●

Telenor Satellite is a major European satellite provider of broadcast and data communication services for customers in the broadcast, maritime, and oil and gas markets. Telenor Satellite owns and operates the THOR satellite fleet, positioned at 1°West, which provides high-powered and high-quality satellite capacity throughout Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Telenor Satellite has also strengthened its position by moving its Thor III satellite to a new orbital location, 4°West, from where it offers inclined-orbit services throughout the Middle East. With the successful launch of THOR 7 in 2015, Telenor Satellite is increasing its presence and expanding its regional coverage to support the growth requirements of its broadcast and enterprise customers.

Maritime shows greatest growth potential

Telenor Satellite, a major European satellite provider, has two decades of experience in providing broadcast and broadband services to the media, maritime, oil and gas sectors. Its hybrid network comprises a satellite fleet, terrestrial fibre network, and teleports, enabling it to provide turnkey solutions throughout Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Amy Saunders spoke with Julian Crudge, Director, Datacomms Division, Telenor Satellite, to find out more about the company's latest activities and innovations, and its thoughts on the future.

Question: What can you tell us about Telenor Satellite's development, from its founding through to where it stands today?

Julian Crudge: Telenor has been active in the satellite industry since the early 1970s when we were one of the pioneers in providing satellite telephony to the developing oil industry in the North Sea. Since these early days, we have branched out into analogue TV and were one of the first adopters of digital TV when Canal Digital was formed to serve this market in 1997. We have a long history of providing satellite communication solutions.

Question: Telenor Satellite is a key player in a range of markets. Can you provide an overview of its presence in each sector and world region?

Julian Crudge: Telenor Satellite is a regional satellite provider and therefore generally provides services in our core markets of Northern Europe, Europe, Mediterranean and the Middle East. Our uniqueness is being able to provide connectivity up to 76 degrees North (Svalbard), and higher latitudes with lower availability. In these areas, we provide satellite communication services to the maritime, oil and gas and land-based sectors.

Question: In which regions and business areas does Telenor Satellite see the most room for growth?

Julian Crudge: We definitely see the maritime sector as the business area with the greatest growth potential, and within this sector, the ferry and cruise sub-sectors. With everyone so reliant on good Internet connectivity, we feel these sub-sectors are relatively poorly served today, and passengers will increasingly ask for high bandwidths in future as new applications are developed. Passengers are increasing using WhatsApp, Facetime, Skype and Viber for voice and video calls, and these applications will begin to take over from GSM.

Question: We're seeing more and more satellite service providers turn to hybrid solutions. Do you think this is the way forward, and what advantages has Telenor Satellite gained from this approach?

Julian Crudge: As the industry continues to launch multi-spot beam high throughput satellites (HTS) to replace older wide beam satellite



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technology for the data market, hybrid solutions are the way forward to efficiently capitalise on this new technology. These new satellites provide between 10 and 100 times the capacity available on older satellites and so the only way to effectively use this new technology is to use hybrid technology that includes hub infrastructure, uplink, backbone plus a range of hosted services. This integrated technology therefore enables satellite owners to deliver the maximum benefit from the new HTS satellite architecture either in terms of price per Mbps or maximising the throughput available.

Question: In October 2016, Telenor Satellite approved C-COM's iNetVu Ka-98G Driveaway and iNetVu FLY-98G antenna systems for THOR 7. How great a role does partnering with equipment manufacturers play in Telenor Satellite's business?

Julian Crudge: Telenor Satellite has a number of approved providers of antennas on its platform from the antenna manufacturer noted above, which are used generally for land based video contribution services to stabilised antennas for mobility services manufactures such as Cobham, Intellian and Skytech. It is therefore vital that we have tried and tested antenna solutions for our customers. We will therefore continue to work with other manufacturers to approve their products for our business.

Question: We're seeing an increasing number of HTS coming online, specifically designed for the data and mobility markets. What is Telenor Satellite's take on this trend?

Julian Crudge: Telenor Satellite was one of the first satellite providers to utilise this new technology when we launched Thor 7 in 2015. As a result, we will continue to invest in this technology for future launches, and feel HTS is the way forward to cater for the growth in the high capacity data and mobility markets.

Question: As a major player in the broadcast sector, how will the advent of 4K and virtual reality affect Telenor Satellite's operations, and are OTT services like Netflix and Amazon Prime a real threat?

Julian Crudge: New formats like 4K are seen as opportunities for Telenor Satellite. We are ready to transmit and distribute 4K, and are looking forward for the broadcasters and DTH-distributors to be ready with content for their infrastructure and Set-top-boxes.

Remember that the existing pay-tv models have existed and developed through many, many years, and there is no surprise that the pay-tv business-model will be challenged. Streaming technology and viewing screens have taken extreme leaps in development in recent years, and products like Netflix and Amazon will certainly find their way and establish themselves as important platforms.

Question: What do you expect Telenor Satellite to achieve in the next couple of years?

Julian Crudge: Telenor Satellite will continue to promote and invest in its existing broadcast and data markets in the next few years. As a result, we will be adding new value-added services and products to the range of services offered to our resellers. We have also recently launched a new web-based customer portal so that customers can order and amend services on line, and will be officially launching a new antenna financing program shortly. 🚀



THOR 5 launch. Photo ILS ●●●



THOR 7 launched successfully, April 26, 2016 ●●●