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Editor

## Offering real insight

**We're at that time of year again - conference season, as I like to call it**, is in full swing. Satellite 2017, CABSAT 2017 and NAB Show are behind us, while CommunicAsia and IBC are looming.

Events like these provide a massive stream of value. Hearing about the leading trends in conference sessions and learning about the latest technology at the exhibition are the two most overt aspects of an event for many of us, but in truth, the value goes far beyond that. For my part, I find that the one-on-one interviews and spontaneous conversations provide the most insight into what's really going on, and how people truly feel about the latest developments.

One of my key finds at Satellite 2017 was an off-the-cuff interview with Isotropic, a relatively young company developing 'the world's most spectrally-efficient, low-profile, conformal, multi-band, electronically steered satellite antenna.' Speaking with Founder John Finney, I learned a great deal about the company's product concept and plans for future development (*read the full interview with Isotropic in the July/August issue of Satellite Evolution Asia*). The technology is unique, far removed from that championed by Kymeta, Phasor and C-COM, all leaders in the field of next-generation antennas, and each with their own game-changing technologies. It's meetings like this, that open the mind to new ideas, new ways of delivering solutions, that really make these events what they are.

We saw a lot of big news come out of Satellite 2017. Intelsat and OneWeb announced plans to merge in a share-for-share transaction, with a US\$1.7 billion investment from SoftBank, which, combined with the debt exchange offers, could reduce Intelsat's debt by around US\$3.6 billion. According to Stephen Spengler, Intelsat's CEO, the combination will create 'an industry leader unique in its ability to provide affordable broadband anywhere in the world.' The deal is expected to close in the third quarter of 2017. In further news, Intelsat acquired an equity stake in Kymeta following the achievement of critical development milestones, and coinciding with the launch of Kymeta's mTenna antenna and the introduction of its KALO services, which will reportedly change the way satellite services are purchased by direct users, integrators and service providers. Intelsat's bold moves certainly mark a major change for the industry, and what it might look like in the years to come.

It's absolutely vital that those of us in the satellite community keep an eye on the sector as a whole. The industry is in a major state of flux right now, and the future is far from certain. With key trends like overcapacity, interference, spectrum and pricing all hot topics for debate, it can be a challenge to keep on top of the latest ideas. And, without the latest information, it's impossible for people to make informed decisions. With events like CommunicAsia and IBC coming up, there's still plenty of opportunity to get up-to-date. ■

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