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Editor

It's 2017 and it's make or break

It's the start of a brand-new year, a new 12 months to move forwards and improve upon 2016. Here in the UK, the mornings are darker than ever, but each day is lighter with the promise of future possibilities.

Of course, with each new year comes a whole host of events to look forward to. In the next three months alone we've got PTC'17, the SmallSat Symposium, Satellite 2017 and CABSAT 2017. It's going to be a busy time for anyone in the communications sector, but it's also going to be a time of fantastic opportunities, for making new contacts, discovering new technologies, and widening horizons.

With so much going on in the satellite industry right now, events such as these are a good marker for which new technologies are finding their place in the market, and which are a flash in the pan. I for one expect to see 4K/8K/HDR having an even larger presence at events this year, in addition to virtual reality. However, that's not to say that these technologies are growing as expected. The harsh economic environment means that consumers are less able to invest, and 4K, in particular, is growing much slower than believed even a short time ago, despite content becoming increasingly available. Meanwhile, much as virtual reality has won me over since my extensive trial at IBC 2016, there is still very little content available, despite the record numbers of headsets received as gifts over Christmas. Even I'm still holding off on such a purchase.

In other news, there are yet more whispers about new takeovers and consolidations, and it's set to be a year of financial uncertainty for many given the political instability in much of the world. Between 'Brexit,' elections and referendums throughout Europe, a new controversial President of the USA, and ongoing military activities in the Middle East, it's going to be a bumpy year. Given the circumstances, it won't take much for some companies teetering on the edge to be forced into an action they didn't plan for.

However, despite the doom and gloom, there will always be companies that rise from nowhere, technologies that stand strong in the face of adversity, and influential individuals who will have a massive effect on industries at large. It will be those companies and people who can adapt the fastest to new circumstances who stand to achieve the most during these turbulent times, and some will even gain thanks to the new market conditions.

In many ways, 2017 stands to be a make or break year for many in the satellite sector. ■

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