



Supporting Digital Convergence

Communications technologies are one of the great economic success stories of modern times, and both individuals and businesses are growing increasingly reliant upon them for their everyday needs. Against this backdrop the effective, reliable transport of communications takes on particular importance, as **Jaime Dickinson** of NewCom International explains

Advanced communications infrastructures play a crucial role in the modern economy – businesses across the globe derive enormous commercial benefits from the ability to gain rapid access to key information, communicate easily with their major partners, and hence tailor their products to meet specific local needs. While this has brought significant economic benefits, it should also be stressed that the effects of the technological revolution of the last 20 years have been felt beyond the commercial world. Innovative new technologies have helped empower private citizens, who are now able to hold Governments, organisations and businesses to account through new technologies and innovations which enhance the transparency of decision-making processes. Against this backdrop it is clear that further developing Africa's communications infrastructures is a goal very much in the continent's long-term social and economic interests.

The catalyst for growth

Both the private and public sectors have responded by investing significant funds in development, and rates of mobile phone and Internet penetration have shown correspondingly high rates of growth, providing a clear illustration of the commercial opportunities that lie on the

African continent. The knowledge that advanced communications networks can act as a catalyst to national economies in other key areas has provided further encouragement; however, while recent years have seen real development in the African telecommunications market, fundamental infrastructure still needs to be updated and improved if the continent is to enjoy the full benefits of a modern, reliable communications system. This is a process in which NewCom International, the Miami-based teleport operator which provides comprehensive engineering support to a wide range of clients across the continent, is playing a full part.

The second-fastest growing teleport operator in the world, NewCom has established a reputation for high-quality customer service and rapid delivery across a range of global markets, including Africa. To illustrate, the company has stepped into the role of primary service provider for governments and ISPs (Internet Service Providers) in both Gambia and Guinea, two fast-developing West African countries. Placing a premium on core attributes like reliability and efficiency, this is a highly responsible position, particularly for two countries which fully recognise the importance of innovative new technologies in today's economic landscape. Demand for core communications services in both of these states has shown consistent growth over

recent years, and it is essential that the underlying infrastructure be developed at the same time if it is to meet the needs of what is a rapidly expanding user base.

In this context the fact that Newcom's core infrastructure business proposition of IP satellite connectivity in all its forms (from dedicated links right through to shared platforms) is always accompanied by added tools and applications takes on particular importance. This is further reinforced by the ability of these tools and applications to create new environments for further communications and collaboration. Examples such as videoconferencing and satellite-based collaboration to reach oil exploration stations in the middle of the world's oceans; rural networks to facilitate distance learning; and security and surveillance systems over satellite for toll roads in regions with poor terrestrial infrastructure, are a key part of NewCom's service offering. It is their ongoing development, and work to improve their reliability, that forms a key focus for the company.

Sharing expertise

This of course is a technically demanding goal, one that cannot be achieved without effective cooperation between partners and the broad-based sharing of expertise, particularly given the complexity of the communications marketplace. This

is something of which NewCom is well aware, and to which it has responded accordingly. Working in conjunction with licensed telecommunications carriers, NewCom is providing both Internet access and Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) services in Gambia and Guinea, two PPTs committed to providing an effective, reliable service to their citizens. This is work which will, in the process, give businesses, schools and governments a means to communicate through voice and data, further reinforcing the broad impact, relevance and potential of innovative new communications technologies. To help support the core infrastructure in these countries, the company is also donating some Internet and VoIP services to Gambia.

This commitment to sharing expertise and utilising the best equipment is translated into other areas of NewCom's business as well, reflecting both the globalised nature of the communications

with a comprehensive, robust, effective solution – ranging from routers and switches right through to satellite modems and converters – capable of meeting their specific equipment needs. This is an approach which has already brought significant benefits to NewCom's clients; the company's work in Nigeria providing a particularly clear example. NewCom recently unveiled its new MCPC technology in the West African state, giving a Nigerian PTT a powerful new communications solution which it was able market to both major businesses and government departments. Unlike traditional Star-based satellite solutions that require communication with the company's Miami-based satellite hub, MCPC/MESH uses a topology that enables primary businesses to communicate directly with remote locations through satellite links, without needing to transmit to the US satellite hub.

These attributes make the MCP/

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marketplace, and also the company's commitment to ensuring that all of its customers have access to the best solutions available. To illustrate, the company has joined forces with the world's top telecom equipment manufacturers so as to provide its customers with a one-stop shop for both its new and used Satellite and Networking equipment needs, an approach which has the needs of NewCom's clients very much at its heart. Today, companies looking to update their communications solutions are confronted with a bewildering range of options, making impartial, well-informed advice more valuable than ever before, particularly for the ever-increasing number of companies that depend on effective communications solutions.

NewCom has responded directly to this trend. The company helps to determine the best telecom equipment solution for its clients, and then works to get it to them in the fastest, most efficient manner possible. NewCom works with a broad range of top telecom equipment brand partners to provide its clients

MESH technology ideal for multiple-location facilities in foreign countries, which themselves often need to network between a main facility and remote locations within that region. This is a technology with enormous potential; however, NewCom remains mindful of the fact that the rapidly evolving nature of the communications marketplace means that its services needs to be continually refined and updated if the company is to continue to meet the needs of its clients. Since being launched in 2004, NewCom has systematically focused its efforts on helping its customers build their IP infrastructure over satellite, which the company sees as being both the most efficient alternative for inaccessible or remote locations and also the natural option for companies aiming to achieve business continuity during disaster recovery scenarios. These are both enormously important considerations in the African communications market, a rapidly evolving market in which NewCom aims to build and maintain a strong presence in the years ahead. 



As president and CEO of NewCom International, Jaime oversees all operations. He drives the company's strategic partnership efforts – working to expand NewCom's presence around the globe. Under his direction, NewCom has emerged as a leading force in the global telecommunications marketplace to be recognised as the second fastest growing teleport operator in the world.

