



David Bettinger, Chief Technology Officer and Senior Vice President of Engineering.

iDirect have been busy – very busy. Fresh from winning the Technology of the Year Award at Satellite 2008 and a new product launch, with more planned for the rest of the year, Satellite Evolution thought it was about time to catch up with the fast-moving company to find out what, and who, is new.

Question: Since we last met at CommunicAsia, can you give us a run down on what has been happening at iDirect?

David Bettinger: Well, we closed down a great year in 2007 and we had record-setting sales for the organisation. We had significant expansion into the Asia market. We were talking to you in Asia last year and we were hoping to grow that part of the business significantly, and we did. We got close to ten percent of our sales in the Asia region so that was great for us – and we are starting to grow quite a bit in Latin America as well.

On the product side, we introduced a lot of new technologies last year. At the CommunicAsia show, we announced the partnership with Intelsat on their maritime business where we are providing a global network management system with the ability to automatically switch beams as the ship moves from one region to another. So partners like Intelsat and SingTel put up a global maritime service and ships are able to automatically roam within it.

We also introduced the next advancement on our Group QoS. Both of these technologies – the automatic beam switching system and the Group QoS were awarded the Technology of the Year Award at Satellite 2008. We are very proud of that. We are always out there trying to innovate our products and for our team to get those kind of

iDirect: ever innovative

Satellite Evolution Asia spoke to iDirect's Chief Technology Officer and Senior Vice President of Engineering, David Bettinger at the recent Satellite 2008 show in Washington DC to find out about the latest developments going on at ever-innovative iDirect.

accolades is just great.

We did quite a bit of development all through last year on our next generation platform. We have had a lot of good years running on the iNFINITI platform series of hub, line cards and remotes. Now we are going to introduce the Evolution series. The first product comes out in March. Mostly for the DoD market, it's our higher end product and it has a lot of flexibility. Then we're going to introduce our standard DVB-S products called the Evolution X 3. That will be coming out in June of this year.

Question: Where will the key regions be for iDirect in 2008? You have recently been recognised in China. How significant is this breakthrough for you? Has it been challenging to get into the Chinese market?

David Bettinger: In China specifically it has been challenging. We have agents and sales people in China and we had our first hub sales and network sales in the oil and gas market which we see as a key sector for us.

Our partnership with our parent company, Singapore Technologies Engineering, has been significant for us. They have a huge presence in Asia in general, as well as in Singapore, so we expect them to help pull us through in business there. The number one growth area for iDirect is not in terms of geographic growth, it's growth within our government business.

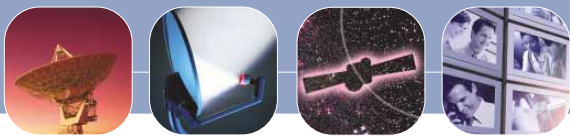
iDirect platform named 2008 Teleport Technology of the Year by World Teleport Association

iDirect received the 2008 Teleport Technology of the Year Award from The World Teleport Association. The award acknowledges the contributions of iDirect's Intelligent Platform™ to the teleport industry, in particular recognizing Group Quality of Service (QoS) and Global Network Management System (NMS) as two critical technologies that enable teleport operators to meet growing reliance on satellite communications to support critical applications around the globe.

The award is presented each year to the organization whose technology has best contributed to the business and operational success of teleport operators through lower costs, increased efficiency, new capabilities or access to new markets. iDirect also won the Teleport Technology of the Year Award in 2005 for its 5IF universal satellite hub.

Group QoS is a new technology feature of the iDirect Intelligent Platform™ that enables teleport operators to logically partition shared bandwidth among different customers, groups of remotes and applications according to dynamic service plans that extend to the application level. This crucial capability allows teleport operators to capitalize on increasing demand by maximizing bandwidth and providing reliable service to as many customers as possible.

Global NMS allows teleport operators to support global networks through the integration of iDirect hubs and remote hardware with multiple satellite coverage footprints. Teleport operators can track, monitor, and maintain contact with mobile communication units anywhere in the world. Global NMS also enables teleport operators to manage multiple networks on multiple hubs across different teleports through iDirect's network management system, iVantage. The feature also incorporates iDirect's industry first automatic beam switching technology, through which mobile communication vehicles can remain connected to the network as they cross multiple footprints.



Last year, we formed a subsidiary called iDirect Government Technologies. iGT has had most success with the US-based government and DoD market. However, it's charter is really to take advantage of all DoD and all government agency activities so we expect significant growth out of that particular market this year – more than any other area. Fifty percent of our sales comes from outside of the US and so we hope to grow both sides of the business this year. But I think that, geographically, Asia and Latin America will probably continue to be the fastest growing along with Eastern Europe and the Middle East and Africa region.

Question: So in terms of research and development, is there anything that you can tell us about what you are working on?

David Bettinger: One of the key things we are doing is launching our Evolution platform. It brings us DVB-S2 with adaptive coding modulation – the industry's biggest buzzword in a long time! Our product will take advantage of that and will demonstrate the actual performance gains. We are going to take a lot of those similar concepts that we used when designing the system and bring them to the return channel so we will have an adaptive inbound channel in order to increase throughput by choosing modulations that closely match the weather conditions at the location of the remote in the footprint. We are also considering adding a shared DVB-S2 outbound multiple SCPC return so continuing the one platform, multiple topologies theme that has guided us throughout our history.

Also, communications-on-the-move continues to be very important for us. Some of our high-end government evolution products such as downstream coming upstream will be expanded into more of a commercial offering later in the year. And of course we will be focusing on extending and expanding our mobility around the world and we are currently looking at the airborne market. We are partnered with Intelsat and the world's largest in-flight entertainment equipment provider, Panasonic, to bring our broadband connection to aircraft. Obviously, there was a big push a few years ago with Connexion by Boeing and that went under for various different reasons, some of them technical bandwidth efficiencies. We're bringing a new view to the table – better efficiencies – and the partnership with Panasonic will give us an enormous amount of insight into the market to provide the coverage and business case. That is a major development programme that we have going on at the moment. We also see a lot of applications in the military that would support airbourne communications. We are testing on aircraft at the moment with antennas. These antennas are incredibly small. They're tiny – it's just incredible.

Based in Herndon, Virginia, iDirect is responsible for transforming the way the world gets and stays connected. The company produces satellite-based IP communications technology for voice, video and data applications in challenging environments. The company has experienced explosive growth over the past six years and serves customers in thirty countries. With offices in the US, Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America, their operations are truly global.

There have been two very important appointments at iDirect over the past six months. We are pleased to introduce Mary Cotton and Chris Burdick to Satellite Evolution Asia readers.

Mary Cotton - Chief Executive Officer

Mary Cotton joined iDirect in September 2007, bringing more than 18 years of technology leadership creating and driving successful growth strategies in CEO, COO and CFO roles. Prior to joining iDirect, Ms. Cotton served as Senior Vice President with SAP Industry Solutions, the world's largest business application software company. She joined SAP in 2005 after managing the acquisition and sale of Frictionless Commerce, a provider of supplier relationship management software, where she served as Chief Executive Officer. Prior to SAP, Ms. Cotton held several top management positions including Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer at Aspen Technology Inc., a provider of software and services that help companies improve their manufacturing processes. There she executed an aggressive growth strategy that took AspenTech from a US\$6m private company to a US\$330m publicly traded international solutions provider.



Chris Burdick - Vice President of Product Management

Chris Burdick has been promoted to Vice President of Product Management. Burdick joins iDirect's senior leadership to drive the strategic development and delivery of the company's products and solutions.

With the key appointment, iDirect aims to broaden its product portfolio, extending its role as a leading innovator and capitalizing on the rising global adoption of satellite IP communications.



So, in general, from an R&D standpoint we have several different key areas that year over year we continue to hit. Bandwidth efficiency is clearly something we always have to focus on and also on the satellite part, considering the costs and lack of bandwidth in a lot of the regions. We are primarily an IP router so we are introducing the BGP routing protocol that is a move to enable us to better integrate with carriers and the MPLS networks that form the core of IP traffic across the globe. We want to be an extension to that. We don't want to be a hybrid network. We just want to be in a better position to be connected. It's something that BT, Verizon and Orange Telecom are all taking advantage of. Also, in terms of security, we came out with a lot of features last year to take our encryption solution, Transec, to the government market.

Our network management system, iVantage will be worked on this year in order to create a more open interface on the MMS to allow us to integrate into other people's operational support so we have designed a softer, programmatic interface on our MMS

that effectively allows people to write middleware. Then of course, we are enhancing our product base in other areas like mobility, our mesh topology and our SCPC support so we still feel that we have a unique offering on our hub side that has star topology, SCPC, mesh – all supported with the same hub on all different frequencies and different satellites. We can continue to make advancements in all those different areas.

Question: Your evolution as a company has been very rapid. What is behind the success?

David Bettinger: We effectively re-started the company at the start of 2002 and we are now really proud to be in the position we are in within the market. The foot's on the gas and it hasn't come off yet!

We're very excited to have our new CEO, Mary Cotton on board. She is the perfect choice for us to take iDirect to the next level. In any industry, especially high-tech if you do not re-invent yourself and grow you become stagnant. It's vital to continue to grow and develop to succeed. ■