

SingTel helps broadcasters prepare for technology growth

It has been a busy year for SingTel Satellite. Named the VSAT Service Provider of the Year at the VSAT London 2014 conference, the company continues to offer a suite of broadcast solutions, ranging from playout, MCPC (multiple channels

per carrier), uplink, downlink and Occasional Use, to enable broadcasters to accelerate their global reach. **APB** sits down for a chat with Lim Kian Soon, Head of Satellite, SingTel, for his thoughts on what to look forward to in 2015.

Can you provide an update of SingTel Satellite's business in 2014?

Lim Kian Soon: SingTel Satellite is a global provider of one-stop satellite communications and ICT solutions. Leveraging our telecommunications infrastructure, we are particularly strong in harnessing infocomm technology for innovative solutions for enterprises in industries such as broadcasting, banking, energy, maritime and government agencies.

With more than 35 years' experience in fixed satellite services, we have established a satellite footprint that covers Asia, the Middle East and Africa. We own three teleports that point to more than 30 satellites and are supported by an extensive terrestrial network of more than 200 Point of Presence (PoPs) in over 160 global cities.

We have over 30 years' experience in mobile satellite services and have forged a strong alliance with partners such as Inmarsat and Iridium which allows us to provide our customers with reliable mobile satellite communications

We also have a whole suite of

broadcast solutions, ranging from playout, MCPC (multiple channels per carrier), uplink, downlink and Occasional Use, to enable broadcasters to accelerate their global reach.

Looking ahead to 2015, what broadcast or content management solutions are you expecting to offer your customers, in order to retain your status as one of the leading providers of uplink and downlink services in the Asia-Pacific region?

Lim: We provide, and will be providing a range of solutions for our customers, including:

■ **Media Cloud Storage solution:** In an increasingly connected world, cloud technology will offer broadcasters the opportunity to reshape their business and optimise user experience. There is growing interest in cloud technology and we are currently exploring a cloud-based media storage solution at a price point that will make sense for the media industry to outsource their content management.

■ **Cloud-based playout solution:** The first thing that comes to

the mind of new startups is cost. Hence, we are providing entry-level "plug and play" playout services that enable them to manage and transmit their content at minimal cost.

■ **Expanding antenna farm infrastructure:** This expansion allows us to provide to our customers greater broadcast coverage especially in the Asia-Pacific region.

■ **Transcoding services:** We will provide transcoding services to enable delivery of video content in different video formats.

What technology trends do you see emerging in 2015?

Lim: Although 4K is still in its early phases of deployment, many in the industry see it as the next major driver of infrastructure upgrades — similar to the transition to HD a decade ago. Where satellite is concerned, optimising the bandwidth will be key for the delivery of 4K content and we expect development of new compression technologies to emerge. There is certainly no doubt that 4K is driving strong interest and excitement in the industry. When the time is ripe, our infrastructure will always be ready to support customers looking to adopt 4K.

We also see an increasing use of cloud technology. Advances in technology and consumer behaviour are driving a transformation in the way video content is delivered to consumers. Hence, cloud technology is being seen as increasingly important by major broadcasters and media companies. Recently, there have been many discussions about creating a "virtualised broadcast infrastructure" in order to drive greater efficiencies. Cloud technology allows broadcasters to experiment with different types of services to test their potential to



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engage consumers without putting significant investment at risk.

WRC-15 next year in Geneva will see the consideration of additional spectrum to be allocated for mobile services. What is your view on this, and what is the impact if C-band spectrum is not preserved for satellite services?

Lim: C-band spectrum is used extensively in the contribution and distribution over satellite, particularly in tropical and subtropical regions, where other frequencies are beset by "rain fade". Today, C-band communications are used to support business communications, telemedicine, distance education, disaster recovery — and of course, getting broadcast content to the region's pay-TV homes. Allocating additional spectrum for mobile services will definitely have an adverse impact because the broadcast industry is dependent on C-band spectrum. If it is given away to terrestrial mobile, many current broadcasters will be affected. This will result in spectrum crunch and, inadvertently, higher cost. **APB**



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