



Raising morale

UltiSat is a company with over 25 years experience in the provision of communications for hard-to-reach, remote and harsh locations. This proven expertise makes them a perfect choice for the delivery of morale welfare and recreation services to military personnel stationed in conflict zones far from home. GMC spoke to Michael Pollack, Vice President of UltiSat to find out more about the company and the services it provides to troops and NGOs in the field.



Michael Pollack, Vice President of UltiSat.

Question: Can you please begin by giving our readers an overview of UltiSat's activities?

Michael Pollack: UltiSat ensures safe, secure, and reliable voice, video, and data communications through its cost-effective, global managed SATCOM network. We are a global satellite communications service provider and systems integrator. We are headquartered in the Washington DC area (Gaithersburg, MD), with offices in Copenhagen, Ramstein and Vienna. UltiSat also has a fully-owned modern teleport facility in Denmark. This is one of very few USA-owned teleports in Europe. We also have a partner teleport in Hawaii to support the Pacific Rim and additional CONUS activity.

UltiSat leverages its managed networks expertise, ground-segment infrastructure, and VSAT and satellite communications capabilities, to provide a high-quality customer-oriented service.

We have a five-star reputation for personalised customer service. With a senior staff averaging more than 20-

years' experience in satellite communications per person, UltiSat's past performance positions it to meet any satellite communications need for government, commercial, and non-governmental organisations.

Customers include the US military – all branches of DoD, US Systems Integrators, Danish Military, embassy networks from NATO allies, telcos, engineering and construction contractors, ISPs, banking, oil and gas and non-governmental organizations including the United Nations.

Question: How do you serve the military with welfare solutions for troops and do you tend to use mostly VSAT technology?

Michael Pollack: US Military personnel are in remote (and often very small) forward operating bases far from existing large-scale Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR) services and UltiSat takes MWR services directly to the warfighters at the remote locations via its satellite-based, managed-VSAT services using

mobile flyaway terminals.

With an end-to-end managed network, UltiSat provides every aspect of the network including space segment, fibre and cable backhaul, physical equipment (including modems, antenna, LNBS, etc.), deployment, ongoing network management, maintenance, and on-the-ground support. Due to its strategic location in Northern Europe, UltiSat operates the Southwest Asia broadband networks from its teleport in Denmark

This service is an Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) initiative. We have a prime contractor, AT&T Government Solutions that has the responsibility for overall program management.

VSATs are placed at military bases in some of the remotest parts of Afghanistan to provide an instant infrastructure that allows a range of services including Internet access, voice over IP (VoIP), and IP applications. These terminals are highly mobile and can quickly be redeployed by service personnel with a minimal amount of training.

Basically, UltiSat provides Internet connectivity, Voice over IP service, video streaming capabilities, and social-networking applications. Generally, the applications supported through the MWR terminals are those that are filtered or blocked from tactical networks such as Facebook, MySpace, Yahoo, iTunes, Twitter, etc.

Social networking sites have become important morale boosters to troops on the frontlines and UltiSat can cost-effectively support the high-data rates needed for services such as downloading photographs, video, music, VoIP, chat applications, and Web browsing, while providing ongoing network management, maintenance, and on-the-ground support.

Currently UltiSat provides support for more than 100 terminals with complete programme implementation, web filtering and in-country support.

Question: Do you believe that the importance of welfare services for soldiers is well understood and is being adequately addressed by the military?

Michael Pollack: Yes, with respect to the United States Department of Defense. The US military has long recognised the crucial role that recreation plays in the quality of life of service members and their families. The US Military MWR is a comprehensive network of support and leisure services designed to enhance the lives of all service members (active, reserve, and National Guard), their families, civilian employees, military retirees and other eligible participants.

From entertainment and arts programmes to fitness centres and outdoor recreation opportunities to community

programmes and child care, the MWR is extensive and is not just reserved for those serving in war zones. The operation is far reaching and provides an enormous number of programmes.

The DoD has recognised the importance of social networking sites for service members, particularly those serving for from home and earlier this year adopted new policies that try to balance national security with the increasing use of social media,

Question: What type of services do you provide for those engaged far away from home? Are demands changing?

Michael Pollack: We primarily provide VoIP, Internet, and videoconferencing services. This includes access to social networking sites and to fun applications such as iTunes, YouTube, Skype, etc.

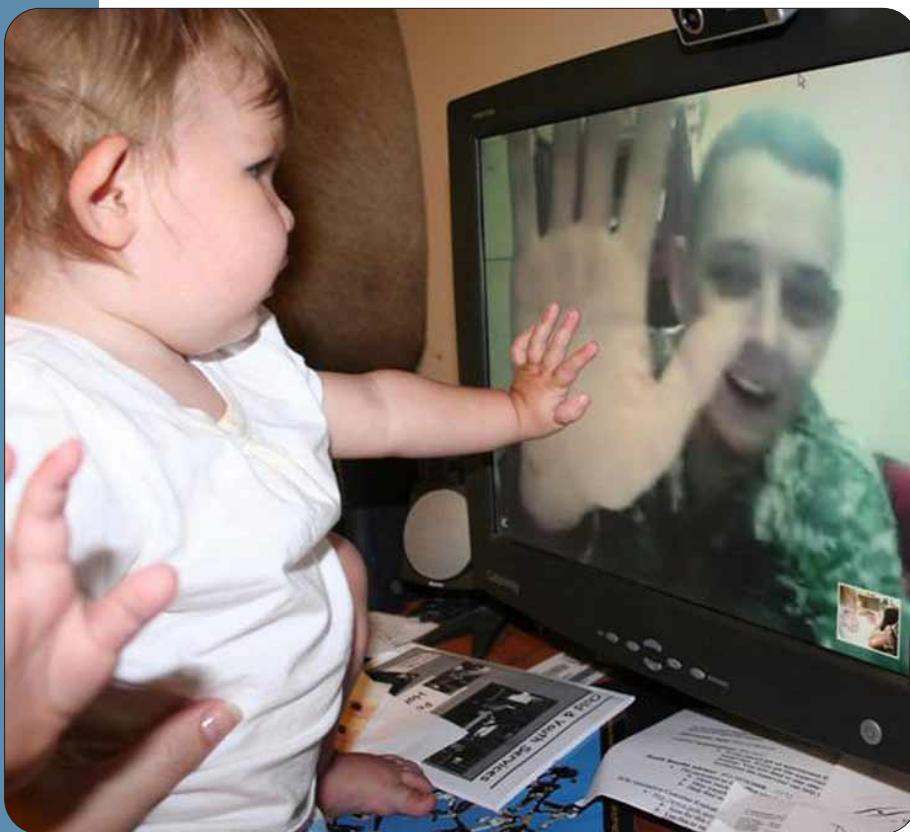
The key difference with this network versus other MWR networks is that these terminals are all completely mobile. The terminals go with the servicemen or service women wherever they are in theatre.

It may not be that the demands for the MWR services are changing, just that there is more and more demand for them. Soldiers today want the same instant access that they have at home out in the field, and the military recognises that providing these services, which are predominantly IP-based applications for the Internet, not only helps its service members cope with the stresses of deployment, but also lightens the load for their family members back home.

As more and more video streaming is accessed via these networks, meeting the bandwidth demands at reasonable costs is probably the greatest challenge being faced as space segment becomes more scarce.

Question: What services do you provide for governments and NGOs?

Michael Pollack: UltiSat provides end-to-end global satellite communications services and products to military, public safety, and government entities, telcos, service providers, NGOs, and enterprises. We can provide globally managed VSAT/SCPC/Satcom services, iDirect/SCPC end-to-end services, global VoIP services, transport services for SCADA or sensor networks, mobile satellite services, and support for wireless point-to-point connectivity. UltiSat also caters for value-added systems integration with the capability to build both large and small earth station infrastructure. We can also provide the UltiFlyaway/ UltiKit platform provider for satcom kits from emergency responder L-band kits to multiband flyaway terminals. We also



Soldier welfare, courtesy US Army.

have small business qualification for NAICS code 517410, 334220 and others.

Question: What are the benefits to the customer of using UltiSat's services and what differentiates you from the competition?

Michael Pollack: UltiSat's employees average more than 20 years experience with satcom technologies. The core team has been together for more than 20 years. In addition to a global satcom end-to-end network provider, we are a VSAT systems integrator and our vendor-agnostic approach to system design ensures that each customer's specific needs are evaluated and then best-value/best-fit components are selected and integrated into the most relevant, comprehensive, and cost-effective solution available. Using commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) components for these custom systems means that every client gets a solution that is tailored to its specific needs, but at a cost-effective price.

We also have vast experience of running networks. Many VSAT vendors claim to be global communications companies and whilst they may have terminals in many different countries, few have UltiSat's experience of running a network that spans more than 100 countries on all continents and Antarctica. This gives UltiSat experience in man-

aging, maintaining, and monitoring 24x7 a comprehensive global network; host-nation approval expertise; telecom Licensing expertise; logistics and onsite maintenance for far-flung locations and means we have experienced onsite personnel.

UltiSat is one of the few VSAT vendors of any size that operates a truly global network.

Our strategically located teleport in Blaavand, Denmark is able to access satellites in the geosynchronous arc from 55°W to 70°E. That means that 90 percent of world's land mass is covered by UltiSat's teleport. It comprises over 12 Ku and C-band dishes and provides end-to-end services to Afghanistan, Iraq, Africa, and the east coast of the USA. It is also less than 20km from the major European fibre PoPs that are required for backhaul and boasts hundreds of Mbps of Internet connectivity.

Our experience in global networks, very remote locations (deep-ocean islands), and harsh environments (including SWA, Africa, Arctic, and Antarctica), means that UltiSat is well suited to address the following issues associated with running heavy-traffic networks in remote and harsh places. This experience allows us to deal with specific modem requirements that tend to be CPU intensive due to high amounts of concurrent VoIP, Internet, broadband-rich social networking applications such

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as music and video. We also recognise the fact that equipment needs to be ruggedised in this sort of environment as it can be hostile. The systems and terminals must be able to withstand extremes of temperature and harsh environmental conditions. UltiSat caters for the service provider requirements via its teleport in Denmark and our 24 hour network operations centre with English speakers, fully redundant electronics and data paths, toll-quality VoIP paths, and active web filtering (for blocking of offensive material). We also provide strong programme management with a defence-oriented team leader to provide management and guidance.

In addition, we have a proven track record, around the world including southwest Asia and Africa. We also have access to US contract vehicles.

Question: How do you envisage the company evolving in the future?

Michael Pollack: We see our company providing additional end-to-end global networks for additional clients that will drive company growth. Clients appreciate the customer-oriented service that UltiSat provides whereby the complete company focus is on providing a stable, high-quality operation. We see additional clients and partners coming to UltiSat for service as they understand the key benefits and advantages that we offer over other service providers in the industry.

Question: What are UltiSat's ambitions for the coming year?

Michael Pollack: Our number-one priority in 2011 is to make sure that our current customers are getting the level of service that they need to accomplish their missions.

We plan to expand services from our teleport in Denmark, including hosting virtual network operations for other service providers, expanding UltiSat services, and continuing to expand the facility into a premier service provider for global satellite communications services.

Additionally, we see the business expanding in other regions including Africa and the Pacific Rim for both government and enterprise business. **GMC**

