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SatMagazine.com : June 2009

INSIGHT — The Keys To Success In Asian Markets

The Asian region is, and will continue to be, a growing market for satellite ground system providers. Due to the geographic make up of Asia, satellites are the perfect solution for providing the region with voice, data, and video services. As such, the need for satellite ground system infrastructure seemingly increases on a daily basis, with more and more requirements for satellite control systems, ground equipment/network management systems, and satellite earth stations. While successfully gaining market share in Asia can prove challenging, the potential rewards can be significant. Integral Systems has met its challenges and is a proven success in Asia, delivering every aspect of satellite ground systems while also rapidly moving into adjacent arenas (e.g., hybrid/cellular networks and remote site management).

Integral Systems is in a unique position as the Company offers a complete set of commercial, product-based solutions that meet, and often exceed, the needs of a wide variety of customers. Through our family of companies, we provide the most widely used satellite control software, industry-leading satellite RF processing and monitoring products, and award-winning network management software. Depending on our customers' needs, these products can be fielded as complete end-to-end

satID
technology that protects

Comprehensive Satellite Interference Geolocation for Complete Situational Awareness

satID Joins the Integral Systems Family of Solutions!

The satID Signal Geolocation System product line seamlessly integrates with Integral Systems' portfolio of Situational Awareness products and services providing an integrated capability for monitoring satellite payloads, communications links, and the ground network, delivering a turnkey solution for satellite operators.

Used by some of the world's largest satellite operators and government agencies, satID supports advanced situational awareness for commercial, military, civilian, and intelligence communities.

system, as standalone elements, or integrated with legacy systems.

However, a significant differentiator for Integral Systems is that by using our integration expertise, combined with intimate product knowledge, we are able to offer customers a one-stop shop for turnkey solutions that satisfy mission-critical needs. For a typical satellite communications operation, this includes antenna/RF systems design and integration all the way back to the satellite or network control system. With one interface, customers have the advantage of managing a single supplier throughout the project. This makes customer management and oversight during the procurement and implementation phases of a project much more efficient. For a project's sustainment phase, which typically lasts much longer, the efficiencies gained from having a single supplier can be even more significant. This is particularly advantageous for Asian customers when dealing with a global provider in a separate time zone.

Perhaps the single biggest factor contributing to business success in Asian markets is building relationships with customers — not always a simple task to accomplish from half way around the world. Obviously, the time zone issue must be dealt with, but the more significant impediment to global companies establishing trusting relationships with Asian customers are the cultural differences and language barriers that must be overcome.

Integral Systems has successfully applied a multi-pronged approach to tackle the “long-distance relationship” issue. Early on, we hired a business development manager who understands Asia's business culture and has helped educate the rest of our team. This is supplemented by a network of local representatives throughout Asia. Finally, once Integral's business in Asia was capable of sustaining a local presence; we placed staff in-region to better serve our growing customer base.

There is no doubt that it takes a long time to foster trust and establish relationships with Asian customers, so it is important to plan for long lead times when considering potential new business opportunities; however, once a successful relationship has been established, long-term repeat business can be favorable assuming the provider delivers high-quality solutions that meet the customers technical and schedule needs. Some general philosophies on doing business in Asia are included in the remainder of this article. In addition, several examples are cited that demonstrate the potential that the Asian markets represent for companies like Integral Systems that are willing to cultivate these markets and deliver high-quality products and services.

What Works

Thorough and comprehensive written correspondence is more effective than a verbal exchange as it allows both parties to fully digest and comprehend the information at a much slower pace. Providing this written information in advance of a particular meeting, be it a design review, training program, or test phase, is highly recommended as it allows both parties to be prepared ahead of time and therefore makes for a more productive meeting. As these meetings often require long-distance travel from one of the parties in the relationship, it is particularly important to get the most out of these meetings since follow-up meetings can be cost prohibitive.

Extensive documentation and training for the customer builds confidence with the team and the provided solution. Training needs to be intensive, hands-on, and designed with the consideration of a cultural environment that does not include many inquiries directed at the instructor. Training programs designed toward an open Q&A forum will not fare well as many Asian cultures consider questioning the instructor improper or disrespectful. Extensive documentation combined with intensive hands-on training, facilitates a student's ability to resolve any outstanding theory-related questions through the baseline training program.

Local representation to facilitate communication and execute business in the native culture is paramount to success. Vendors should expect additional time needed for collecting data and surveying architecture as this may be the first exercise of this nature experienced by the customer. Take an element management system for example, additional time should be set aside for onsite commissioning as the system may have similar models of equipment, but with varying firmware versions because of disparate facility and mission growth cycles.

Onsite time is reduced by using the built-in simulation and training capabilities of Integral's software suite to factory test operator interfaces and associated system logic. This minimizes onsite efforts to validate physical connectivity and correct status reported from the equipment.

For the sustainment phase of the program, consideration must be given to how the delivered system will be supported from half way across the globe. Two methods have proven particularly effective for Integral Systems as our market share in Asia has grown.

One method is to establish remote access through secure *Virtual Private Networks (VPN)*. By using secure VPN over the Internet, Integral Systems provides cost-effective remote support to customers for system administration and problem investigation. Because of the time difference, remote access is often granted during the customer off-hours, which is the supplier's normal working day, thus turning the time difference into an advantage rather than a disadvantage. The customer can report a problem at the end of their day, and by the time they arrive to work the next day, a problem resolution is waiting. However, remote access is not the only way Integral supports customers in Asia.

The other method is to establish local technical support through Integral Systems personnel and local representatives. This provides customers with local support in their time zone and often, support personnel are fluent in the customer's native language, which offers a tremendous advantage. In the rare event of an emergency, local support allows Integral to have an expert onsite in a short period to assist with problem investigation or a recovery action, giving the customer tremendous piece of mind when performing mission-critical activities.

What to Avoid

System architecture flexibility is an area for consideration when examining an existing system that may have components already managed by another system or through OEM software. In cases of legacy equipment, trying to interface directly to the equipment can prove challenging because access to necessary information can be limited or completely unavailable. If the system already has a subset of equipment managed through an existing system, exploring the option of interfacing to the existing system can provide a more cost-effective solution for the customer and integrator.

Business development and sales personnel should be careful to avoid setting unrealistic schedule expectations for closing deals. Negotiations take time since much of the business conducted is based on establishing trust relationships with the customer. This is where local representation can help foster relationships and growth with customers. Time is the critical investment here so anticipate long lead times for potential new business; however, once a successful relationship has been established, repeat business is not at all uncommon.



How Integral Systems “Broke Into ”Asia’s Markets

Integral Systems has its products in use throughout Asia — some deployments include our **EPOCH Integrated Product Suite (EPOCH IPS)**, while other instances are standalone solutions from our **Newpoint Technologies** or **SAT Corporation** subsidiaries. Having the ability to expand systems for growing missions has brought continued success to both Integral Systems and its customers. Our complete ground station solution continues to provide customers with scalability to “right-size” solutions to meet current mission needs, and offers expandability as requirements grow and budget becomes available. Scalability and expandability, combined with low cost of ownership have been key factors in making Integral Systems a choice solution provider in Asia.



AsiaSat's Tai Po Earth Station

Success in Asia

In 2008, Integral Systems scored a major success when it supported China’s broadcast of the Olympic Games from Beijing. *Chinese Central Television (CCTV)* broadcast the games using the *China Direct Broadcast Satellite Company’s (China DBSAT)* satellite capacity. More than 92 percent of China’s TV audience viewed the Olympics through direct-to-home channels

broadcast by CCTV via ChinaDBSAT satellites (*ref. CSM Media Research*). The ChinaDBSAT system is based on industry-leading products from two of Integral Systems wholly-owned subsidiaries. Newpoint Technologies products manage the satellite network infrastructure and SAT Corporation’s products manage critical satellite payloads and detect carrier interference or anomalies.

An excellent example of the long lead times required to foster long-term customer relationships in Asia is our **AsiaSat** experience. Integral Systems began communication with AsiaSat back in 1997, but it was not until AsiaSat finished its new *Tai Po Earth Station* facility in 2004 that it decided to consolidate its fleet operations by using EPOCH IPS for a new *Satellite Control Center*. The relationship formed between Integral and AsiaSat over the years has led to follow-on projects. In fact, early this year, Integral Systems completed the upgrade of AsiaSat’s satellite control system to accommodate its soon-to-be-launched **AsiaSat-5** satellite.

Integral Systems solutions have also been widely accepted in Japan. Integral has built long-term, trusting relationships with **B-SAT** and **SkyPerfect JSAT**, both having selected Integral Systems for their critical satellite ground system needs over the past several years. In the case of B-SAT, Integral Systems built on the relationship established nearly a decade ago during the BSAT-2 program and has more recently provided a state-of-the-art integrated control system for the **BSAT 3a** satellite that can be expanded to accommodate the **BSAT-3b** and **BSAT-3c** satellites. SkyPerfect JSAT uses Integral’s control system, element management, carrier signal monitoring, and geolocation product to ensure satellite mission reliability. Repeat business speaks volumes about customer satisfaction and it is clear

from the follow-on contracts we have received from our Japanese customers that they are very satisfied with our service and products.

Over the past couple of years, Integral Systems has been deeply involved in providing the entire ground infrastructure for **ProtoStar**, a relatively new, but rapidly growing, satellite operator in the Asian region. In mid 2007, Integral Systems was contracted to provide a completely integrated turnkey solution for the **PS-I** satellite. The solution consisted of the TT&C antenna/RF systems, the basebands equipment, the ground equipment/network management system, the



ISI EPOCH-IPS based AsiaSat Satellite Control Center provides excellent operational support to its customers. (Photo courtesy of AsiaSat)

payload management system, and the satellite control system. The system was delivered in less than a year, in order to support the PS-I satellite launch. At the tail end of the PS-I program, ProtoStar again put its trust in Integral for a fully integrated, full-featured solution for the **PS-II** satellite, and again Integral System delivered in less than a year before the PS-II launch. These two programs are a clear demonstration that the one-stop-shop approach can be extremely efficient when satisfying demanding ground infrastructure needs on an aggressive schedule

While ProtoStar is an example of a customer that took advantage of many Integral Systems capabilities, other customers select Integral for more focused needs. **MEASAT** for example, continues to take advantage of our network/element management products' interoperability and scalability to expand its systems as mission needs grow. Infrastructure management provided by products from Integral's wholly-owned subsidiary, Newpoint Technologies, has facilitated mission expansion and minimized cost of ownership by delivering products that can be easily integrated when system challenges arise. In addition, local Integral Systems representatives have provided support for more complex expansion challenges.


Trends + The Future For Asian Markets

Fluctuations in the world economy will continue to be a factor for foreign markets as available budgets may grow or shrink with exchange rates. This can slow or halt projects when significant fluctuations drain exchange rate value from budget dollars. However, the need for ground system infrastructure is not directly related to the global economy. In fact, as budgets are constrained, the need for

About the author

James Kramer is currently the Senior Vice President and General Manager of the Commercial Systems Group at Integral Systems, Inc., in Columbia, Maryland, USA. He is responsible for the Commercial division based in Maryland, as well as two wholly-owned subsidiaries of Integral Systems - Newpoint Technologies based in New Hampshire and Integral



innovative, efficient solutions actually increases. Integral Systems will continue to provide our customers in Asia with value-added solutions that drive efficiencies into all phases of their expansion plans, from procurement, through operations and sustainment, and we are confident that our customers will continue to trust Integral Systems for their ground system solutions. 

James Kramer may be reached at jkramer@integ.com.