

Case Study

IPSTAR Satellite News Gathering (SNG)

Channel 7 Uses IPSTAR, Rendering Broadcast Trucks Obsolete in Delivering Live Breaking News

The use of heavy news broadcasting systems that are difficult to transport and operate is well and truly over. Currently, news organizations are shifting towards a new generation of SNG system that is IP-based, easy-to-use and complete – capable of delivering live news reports not only via video streaming, but also through Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), video conferencing or the Internet.

Channel 7, a Perth-based TV news station, is currently using the THAICOM-4 (IPSTAR) satellite to cover live breaking news stories in Australia. In the previous months, IPSNG – the IPSTAR-enabled SNG system developed by Balconi –

had been deployed to provide coverage for news stories, such as the arrest of a woman who stole a baby in Northam, the bushfire incident in Southern Cross, and the court hearing and trial in Busselton. In all 3 headlines, Channel 7 had been able to easily beat its competitors in reporting live breaking news from remote areas, while other news organizations were forced to drive their camera tapes to faraway feed points. Once at its destination, the IPSTAR-backhauled SNG system can be deployed rapidly and can enable broadcasting in just few minutes.

Benefits

Simultaneous voice, video and data

- Deliver news reports either through VoIP, video conferencing or the Internet

Nationwide coverage

- Broadcast live breaking news from anywhere nationwide

Easy-to-use

- Quick to set up and shut down
- No technical expertise required

Reliable

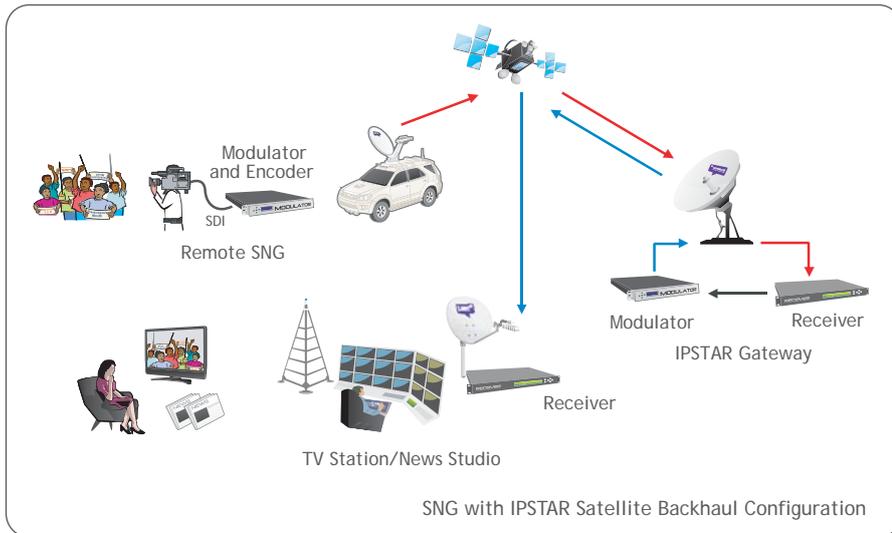
- Guaranteed bandwidth for news reporting
- Can withstand harsh environments and extreme weather conditions

Challenge

- Deploy an easy-to-use SNG system for reporting news events in remote areas where wired infrastructure rarely exists
- Set up an SNG system that can withstand harsh environments and extreme weather conditions

Solution

- Provide a reliable SNG system that can enable Internet, video conferencing and VoIP – all in a single platform



The Situation

Roving production news teams are continually on high alert and close coordination is essential in news reporting. However, as soon as news teams set out on a field mission, they are often-times deprived of the broadcasting equipment and tools available at the newsroom.

Traditional Outside Broadcasting (OB) trucks continue to play an important role in the broadcasting arena, but as the 24-hour news cycle demands for more live contents, small drive-away and man-portable SNG units are becoming the must-have tool for news broadcasting.

The Solution

Using the THAICOM-4 (IPSTAR) satellite for backhaul has distinct advantages over OB trucks in delivering news stories from a remote location. Basically an easy-to-use IP-based system, IPSNG uses the THAICOM-4 (IPSTAR) satellite to quickly send live breaking news to the TV station's newsroom.

Proof-of-Concept

IPSNG via the THAICOM-4 (IPSTAR) satellite enables field reporters to broadcast live or send reports in 14 countries across Asia-Pacific. The IPSNG satellite dish can be mounted on top of a vehicle or can be in a fly-away setup. It can be housed in a portable casing that can be carried on a helicopter or checked in as standard luggage on a commercial flight – thus allowing

reporters to cover news on accidents, disasters or any important event as soon as they arrive at their destination.

Previously, field reporters underwent a very slow process whenever they need to take live footage. News broadcasters have to plug a tape at some dedicated fiber or satellite uplink location before news reporters can start broadcasting. Most of the time, they also need to call a satellite technician to turn on the equipment and to fix the polarization line-ups.

With the IPSTAR-powered IPSNG network, the system can be set up in less than 10 minutes and can start broadcasting few minutes after it is deployed. Moreover,

news personnel do not need to call for any satellite booking, to make rigid configurations or to wait for a transponder to become available – they just need to turn on the system.

With various advantages against other news broadcasting technology, IPSNG via the THAICOM-4 (IPSTAR) satellite was chosen by Channel 7 as the preferred cost-effective SNG system that can enable video conferencing, Internet and VoIP for covering breaking news stories nationwide.

Comparison: SNG, ENG, and IPSNG via THAICOM-4 (IPSTAR)			
	SNG	ENG	IPSNG
Capital Expenditure*	200-500k	100-500k	40-80k
License Cost*	>1,000k	20k	0
Infrastructure Cost*	>100k	>100k	0
Delivery	DVB	Microwave	IP, MPEG4/Metered/H264
Backhaul Infrastructure	Yes	Yes	Not Required
Multiple Live Locations	No	Limited	Yes
File Transfer, Store and Forward	No	No	Yes
Internet Access	No	No	Yes
Two-Way Operations (Full Duplex)	No	No	Yes
Instant-On Video Streaming	No	Yes	Yes
Satellite Transponder Availability	Limited	N/A	Unlimited
Always On	No	Yes	Yes
VoIP	No	No	Yes
Small Dish	No	Yes	Yes
Technical Personnel Requirement	Yes	Yes	No

* Australian Dollar

About IPSTAR

THAICOM-4 (IPSTAR) is the world's largest and most advanced commercial satellite serving up to 10 million users in Asia-Pacific. The breadth of the satellite's geographical reach in the region – covering an area inhabited by 4 billion people or roughly 60 percent of the world's population – positions IPSTAR as the preferred gateway in 14 countries across Asia-Pacific. IPSTAR has achieved a critical milestone in its pursuit to bridge the digital divide in the region. With a combined 100,000 subscribers in Australia and New Zealand alone and still growing, IPSTAR has become the single largest VSAT network operator in both countries. Across the region, IPSTAR has sold nearly a quarter of a million user terminals.

For more information, visit www.ipstar.com.

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