

International satellite links access Africa

Q-KON, a South African based engineering group that provides turn-key solutions and managed network services to the emerging African telecommunications market, has united with its ICT services partner Business Connexion in order to benefit a client, Metcash. This is a joint operational agreement involves the provision of managed network services and the construction of a teleport operated by Q-KON to ensure the delivery of value via Business Connexion's VSA technology and support.



Metcash required a reliable solution to ensure connectivity for its management information systems. The company had to address the issue of running a network to remotely located branches. Aside from the challenge of inadequate infrastructure, the problem of cable theft also hampered progress.

The solution was found in the deployment of the VSAT network to reduce the effect of business disruption due to access line failures. The co-operation and partnership enabled the client to benefit from reliable inter-branch connectivity across proven platforms incorporating technology that has the capacity to transmit and receive signals with minimal interference.

According to specialist service providers, within the telecommunications infrastructure and solution development space across Africa, satellite connectivity is gaining popularity and standing out as a credible cost-effective solution.

Local links, international access

Locally, there are partnerships in place that are designed to transfer the value of point-to-multipoint satellite access service to clients. The satellite access service, under the umbrella of que-X, is based on a two-way communication circuit from an on-premise earth station at the customer's site to its teleport or hub facility in Midrand. The satellite network solution provides seamless end-to-end IP connectivity from any location in Africa directly to the teleport.

Dawie de Wet, CEO at Q-KON, says it is a concept and service that the company's growing list of service partners are keen to invest in and exploit in order to strengthen connectivity service delivery to their clients

"Interconnection from the remote site to the teleport is via either Hellas-Sat 2 on Ku-Band, or via Arabsat 5 on C-Band satellites. From the teleport, the access circuit is connected to the customer's hosted equipment in the tier four data centre or backhauled to the customer's South African premises via terrestrial links," he explains. According to him, satellite-based services is growing in appeal domestically and across Africa.

"Connectivity services like ADSL are very strong but are based on existing copper cable lines and are asymmetrical by nature. It was designed as a voice network and can be restrictive and prone to issues like cable theft and indiscriminate breakages in connection. Satellite has the advantage of being able to reach remote areas and cover extensive ground, and was designed to facilitate Internet connectivity. Access to connectivity services is a priority across the continent and the market is hungry for coalition that adds value provides reliability and is established to deliver quickly and accurately," he concludes.

With the input and support of its ICT services partners, the company is focused on becoming a world-class provider of wireless and satellite solutions.

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