

Connexion by Boeing signs deals in the Far East

Japan/Singapore

Japan Airlines (JAL) and Connexion by Boeing have announced the signing of a definitive service agreement that will bring real-time, high speed

connectivity to the leading Asian carrier's passengers and airline operations.

The agreement outlines the installation of the Connexion by Boeing mobile information serv-

ice on JAL's long-haul fleet of 68 aircraft, including firm and optional. As the Asian launch customer for the Connexion by Boeing service, JAL will help pioneer in-flight connectivity in the region. Installations will begin in 2004, with passenger service expected to begin on routes originating from Japan to London. Financial terms of the agreement were not disclosed.

In similar but separate news, Singapore Airlines has selected Connexion by Boeing as its provider of choice for high-speed Internet-based communications on board. The letter of intent agreement calls for the Connexion by Boeing mobile information service to be installed on 40 of SIA's long-haul jetliners with an undisclosed number of options for additional service installations. Financial terms of the agreement were not disclosed.

This technology will enable SIA's customers to tap into

broadband services that will allow them to surf the Internet, send and receive e-mails and view up to 12 broadcast television channels.

Installation of the service is expected to begin by the Third Quarter (Q3) of 2004 and launched on commercial services shortly thereafter.

SIA plans to offer the Connexion by Boeing broadband service on all long-haul flights. SIA's in-flight entertainment system - KrisWorld - offers over 200 entertainment options that include 29 blockbuster movies, more than 60 hours of short features, up to 150 CD albums and 12 audio channels, over 30 games from the Nintendo Game Boy series, interactive multi-player games like mahjong, and news from around the world. As of 1 November, SIA's operating fleet includes passenger aircraft consisting of 30 Boeing 747 and 51 Boeing 777 airliners. ■



Photo: The Boeing Company

Liberty Media completes acquisition of Liberty Satellite and technology

US

Liberty Media Corporation has completed its acquisition of all the issued and outstanding shares of Liberty Satellite and Technology Inc (LSAT) that it did not already own.

Each LSAT stockholder, other than Liberty Media, will receive 0.2750 shares of Liberty Media Series A common stock for each share of LSAT Series A or Series B common stock held. Liberty Media will issue approximately 1.8 million shares of Liberty Media Series A common stock to the LSAT shareholders.

The transaction was accomplished through a merger of Liberty Satellite Acquisition Co., a newly formed controlled subsidiary of Liberty Media, with and into LSAT, with LSAT as the surviving

corporation in the merger. The merger was taxable to the LSAT shareholders.

Liberty Satellite and Technology, Inc., known as LSAT, pursues strategic opportunities worldwide in the distribution of

Internet data and other content via satellite and related businesses. Through its majority-owned subsidiary, On Command Corporation, LSAT is a leading provider of in-room movies, broadband access and

other entertainment and business services to the hotel industry. LSAT also holds strategic ownership positions in a range of video programming, satellite-delivered broadband distribution and satellite communication businesses, including Wildblue Communications, Astrolink International, and Sky Latin America. LSAT is a consolidated subsidiary of Liberty Media Corporation. ■

Andrew acquires Channel Master assets

US

Andrew Corporation has acquired selected assets of Channel Master and certain of its subsidiaries for total consideration of approximately US\$18 million in cash.

Channel Master is a privately held designer and manufacturer of high volume antenna and antenna related products for

professional Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT), consumer Direct Broadcast Satellite (DBS) and television accessory markets. The acquired assets include equipment, inventory, intellectual property, and a lease on a portion of the Smithfield, North Carolina facility for a period of up to 18 months.

Andrew is currently working with former Channel Master customers to assure delivery and service continuity while integration teams are examining customer, commercial and employee implications of combining Channel Master's US and overseas operations into existing Andrew locations. ■

PanAmSat expands global satellite/fibre hybrid network

Global

PanAmSat Corporation has announced the acquisition of Sonic Telecom Ltd, a provider of international high-definition multimedia transmission services and business applications.

The all-cash transaction will extend and enhance the reach of PanAmSat's 24-satellite global fleet and its extensive fibre network throughout

the US, Europe and Asia. As a result, the integration of Sonic Telecom to the PanAmSat infrastructure will provide customers with a seamless satellite/fibre network that will deliver video content virtually to or from anywhere in the world in a cost-efficient, secure manner with robust redundancy.

The Sonic Telecom acquisition is the second phase of

PanAmSat's hybrid satellite/fibre strategy. In April 2003, PanAmSat entered into an agreement with Level 3 Communications Inc, to utilize its 20,000-mile broadband fibre optic network and create a virtual teleport. By connecting PanAmSat's satellite uplink facilities to one of the world's most advanced terrestrial networks, customers are now able to ac-

cess the fleet from any Level 3 network location.

Sonic Telecom brings to PanAmSat its customer base of multinational broadcasters and corporate videoconferencing users, related network management capabilities, a usage-based billing platform and access to an established international fibre network. In addition, PanAmSat gains access to an additional 20 points of presence (PoPs) around the world that are complementary to its existing network. Situated across the US, Europe and Asia, these co-location sites provide PanAmSat with an immediate expanded presence in key markets.

Sonic Telecom and PanAmSat already share a number of common customers including CNN, ABC, Reuters and the NFL. These customers and many others will now enjoy access to a broader array of services as well as a single point of contact for all their video distribution content needs, whether in the air or on the ground. In addition, G2, PanAmSat's government services division, will also be able to leverage PanAmSat's expanded hybrid satellite/fibre network to support many defence and homeland security applications. ■

MTS selected for satellite test system

South Korea

The Korean Aerospace Research Institute (KARI), which spearheads the South Korean national space program, has selected MTS Systems Corp to provide test and data acquisition systems for KARI's recently commissioned test facility. KARI's new state-of-the-art acoustic and vibration certification test facility will host future launch environment certification projects in Korea.

MTS' proven suite of noise and vibration solutions will provide the foundation for the new facilities' test system. The solutions provide the broadest range of sophisticated high-performance data collection, structural

dynamic analysis, sound quality, acoustics and modal analysis functionality available today in a single, integrated package.

MTS' test systems integrate best-in-class data acquisition hardware from today's leading providers of electronics, including National Instruments, Sony Precision Technology and VXI Technologies. The core of the data acquisition instrumentation MTS will supply KARI is based on National Instrument's PXI-4472 product, an eight-channel dynamic signal acquisition module for making high-accuracy frequency-domain measurements.

The Korean government has selected Space Technology

(ST) as one of the Six national Technologies (6T) and has drawn up the National Technology Road Map, in which the ST is categorised as national strategic technology and for elevating Korean national status on the global stage. The contributions and activities at the Korea Aerospace Research Institute focus on research and development of aircraft, artificial satellites and rockets, and also include type certification of aircraft and quality assurance for space products. ■

HNS supplies SSCC with broadband network

China

Hughes Network Systems Inc (HNS) is supplying the Shenzhen Security Communications Co Ltd (SSCC) with a comprehensive DirecWay broadband satellite network. The multi-million dollar contract comprises two Network Operations Centres (NOCs) and more than 3,500 DW1000 remote satellite terminals.

SSCC provides database communication services for the Shenzhen Securities Exchange, one of two stock exchanges in mainland China, handling bil-

lions of Yuan in transactions annually, with 508 companies listed from across the country. With the DirecWay broadband satellite network, SSCC will be able to broadcast vital stock information to stock brokerages across China in real-time, thereby improving the services they provide their customers.

Initially deployed as a one-way broadcast system, operational in December 2003, the DirecWay network can be expanded easily to a two-way solution as SSCC's needs expand. ■

SES Americom receives Type 1 telecom license

Japan

The Government of Japan, through its Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications - the Japanese telecommunications authority - has granted SES Americom a Type 1 Telecommunications Business License which includes the authority to operate an earth station to facilitate sat-

ellite services for a broad range of customers distributing content between Japan and the US.

SES Americom plans to be an active participant in the Japanese telecommunications industry through its newly-formed Worldsat business, supporting both Japanese and US-based customers with connectivity and bandwidth services. ■

XXXII session of the board of the Intersputnik takes place in Moscow

Russia

The XXXII session of the Board of the Intersputnik International Organisation of Space Communications was held in Moscow on 26-27 November 2003.

L.D. Reiman, Minister of Communications and Informatisation of the Russian Federation, Plenipotentiary Representative of Russia on the Intersputnik Board was unanimously elected Chairman of the Intersputnik Board for the next term during the session.

In his report, Intersputnik's Director General G.G. Kudryavtsev noted that 'the principal indicators of Intersputnik's business show the steady development'. It was highlighted that Intersputnik had 'not only preserved its potential, ..., but also found new perspective projects for its business'.

During the session, special emphasis was laid on the progress in the implementation of the Intersputnik-100M project to create a fleet of small communication satellites carried out in close cooperation with the major Russian manufacturers of satellite systems: M.V. Khrunichev State Space Research and Production Centre, M.F. Reshetnev NPO PM, and NPO Mashinostroyeniye.

Special attention was paid to the implementation and all possible promotion of new high-tech

Intersputnik's deal with Connexion by Boeing

Connexion by Boeing has signed a contract with Intersputnik for transponder capacity on the Yamal-200 geostationary satellite.

The contract stipulates that Connexion by Boeing will initially use one Ku-band transponder (72MHz bandwidth) of the Yamal-200 number one satellite, which was injected into orbit on 24 November 2003 and is now located at the 90 degrees East orbital position. Intersputnik provides this frequency resource on the basis of the agreement with JSC Gascom, the owner of Yamal-200 series spacecraft.

satellite services such as connection to the high-speed broadband Internet backbone, establishment of broadcasting channels on the basis of digital platforms, provision of multimedia services to the potential clients on a turnkey basis. Delegates of the session highly estimated the efforts of the Intersputnik Directorate for fur-

Two Yamal-200 satellites produced by JSC Gascom and Energia Rocket and Space Corporation named after S.P. Korolev were launched aboard one Proton launch vehicle to 90 degrees East and 49 degrees East orbital positions. Yamal-200 number one at 90 degree East is equipped with a combined C- and Ku-band payload covering Russia, CIS, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Central Asia.

Connexion by Boeing will begin the installation of its service onboard commercial airliners in March 2004. ■

ther intensification and diversification of the company's cooperation with such major satellite operators as Russian Space Communications Company, Eutelsat S.A. (France), Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Gascom (Russia).

Josef Dolecki was unanimously elected Deputy Director General of Intersputnik. ■

SkyLife hits one million subscribers



South Korea

Korean broadcaster SkyLife has reached one million subscribers, becoming one of Asia's largest and fastest growing pay Television (pay-TV) platforms.

SkyLife launched Korea's only digital satellite TV service in March 2002. Since then it has grown quickly to gain market share of 6.1 per cent of television households. SkyLife research shows that this growth rate far surpasses expansion of satellite broadcasting in the US, which reached only 3.4 per cent market share after two years, and only 1.4 per cent market share in Japan in the same timeframe.

Hwang Kyu Hwan, President of SkyLife, commented: "SkyLife pioneered a new market under challenging circumstances. The service has grown to one million subscribers in just one year and eight months. This is proof that Korean viewers are rapidly accepting digital satellite broadcasting and welcoming the harmony of broadcast and communication." ■

SES Astra wins four new contracts for broadband services

Luxembourg

SES Astra has announced four new contracts for the provision of Astra one-way satellite broadband services.

In Germany, SES ASTRA has contracted BBV-Computer-Dienst, a specialised IT service provider focusing on rural areas and the agricultural sector, who, in collaboration with the national Farmers' Association, has

launched 'Agrosat'. The 'Agrosat' service notably offers three different high-speed Internet access packages via Astra to the members of the Farmers' Association via its field offices.

Furthermore, in Germany, Internetagentur Schott is now providing a wide range of seven different satellite broadband services via Astra, either at flat rates or with vari-

able service levels at different subscription prices.

In Hungary, EticS introduced a new Interactive Television Service for the Hungarian market. By leasing fully equipped PC's to Hungarian households for three years, EticS provides end users broadband access via satellite to the virtual city of Metropolis. In the UK, SES Astra has teamed up with network and

communications specialist AVC Europe to launch the UK's first nationwide consumer broadband Internet-via satellite service on Astra, branded AVC Broadband.

This high-speed package offers to the end-user download speeds in excess of 512kbit/s with unlimited access to the Internet and will be available across the UK. ■