



All things must pass

How things change! Ten years ago, I happened to stumble across the satellite industry just by chance. As a young journalist who had just moved to London, I was given the opportunity to research and produce a yearbook for one of the leading satellite industry bodies: the Asia-Pacific Satellite Communications Council (APSCC). From that moment on, researching, writing and editing publications on topics related to the satellite sector became my professional life and, eventually, one of my life passions.

Over the course of time, I have witnessed the most remarkable changes in the satellite industry. Ten years ago, Iridium and Globalstar existed only on paper, while the world was awash with competing satellite operators, launch companies and manufacturers. Besides, broadband via satellite was the stuff of dreams best left to projects such as Teledesic – the so-called Internet in the sky.

Well, perhaps unsurprisingly, over the last ten years things have changed rather a lot. Consolidation has reduced the number of players in all major sectors of the industry, a truly service-oriented satellite sector has finally emerged, while new applications have been developed. In a nutshell, the satellite industry has become leaner, more efficient and more commercially-oriented, as the arrival of private equity firms in the sector clearly demonstrates.

This process, of course, has not been painless for all. Many famous industry names have disappeared from the scene, just like so many industry veterans have retired. However, new companies have also made their appearance, while a new generation of engineers and business men have taken the reins. On the whole, after a few difficult years, the satellite industry is arguably in its best shape ever: with solid foundations and in readiness for the challenges lying ahead.

Things have changed over the years and things continue to change, even at a personal level for all of us. My days as a witness of the satellite industry, in fact, have finally come to an end, as I am leaving the Satellite Evolution Group to join the communications department of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna.

Leaving my wonderful colleagues fills me sadness but also with pride, as today the Group is at its strongest, with a portfolio of editorial products spanning from online to print that are well-known and extremely well-established within the industry. Besides, I am leaving the Group in very capable hands: professionals who will continue to build on the reputation and strength of this fantastic multimedia communications and marketing platform.

As to myself, as the time to leave is approaching, the moment for drawing a balance of this experience has also arrived. And the conclusion cannot be but one: all these years of my life spent as an observer of the satellite industry would amount to nothing if it was not for the friends that I have made in the industry. Friends from all over the world and from all walks of life to whom I only have one thing to say: I shall miss you all deeply.

PS: It is my great pleasure to give you the news that the Satellite Evolution Group has managed to secure the services of a formidable new editor: Helen Jameson. As former International Programme Co-ordinator at the GVF, Helen is a well-known industry figure who will do a fantastic job with this publication and the rest of our multimedia communications group. I wish her and the rest of the team at the Group all the best for the future.

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