



A Teleport Taking your Business up from the Edge

by Virgil Labrador

Three years ago I had the privilege of visiting an exceptional teleport in the English countryside, a teleport with state-of-the-art facilities laid out in beautiful, well-landscaped gardens and bucolic surroundings. This teleport located in Rugby, England and operated by Satellite Mediaport Services (SMS) was featured in this magazine's May 2019 issue ("A Beautiful Setting for a State-of-the-Art Teleport"). A lot has happened over those three years - not the least of which is the global COVID-19 pandemic that catalyzed a satellite industry already seized in the grips of profound transformation. So we thought to revisit and check up on this teleport located in its pastoral retreat for a live update.

There's much talk about the ongoing demise of teleports, but you wouldn't know it if you recently dropped in to see SMS's facility. It has actually grown extensively since my last visit before the pandemic. Since that time it has advanced into prime gateway positioning, continuing to invest heavily in new equipment and increasing its surrounding land area to allow plenty of room for

further expansion into new services associated with Non-GEO constellations. "Our strategy has always been to continuously grow and expand our facilities and capabilities. We have maintained a high level of investment in the teleport every year and now remain even more committed to its continuous expansion, at a time when others scale back and shrink whilst we see that demand for solid ground segment operations remains strong. This has also been our experience. By expanding, we are able to achieve and offer improved levels of service and efficiency and in turn, this has made our service more attractive to a number of key industry players" said SMS Founder and its President Zvi Golod.

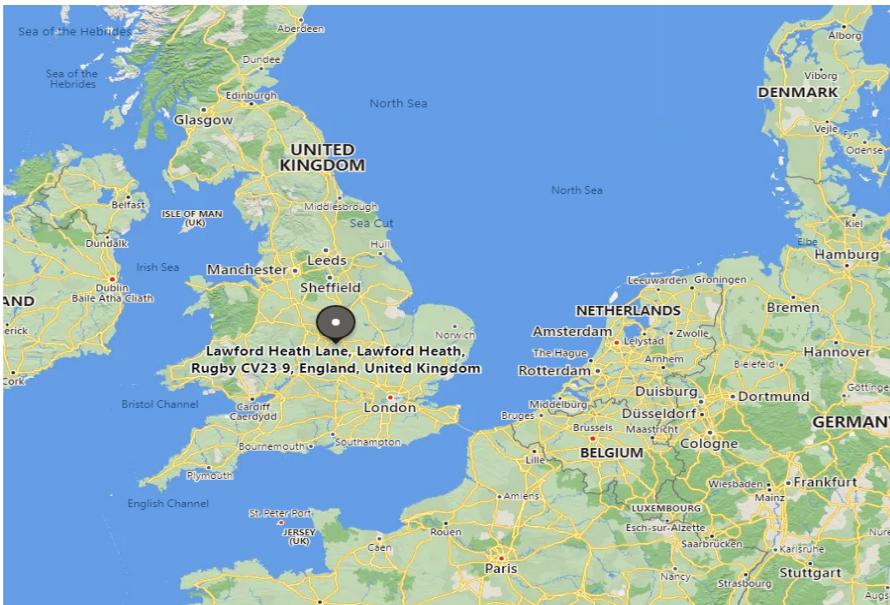
Location, Location, Location

Despite its pastoral surroundings, SMS's strategic positioning in close proximity to England's industrial heartland, its major cities and only a one-hour train ride from London, has made it a very attractive gateway option for Tier-one global network operators and for broadcast service operators alike. From its central location in the UK, the teleport has clear line-of-sight to over 100 communica-

tion satellites between 60°E to 60°W. Currently the teleport has over 80 antennas in a range of sizes in C-, Ku- and Ka-band with plenty of room to add more - including room for a cluster of antennas typically required for effective NGSO tracking.

"The ability to reach a lot of satellites combined with large infrastructure are attractive features for our clients. A number of them often face very short time frames to launch services and we have shown that we are able to match their schedule because we propose realistic charges and have most of the systems already in place" said Golod.

The teleport's core network comprises more than 10 Gbps of dedicated and fully redundant terrestrial fibre connectivity connects within 2 m/s with multiple major Points of Presence in the City of London. SMS has begun the process of expanding its service footprint into global coverage through the deployment of remotely managed uplink assets in key locations around the globe for services to customers in monitoring, collecting and analysing news content and satellite spectrum at any GEO



From its central location in the UK, the teleport has clear line-of-sight to over 120 communication satellites between 60°E to 60°W and within 2 m/s connection with multiple-peering points in London.

location. The teleport's location, combined with extensive and growing infrastructure, as Zvi Golod has mentioned, has made it a very attractive option for Tier-one global network and broadcast customers.

Aside from reliable connectivity, the SMS teleport delivers relentless QoS dedication; a wide infrastructure base for uplink combined with a highly responsive customer focus and accumulated know-how in service provisioning – all essential elements for an optimal base for satellite communication services over the European continent, throughout the Atlantic, African and over Asian regions. The SMS service range includes:

- Transmission and reception;
- RF uplink and downlink;
- IP connectivity and backhaul;
- Conception, installation and operation of VSAT networks
- One-way or two-way Internet backbone connectivity via satellite;
- Network/Hub Hosting;
- Hosting/Maintenance of Customer Furnished Equipment (CFE);

- Satellite capacity;
- Worldwide lease line connections;
- DVBS2 + SCPC services;
- Data Storage and backup; and
- Colocation.

Today the site is clearly marked by structural building work, both inside and around its perimeter that is designed to prepare the teleport for gateway services to Low Earth Orbit (LEO) constellations and for accommodating cloud edge connectivity needs.

Ready for New Space Services

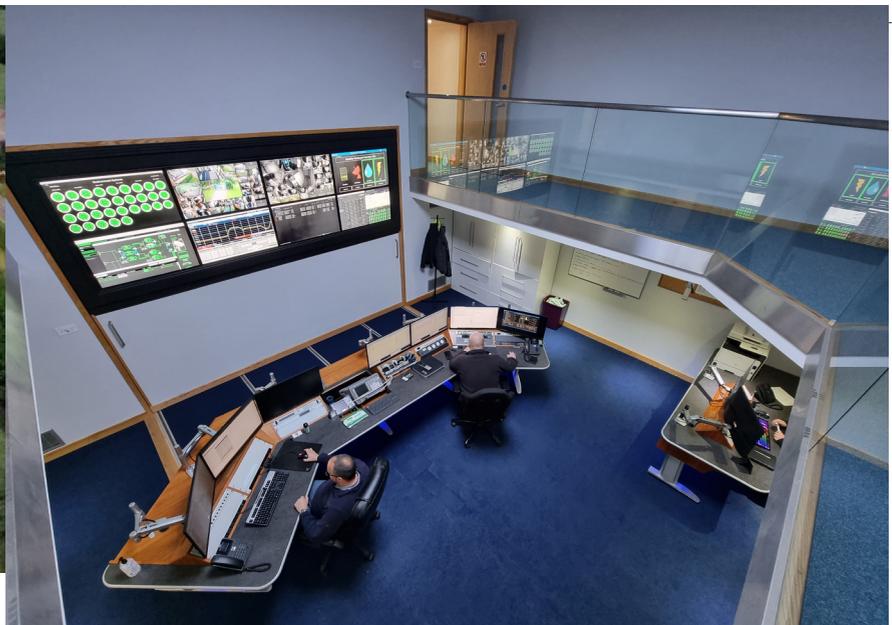
When I asked Mody Schreiber, Strategic Advisor to SMS, for which applications the teleport is particularly suited, he replied that with its extensive infrastructure and room for further expansion "there are really no limitations to what applications we can support." Indeed the teleport is host to almost all the major applications including broadcast, content distribution, enterprise, VSAT services, gateway services and mobility such as maritime.

SMS is by design a continuous-ly evolving teleport, seeking to ac-

commodate new opportunities and changing market conditions. Its aim is to fit into the developing telecommunications environment, which is not limited to satellite services, but addresses hybrid satellite and terrestrial services.

There is one area where SMS sees a definite potential for growth -- data services. According to Schreiber, the major and also the new players in the satellite market see teleports as an edge presence that form part of a global data system, one where a wide range of scalable, real-time cloud-native applications are made available to enhance customers' and their customers' businesses. In his view this spot is the hypocenter of the expanding telecommunication market that is also experiencing the highest rate of growth and the teleport's ability to join into this value chain is part of the unique challenge and opportunity ahead for all operating parts of the satellite industry.

SMS anticipates that the seemingly unending growth in data traffic we are experiencing will lead to demand for more local nodes or aggregated edge service centres capable of boosting capabilities for cloud edge players. "This is will be a key value proposition that a teleport such as SMS can provide. Our high speed connection to major global peering points, coupled with our close prox-



imity to major industrial centers is a key advantage we have" said Schreiber. "We look at our teleport as an edge enabler that allows clients to tap into its network for distribution services that drive applications for their ends users over a combination of terrestrial and non-terrestrial networks. At the end of the day this kind of integration is the challenge all satellite service providers must confront if they wish to integrate closely into a unified global telecom ecosystem."

An Extension of Their Clients' Businesses

Looking at the site, Golod says "Our business is pure ground segment operation. This makes us an extended part of our client's business. The services we provide are only a piece, but they are an integral part of their global operations, of which we form a distinct part. Our clients see us that way and we've been able to grow capacity by making that piece of their operation efficient, reliable and more cost-effective for them. We want our customers business to enjoy good service and grow, because as they grow, we and our modest value proposition grows with them."

In this connection, one of the keys to SMS's success, aside from state-of-the art infrastructure, is the quality and professionalism of their staff.

The teleport's Network Operations Center (NOC) is located in a site of a former nuclear bunker. It has recently been refurbished with the latest state-of-the art monitoring and control systems.

"This teleport has the capability of understanding what its customers want and go wherever it takes them. We pride ourselves on the extensive skill sets we offer and the wealth which our team's experience at the SMS Teleport can provide to you with expert advice and design solutions that satisfy your communication needs - however specialised these may be," said Zvi Golod.

"When you do business with us, you enter into a customer support experience that's not typical in the teleport business. You will work with management-level perspectives and technical professionals who can readily understand your business requirements; know the technology; can anticipate the challenges and provide the right solutions," said Schreiber.

Conclusion

SMS is living proof that the teleport business is as viable a business as it ever has been. SMS has shown that its special resilience, which amounts to a willingness to adapt to changing technologies and customer requirements, accompanied where necessary by investment in operational infrastructure, is the secret to its growth and enduring success. Three years ago, when I first visited the teleport, SMS founder Zvi Golod told me that "the future is here, and we are ready to face the challenges required by the new services." He continues to make good on that statement by investing in the teleport's future as it prepares to take on the challenges and opportunities of the new space telecommunication environment. 📡



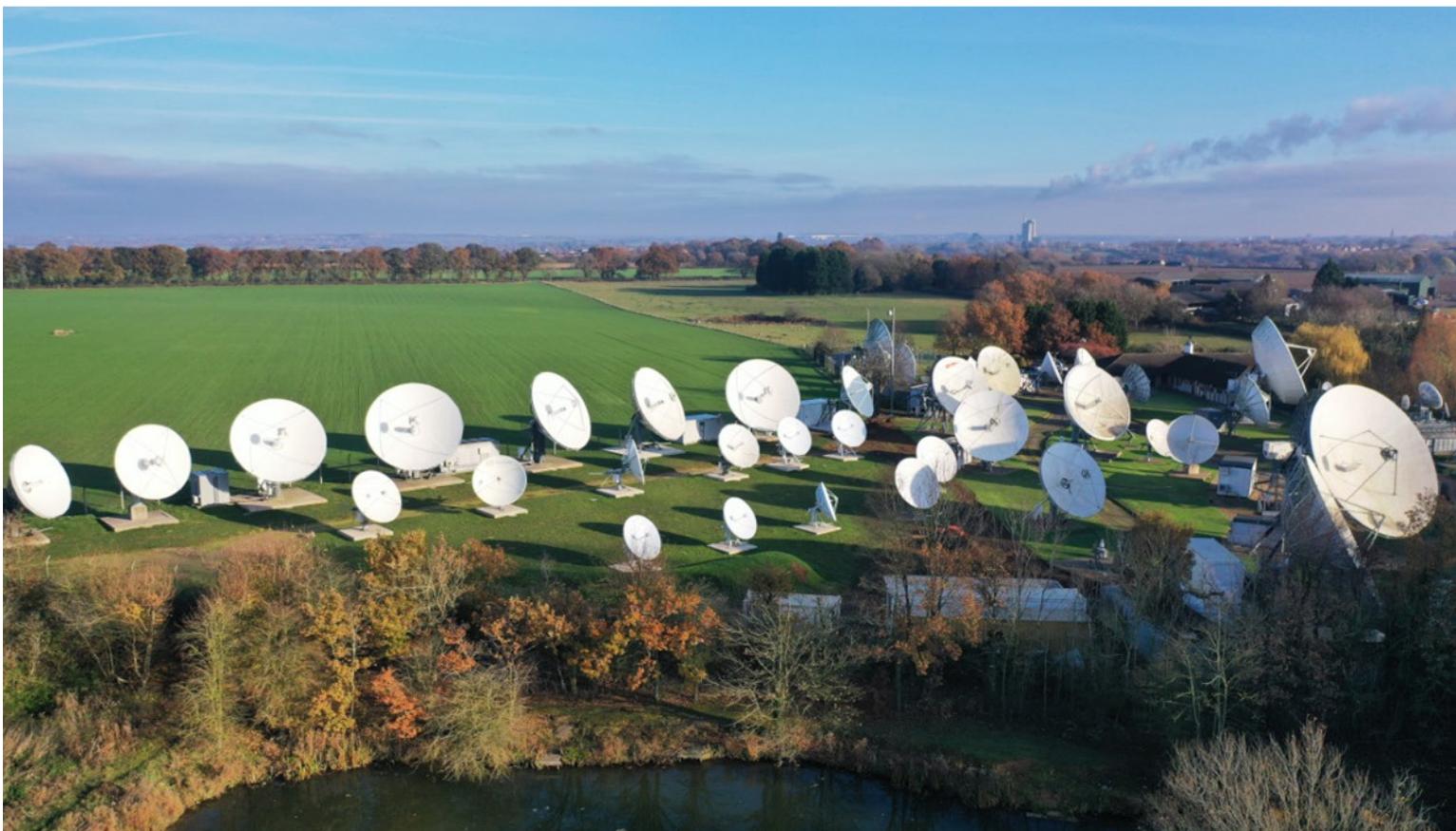
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