



O3b Networks Empowers the Unconnected and Underserved Markets November 2011

Satellite Evolution sat down with O3b Networks CEO Steve Collar to discuss the innovative satellite operator's unique mission to connect underserved and emerging markets. We touched on everything from the status of O3b's initial constellation, set to launch in early 2013, to key objectives for the coming year.

Satellite Evolution: The UN Commission has just agreed on new targets to ensure that the challenge of connecting the as yet unconnected is achieved in large part by 2015. This lines up perfectly with O3b's ambitions. Can you tell us about your mission and the real driving forces behind the company?

Steve Collar: Broadband has become a critical infrastructure facilitating education, trade, economic growth and productivity. Increasingly, we need to consider broadband access to the public internet a basic right. It will be just as important over the next 20 years as other basic infrastructures, such as roads and power.

However, the bandwidth needed to deliver broadband in an affordable and sustainable way hasn't been available across large parts of Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and Asia – until now.

O3b can deliver more than enough bandwidth to enable new opportunities and economic development in countries, regions and communities lagging far behind the broadband boom.

The system was developed to deliver high-speed connectivity to the unconnected and underserved markets around the world. Already one-third of our capacity is sold, over a year ahead of the launch of our initial constellation of eight Medium Earth Orbit (MEO) satellites in early 2013.



It's extremely exciting to have so many innovative telecommunications companies and Internet service providers signing on with O3b to turn our powerful bandwidth into exciting new applications and growth opportunities across the markets they serve.

Satellite Evolution: How is the development of the O3b satellite constellation and ground facilities progressing and is everything on schedule for launch in the first quarter of 2013?

Steve Collar: Everything is on track and, if anything, a little ahead of schedule. The satellite construction program is going extremely well, with plans to initiate service aboard first our eight-satellite fleet following two successive launches in February and April 2013. Our tenacious and highly-skilled technical team is working across three continents and eleven countries to build the various stages of our space segment and ground systems.

The terrestrial network of command and control centers, equally important to the success of the mission, is also well underway. We're installing seven strategic gateways around the world to support a combination of satellite control and customer services. The first two teleports are under construction in Greece and Hawaii, and it's exciting to think that soon these sites will be feeding the high-capacity, IP bandwidth that will ultimately play a key role in transforming the emerging world.

A global system as ambitious as ours requires planning and execution, and every day brings new milestones and takes us a few steps closer to launch.

Satellite Evolution: O3b has effectively moved on from start-up status to an extremely well-funded and supported organization in a short period of time. How has this been achieved?

Steve Collar: O3b's position today is a reflection of the commitment of the company's board, management team, employees, vendors and everyone involved in what has become an extremely effective eco-system. The directors on our board are from innovative technology companies like SES, Liberty Global and Google, and financial institutions such as HSBC and Satya Capital, who together bring a wealth of experience in how to successfully structure and run a global company.

We have recruited top talent from the satellite and mobile industries because our vision is an easy sell to knowledgeable people who want to be part of something exciting and



important. We've also received a lot of support from the vendor community, which admires our ability to innovate and wants to contribute to our success.

Our ability to empower whole countries and regions to discover a brighter, connected future is the biggest reason people work at O3b. And it's why telecom and service providers are staking their claim to O3b capacity.

So many factors – people, leadership, expertise and drive – have all come together to form O3b, and as a company we will do our bit to change the world a little and have some fun in the process.

Satellite Evolution: In terms of regional markets, where is O3b generating most interest and contracts?

Steve Collar: O3b is signing important capacity agreements with telcos and ISPs all over the world – from Africa's heartland to the Pacific Islands.

Many of these nations have been left out of the broadband movement. Innovative providers, such as Mavoni Technologies in South Africa, Netcom Africa in Nigeria, Sorooof in Saudi Arabia, NEDA in Afghanistan, Telecom Cook Islands in the Cook Islands, and Ozonio in Brazil have inked important deals with O3b to close that bandwidth gap and ignite growth and progress that comes with broadband.

We recently held a great launch event with Ozonio in the regional capital, Manaus in the Brazilian state of Amazonas. Several state governors and city mayors from across the Amazon region traveled to the event to mark the significant milestone. It was enormously gratifying to hear them explain just how important it is for O3b and Ozonio to enable their communities to participate in all the advancements and opportunities that broadband can bring.

They said that O3b is really on to something new and exciting and for them it represents the best and perhaps only way for the Amazonas state to participate in the National Broadband Plan in Brazil. It's a sentiment we hear a lot from communities and customers around the globe and I certainly agree. We really are providing a solution that no one else can deliver.

Satellite Evolution: We are nearing the end of 2011. Can you share with us some of the highlights from O3b's year?



Steve Collar: It's been a very successful year at O3b as we build towards 2012 an ultimately service launch. We just introduced our new IP Trunking solution, O3b Trunk – a scalable, bundled offering designed to deliver affordable, fiber-like capacity anywhere within 45 degrees of the equator. Telecommunications carriers and Internet service providers simply select the speed of the connection they want and we provide them with the fully-managed O3b Trunk service with up to 1.2Gbps on offer.

We continue to sign on high-caliber service providers. We added some of our most innovative customers in 2011. In addition to Ozonio, we announced a deal with Mavoni Technologies to deliver highly-anticipated connectivity to nearly 2,000 rural schools in the underserved provinces of Limpopo and the Northern Cape in the Northeastern region of South Africa. Sky Fiber became our first customer in Asia and will be serving ISPs and telcos in Indonesia and The Philippines. And Etisalat became our first global telco to sign a global frame agreement to offer tailored regional services in Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

Satellite Evolution: As the CEO of O3b, give us an idea of what O3b is aiming to achieve in 2012?

Steve Collar: 2012 will no doubt be a busy year at O3b.

We will continue to sign customers around the world, with particular focus on Latin America and Asia. We have new products in the locker ready to be launched and we will have a lot more to say about mobile broadband backhaul in 2012, as we roll out products specifically tailored for this market. You can also expect us to break into a couple of new markets in 2012, showing that O3b can be used flexibly for customers who simply need low cost, highly flexible bandwidth to be deployed to places that are hard to reach terrestrially. The possibilities are endless and there is a real sense within O3b that we have yet to discover all the unique and innovative applications the O3b system can enable our customers to deliver around the world.

By the end of 2012 we will stand on the verge of turning our vision of connecting the underserved regions of the world into a powerful reality. It's an exciting future. Stay tuned.

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