



African capacity of the Russian satellite operator

In December 2012 Gazprom Space Systems (GSS) launched Yamal-402 to the orbital slot 55E thus opening African market for their services. Our Correspondent talked to GSS CEO Dmitry Sevastyanov about the implemented projects and plans for further development.

Yamal-402 has been operating for almost one and a half year-how fast is it filling? How much is the capacity of the Russian satellite in demand for European and African users?

Taking into account very high competition in these markets, we are satisfied with our results.

European Beam is mostly used by our partners for maritime services in the Mediterranean Sea and also for a number of Middle East projects.

The most demanded service for European business in Africa - channels from Europe to Africa - now leaves not that much for further expansion - our capacity for such projects has been sold almost completely. Of course, we have reserved capacity for the growth of our current clients and definitely we will do our best to find the resource if some new interesting projects come up. The most popular service is Internet via satellite for remote areas in Africa. Big European providers, teleports, that have connection with communication centers, uplink the channels, received in Sub-Saharan region.

Southern/African Beam is also interesting for our customers.

In particular, together with Telemedia (Johannesburg, SA), we placed two platforms of African TV channels on the Yamal-402 satellite. Telemedia is also using Yamal-402 capacity for

live sportscasting. Wide coverage area of Yamal-402 makes it is possible to cast horse racing from Zimbabwe, Mauritius and Nairobi receiving the signal in a teleport in Johannesburg.

Recently GSS and the company ISAT Africa (a member of Wananchi Group Holding Limited (Kenya), one of the biggest players in satellite communications and broadcasting on the African continent) announced signing a contract, whereunder ISAT Africa will use capacity on Yamal-402 Southern Beam for the operation of the network, deployed in DR Congo and other Central African countries.

We are providing our extensive support to our partners and very glad when our cooperation brings good results. Take, for example, Sat Space Africa (Namibia), a well-known provider of reliable and cost-effective services of Internet access on the continent, who started using Yamal-402 capacity in October 2013. Since then the volume of the capacity utilized by this company has increased two times.

We are pleased to establish such strong partnership because outside Russia we are only a satellite operator, delivering capacity of our satellites to overseas service providers. Local and external, but authorized providers, who

have ground infrastructure, sales offices, national licenses, handle customer relations all by themselves, while the commercial and technical support staff of GSS always keep in touch with their and consequently our customers.

What GSS can offer to its potential international partners?

Very few satellites can provide such wide service zone like Yamal-402. Extensive coverage and high power allow to use this satellite for different services both in local zones and in pan-African networks in Sub Sahara. There is opportunity for the local projects-high power Steerable Spot Beam that could be pointed to the territory of the interest.

GSS is trying to create a comfortable business environment for its clients and is ready to share business risks with them. We faithfully and promptly treat any, even minor requests, ready to calculate repeatedly link budgets proposing the most optimal option for the joint research and to deliver satellite capacity for testing at any time. We try to provide a very flexible and attractive conditions of contracts and to assist our partners in every possible way.

Our customer-oriented team keeps up with the market and meet the wishes of our partners. Though it is not that easy here. Prices in emerging markets are changing rapidly. In particular, in Africa over the past five years, the average value of the assets has decreased by almost half. But we are optimists and believe in business opportunities in Africa. On our side we are open to any ideas and ready to support interesting projects.

