

Conference Report

Satellite 2001 Conference

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The Satellite 2001 was held from March 28 through 30 in Washington DC. There were 28 Sessions and 219 booths in the Exhibition Hall. Overall participants, total of Session and Exhibition, were about 7000.

The acquisition of GE Americom by SES Astra was announced. This was discussed at Opening Session “ Global Industry Leaders Speak”. The combination of SES Astra



and GE Americom will create the world's premier satellite broadband services provider and generate \$1.3 B in annual revenue. This will be expected to mark the beginning of a consolidation trend that will sweep the satellite industry.

In Session “ SatSats : Crunching the Industry

Numbers”, analysts described the satellite industry's future. US DBS penetration will hit 18 million subscribers this year and 36 million by 2010. The average DBS equipment costs have fallen from \$300 per box in 1998 to \$150 in 2000. At the same time, average monthly subscriber fees hit \$52 in 2000, up from \$42 in 1999. This is due to premium services. 62% of DBS subscribers take premium services, compared to only 32% for the cable TV. On the other hand, Communications faces a difficult situation. By 2003, new optical cable will increase exponentially in point-to-point capacity. Also, research has shown that “richer countries tend to use more fiber”, “Poorer countries tend to use more satellites.” High percentage is recorded in the countries in Africa, in Japan close to 0%. In Session “Pacific Rim Update : Tracking the Tigers in Asia”, the situation of Asian region has been discussed. Satellite communication expects the usage in internet, however, people living in Asia cannot afford to pay \$50 for monthly charge like US or European. How to spread the satellite communications in Asia is difficult question to be answered. Mr. Giuliano Berretta, Eutelsat's Director General was awarded in the Executive of the year 2000.