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COMMAND CENTER: Paul Scardino

*“Not Your Grandfather’s Satellite Tech Company”*



**Paul Scardino is Vice President, Sales & Marketing for Globecomm Systems, and oversees sales and communications across all of the company’s lines of business. We spoke to him last December about how the well-known systems integrator is changing to match a changing world.**

### *MilsatMagazine*

*Globecomm has a long legacy in the satellite business, with the founders and lead engineers of the company going back to the early days of the industry. When people think of Globecomm, they probably think of Earth stations. Is that still what the*

*company does?*

### **Paul Scardino**

We’re proud of a legacy that goes back to the time when our founder and CEO, *Dave Hershberg*, helped install the presidential hotline that connected Washington and Moscow via satellite after the Cuban Missile Crisis. And we still sell a lot of earth stations, from custom-designed 11-meter uplinks to mobile auto-acquisition terminals. But the old satellite industry is now a hybrid industry, and Globecomm is a hybrid company.

### *MilsatMagazine*

*What does that mean in Globecomm’s case?*

### **Paul Scardino**

We’re hybrid in terms of what we do. We custom-engineer systems from earth stations to media processing centers and multipoint next-generation networks, but we also operate teleport facilities and fiber circuits around the globe, and we provide lifecycle support for all of our systems. Our services unit is actually now the fastest-growing part of our business.

This year, we have even launched an information technology professional services company, **Cachendo**, to provide customers with expert, security-cleared staff on a project basis. And we’re hybrid in terms of transmission. Two of our recent mobile service contracts — with **Indigo Wireless** in Pennsylvania and **FIRST Networks** in Canada – use fiber as the primary transmission path. So, no, Globecomm is not your grandfather’s satellite technology company any more.

### ***MilsatMagazine***

*Mobility is a key requirement for military solutions. What are you doing in that area?*

#### ***Paul Scardino***

We just introduced a new X-band version of our ***Auto-Explorer*** 1.2-meter auto-acquisition terminal. We have been selling record numbers of the Ku-band version, under the *Worldwide Satellite Systems Program*, for which we are one of six approved vendors. The demand is there from X-band users, and we want to meet it. But there are so many aspects of mobility. For **NATO** in Afghanistan, we developed a **Blue Force** tracking system based on a new Friendly Force Identifier standard they devised. The vehicle-mounted systems allow all of the vehicles in a unit to see themselves and each other, to navigate regardless of conditions, and to communicate by text-based instant messaging. The command post has the same information in real-time and troops in the field or commanders can mark hazards like IEDs as they are found. It creates tremendous situational awareness while preventing friendly-fire casualties, and can be quickly swapped into and out of vehicles as needed.

There is also a commercial application that is generating a lot of interest from our military customers. Early in this decade, we had an opportunity to develop a solution to meet a customer requirement for running a mobile network in remote regions. We have since expanded that into a service offering called **SatCell**. SatCell technology optimizes mobile signaling and backhaul traffic for transmission as IP, using a hybrid architecture customized to a network's traffic volumes and patterns. It significantly reduces the bandwidth required to connect base stations via satellite, which means high efficiency and the ability to support more base stations.



At our *Mobile Service Center*, we also operate a hosted switch that allows customers to activate a network on short notice, run it for as long as needed, and take it down again. Our military customers are interested in SatCell as a way to support the new counter-insurgency strategy issued by the Army and Marine Corps. That doctrine stresses the importance of safeguarding civilians, restoring essential services and supporting the rapid deployment of local security forces, instead of just targeting the enemy. From our work for the government of Afghanistan, we know how powerfully communications can contribute to those goals.

### ***MilsatMagazine***

*How are the government and military's requirements evolving, and how is Globecom adapting?*

#### ***Paul Scardino***

Whether the application is military or civilian, governments want more bang for the buck. There are a couple of examples I can share from the civilian side of the fence. We engineered and continue to provide lifecycle support for a mission-critical satellite network for the **Federal Aviation Administration**. That's part of a **Harris** project to upgrade the nation's air traffic control system, which is going to save taxpayers millions of dollars as well as ensuring safety and reliability.

We just completed another air traffic control project for a Middle Eastern nation that involved putting all ATC-related voice and data onto a TDMA frame-relay platform running over satellite. It is already saving a lot of money while bringing performance and reliability up to world-class standards. There's a constant need to innovate to slash costs and improve performance for our customers, and that's where

we will continue to focus our efforts.