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Year In Review 2011: Part II

Globecomm

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Left: Hershberg — Right: Hall

The biggest element that 2011 has taught us at Globecomm is that this is no longer your grandfather's satellite business. It's not even your father's or your older brother's satellite business.

What we do every day — whether it is delivering network services or building network infrastructure — is driven as much by changes in terrestrial markets and technology as by the ever-improving capabilities of satellite.

Two years ago, Globecomm entered a new business by buying a GSM switch and offering hosted switching and distribution services for wireless carriers, mostly small rural carriers for whom the purchase and operation of a carrier-class switch is a high mountain to climb. Two years later, we are preparing our combined GSM and CDMA Mobile Switching Center to leap from 2G and 3G to LTE. This involves a completely new switching infrastructure and network architecture. Satellite still plays the occasional role in reaching truly remote sites, but most of the traffic travels over fiber.

Two years ago, we acquired two small maritime services companies. Mach6 specializes in VSAT to ships and platforms at sea, while Telaurus specializes in optimizing Inmarsat and Iridium L-band services for maritime customers. Today, Globecomm Maritime is serving more than 2,500 ships at sea with VSAT, L-band and auto-switching hybrid services that deliver the

best of both worlds. In this case, satellite remains the core of the network, but the value lies in optimization and flexibility – in short, in the software as much as the hardware.



Kenneth A. Miller international teleport

Talk today to our CTO, Steve Yablonski, and you will hear about “collaboration in the

network.” Instead of fixed configurations connecting point to point or point to multipoint, the

network is increasingly collaborating with the applications running over it to figure out what level of performance is needed to meet the end-users' requirements. Mobile video is an example: if there are a thousand devices out there trying to access content, they will have many different screen sizes, resolutions and processing power. The handset, the network and the application collaborate to figure out how to deliver a service cost-effectively in terms of available bandwidth.

As we look forward to 2012, we feel sure of a few things. The complexity of the networks will keep growing. The intelligence of the network will keep growing with it – because otherwise, we will not even remotely be able to handle that complexity.

The integration between satellite and terrestrial services will keep getting deeper, as the world strives to push the network to ever more challenging locations on land, at sea and in the air. That's good news for our industry. When you add a little bit of satellite to a network, it introduces complications in how protocols interact. Our industry knows how to handle those complications – and nobody else really does. It's also good because the more seamlessly we connect with other telecommunications technologies, the more value we can contribute and the larger our customer base will become.

As we close 2011 and look toward 2012, we have to ask ourselves: what kind of Company is Globecomm? Is it a teleport operator? A satellite services business? A supplier of satellite terminals, systems and networks? A mobile services Company? A maritime communications Company? An interactive broadcasting Company? The answer to all these questions is "yes." And we believe our partners, competitors and colleagues in the business are all heading in the same direction.

