Answering the Call for Flexible Service: Lepton's Block Network

In the last decade, advances in communications technology have fundamentally altered the capabilities landscape for US Signal Officers. Regardless of budgets, acquisition vehicles, and notice prior to deployment, a long-haul communications capability is expected across all AORs for all lengths of deployment. Being able to transmit email, voice, and even pictures and videos from anywhere on Earth is very much possible, and – increasingly, expected. In an era of complex VPN routing, high definition resolution, and streaming services, a UHF radio and a BGAN terminal do not fulfill any unit's total communications needs.

Resources that exist to provide support to Signal staff planners include equipment programs of record (i.e. the Army's WIN-T contract), Wideband Global SATCOM (WGS) services, and commercially provided SATCOM services through DISA CSS (Commercial Satellite Service). After a decade and a half of war engagements, great strides have been made within programs like these to equip the warfighter with truly modern communications tools. However, like any bureaucratically- administered initiative, these routes do not provide a quick path to capabilities, and there are often limiting variables in using the pre-structured programs. In programs of record, equipment choices are limited by default. Using the WGS constellation requires 45-day advance notice just to request space segment, and there is never a guarantee that a higher priority request won't preempt requested services. Despite increased flexibility as well as improvements made in the acquisition process, DISA's commercial services have historically occasioned a drawn out and unsatisfactory result for end users. In light of the challenges outlined above, Lepton has developed a flexible, scalable alternative to procuring managed network services. Their model - the Block Network - allows customers to pre-purchase "blocks" of service, or one month allocations, with coverage over individual regions or COCOMs at pre-negotiated prices. Once blocks have been purchased, users can request option

files with 48 hours' notice for any region in the world in which a block has been purchased. While the concept is simple, the block network removes major obstacles to ensuring a communications capability for signal officers while saving immensely on time and costs.

With the block model, leadership rests assured that VSAT service will be available globally on short notice, yet they will only pay for what they need. Prior to a deployment or service requirement, customers simply call the Lepton Network Operations Center in Vienna, VA, which virtually manages the entire network, and service is immediately provisioned.

To date, Lepton has sold over 100 blocks of global service to DoD units. Blocks have been purchased in CONUS for training, as well as in SOUTHCOM, CENTCOM, PACOM, and AFRICOM. Using deployable VSAT equipment, customers leverage the block network for short forward deployments, overseas training exercises, and months-long steady-state usage. In enabling customers to pay for service in month-long blocks, rather than on a longer-term basis, Lepton estimates that customers recognize, on average, a 65% cost savings. By using Lepton's streamlined procurement path, the only step block network customers must take when needing satellite services in country is to place a phone to the Lepton 24x7 NOC. All budget, procurement, and preemption obstacles have been removed, enabling customers to focus on their missions.

About Lepton Global Solutions

Lepton Global Solutions specializes in the engineering and delivery of customized, yet cost-effective turnkey satellite communications solutions to commercial and government customers. Lepton's end-to-end solutions, which go beyond managed satellite services to include VSAT equipment installation, 24×7 technical support, and customized back-end IT infrastructure, are tailored to meet the customer's specific needs.

Lepton's customer-focused strategy is based on achieving a communications whole greater than the sum of its parts. Our solution delivery process removes the burden of dealing with multiple vendors, allowing customers to focus instead on their applications and missions. Lepton leverages its strong relationships with various network partners to provide a robust global satellite network, quality VSAT equipment, and a world-class customer experience.

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