

BGAN Demonstration

Joni Evans

Simple, portable, and easy to use are deceiving words for such complex technology, but this is exactly how Inmarsat's Broadband Global Area Network (BGAN) service works. The BGAN system utilizes three powerful Inmarsat 4 (I-4) satellites to provide broadband coverage anywhere in the world. On Thursday, Sept 10, Inmarsat, their distribution partner Stratos Global, and service provider Infosat Communications LP came together in Calgary to demonstrate the technology behind the BGAN terminals and their applications within the oil and gas industry.

After a brief introduction and explanation of several BGAN features, Guy Mariz of Inmarsat gave the step-by-step demonstration showing how quickly and easily a BGAN terminal is set up.

Within five minutes, including a detailed explanation of each step, the Explorer 700 terminal was up and running. The BGAN terminal had located the satellite, registered the user, and accessed the internet, all through Mariz's laptop. A quick Google search illustrated the connection speed.

The Explorer 700's standard variable bit rate is 492 kbps, but if a guaranteed service rate is needed streaming at 384 kbps is possible, explained Mariz.

"Automatic setup is also possible," Mariz says. The BGAN terminal uses a single SIM card which is programmable for specific users, streamlining the setup process.

"BGAN excels as a mobile device," he says, "You only pay for what you use, per megabyte or per minute."

BGAN terminals are able to simultaneously utilize voice and broadband data transmissions. Mariz demonstrated this by simply plugging in a regular telephone and placing a call.

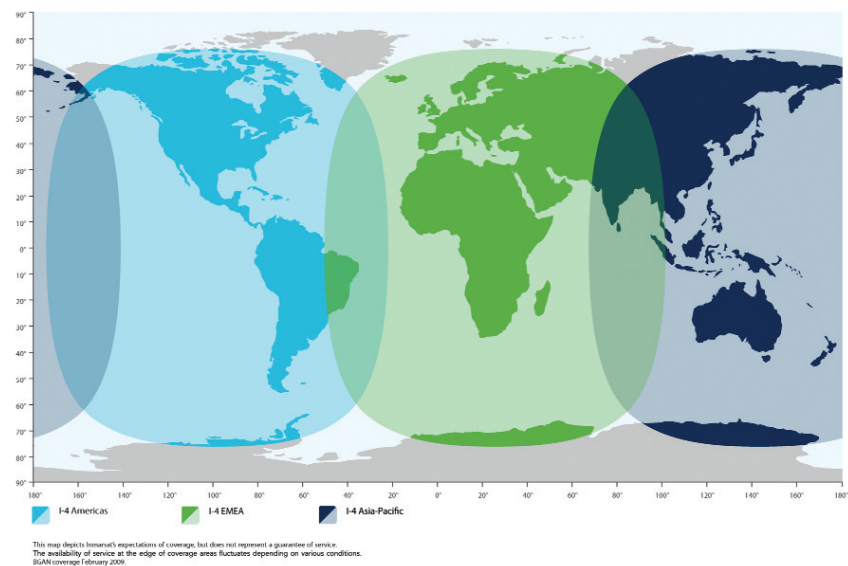
"BGAN gives anyone the connectivity they would enjoy in an office anywhere in the world," he says. "Essentially you can replicate your office."

The terminal uses Launch pad, a simple interface, and is compatible with all Microsoft products, Citrix and many FTP programs. There are several terminal types based around the needs of industry. Many terminals offer Ethernet, Bluetooth and USB connections for a variety of laptops. One BGAN terminal has the ability to support 11 simultaneous users.

There are several different access terminals available, each with their own unique features.



BGAN coverage



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Each access terminal is designed for portability and will fit easily in a laptop bag or briefcase, making it ideal for use in remote locations, man alone situations, and at the exploration phase. BGAN easily allows workers to remain in touch, instantly sending photos, reports, and updates back to the office.

Next, BGAN's video conferencing capabilities were highlighted as he connected with a colleague in Inmarsat's London, England office.

"We've had many requests for video conferencing from our oil and gas clients," says Dale Gamber, Infosat communications vice-president of sales and marketing. The video conferencing capabilities are becoming more commonly used all the time, says Gamber.

"It's surprising what a powerful tool it is. Companies are able to get their message out to everyone at the same time," he says.

Two additional products were demonstrated using the BGAN network, a Frontline Communicator by AudiSoft Technologies and AFIANT Satellite Network Video Management System by Modern Security Solutions LTD.

The Frontline Communicator is a small portable device with a small camera attached to a headset, for hands-free use, and its own interface. The communicator was designed with telemedicine or off-site expert advice in mind. Users are able to connect to the BGAN network, and communicate through voice and live video, with an expert who may be located half a world away.

The AFIANT Satellite Network Video Management System is a unique security offering jointly offered through Stratos Global and Modern Security Solutions LTD. AFIANT provides a cost effective solution for video surveillance and monitoring of remote assets.

By utilizing the BGAN background IP channel, user's can implement motion triggered recording, and view or manage the information from anywhere in the world.

"The balance BGAN strikes between portability and data capacity makes it the perfect solution for our customers," says Sarah Crew, Infosat's sales and marketing coordinator. "The portability and easy use of the terminals are where BGAN really shines."

Infosat Communications LP is a complete communications solutions provider located in Calgary, Alberta. As one of North America's leading providers of satellite communications, BGAN was a natural addition to Infosat's services.

By building upon Inmarsat's global satellite coverage through the I-4 network, and Stratos Global's position as the only tier-one service provider in Canada, Infosat offers 24/7 customer support and the right BGAN solution to resolve unique communication challenges in the industry.