



CASE STUDY

BFM TV Reports Live from Anywhere with BGAN/ClipWay Solution

Since 2007, reporters for BFM TV, a free 24/7 French news channel, have been using BGAN from Stratos with SeaMobile Europe's unique Media ClipWay software to capture, compress, and transmit both live broadcasts and pre-recorded video from anywhere breaking news is happening. The Stratos Advantage™—Stratos Trench™ and Stratos Dashboard™—help monitor airtime, restrict unauthorized usage, and manage costs more efficiently.

A Fast, Portable, Cost-Effective Alternative

Shortly after BFM TV was founded, the French 24/7 news channel went looking for a fast, portable satellite communications system that its journalists could use



BFM TV's reporters cover breaking news from anywhere in the world using BGAN from Stratos with Media ClipWay software. Photo courtesy of BFM TV.

to transmit footage from anywhere on earth, at a reasonable cost.

"We wanted to do much the same as CNN, but, of course, with a lower budget," explains Thomas Jumel, Chief Operating Officer for BFM TV in Paris. Currently, BFM TV is the number one news channel in France with 150 reporters and correspondents, including two international units that are continually on the road covering breaking news. "We didn't want to force them always to find a hotel or cyber cafe with an Internet connection, or to book a professional broadcast studio. Our number one need was to send live videos over the Internet as fast as possible from any place in the world—even if they were out in a desert."

The solution they adopted combines BGAN (Broadband Global Area Network) service from Stratos

with Media ClipWay software from SeaMobile Europe, a Stratos Channel Partner. Hardware required includes BGAN terminals that weigh only a few kilograms, and laptops. BFM TV now has six packages, which are used as back up whenever reporters need them. "If they have trouble sending video in the usual ways, no problem," says Jumel. "They can send it this way."

Previously, when standard Internet connections or professional studios were heavily booked, inconveniently located

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or unavailable, French TV journalists used Inmarsat's GAN (Global Area Network) system or an SNG (Satellite News Gathering) vehicle with VSAT antenna. However, both approaches had downsides. "The GAN system was portable," he notes. "But the maximum speed was 128 kbps, using two antennas." Therefore, it lacked sufficient bandwidth for smooth live broadcasting. Also, lugging around two GAN units to boost bandwidth was cumbersome. On the other hand, while SNG vehicles have higher bandwidth, they are more costly and geographically limited. BFM TV deploys six SNG vehicles but these are limited to shoots in France and Europe.

"Cost is very important to us," Jumel emphasizes. "SNG is too expensive. The way BGAN from Stratos works with SeaMobile's Media ClipWay is simple, fast and much more affordable."

Advantages of BGAN with ClipWay

"When we met BFM TV about two years ago," recalls Juliette Warter, Marketing Director for SeaMobile Europe, "we proposed Media ClipWay because it optimizes transmission through BGAN—or, in fact, through any other link: GAN, VSAT, ISDN, ADSL, 3G, whatever."

Unlike other media solutions on the market, ClipWay captures, compresses and transmits footage—both live and store-and-forward—using software only. So it fits conveniently on the same laptop reporters use for editing. "BGAN with Media ClipWay," says Warter, "is like a small SNG you can put in a backpack."

Jumel cites a number of advantages ClipWay offers. "For a journalist, the ergonomics of the system—the menus and windows for compression and transmission—are very simple and easy

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to use. Also, the hardware solutions we looked at for compression were much more expensive. They wouldn't be very mobile either. And ClipWay's transmission protocol is faster than other technologies, such as classic FTP transfer."

According to Michel Notté, the media applications engineer who developed

ClipWay, video transmission through a standard IP connection over BGAN using the ClipWay protocol may be up to four times faster than FTP. "It's very efficient, and if there's any break in transmission," he says, "ClipWay reconnects automatically and ensures that you never retransmit the previous packet."

As noted, Media ClipWay offers remote transmission of live and pre-recorded video in a single solution. Other commercial packages provide only one or the other. Finally, a ClipWay client license is about half as costly as competitive alternatives, and server licenses may be as little as a tenth of the cost.

BGAN from Stratos also offers two ways of transmitting video, each priced differently. One is a dedicated IP streaming channel with guaranteed access to 256 kbps, charged by the minute. The other is a standard IP connection with shared access of up to 492 kbps, charged by the megabyte. However, with the standard IP connection bandwidth is not guaranteed and varies with the number of concurrent users. "Because of variable rates in shared mode, which could cause video breakouts on air," says Jumel, "we always use 256 kbps streaming for live stand-ups."



Jumel estimates a ten-minute BGAN transmission (a one and a half minute report compressed in standard broadcast quality) costs about 100 Euros (approx. \$155 USD) via shared access. According to Juliette Warter, ten minutes of transmission via SNG can range from about 500 Euros (approx. \$800 USD) to more than 5,000 Euros (approx. \$8,000 USD), depending upon location and demand.

More important, however, is the speed with which reporters can capture and send live footage from remote locations. "In 24/7 news television, we like faster-than-fast solutions," Jumel explains. "When journalists follow French president Nicolas Sarkozy on the road, for example, there's no time to find an Internet connection when he stops. The BGAN system takes about 10 minutes from the time you set up and point the antenna until you start sending videos.

Recently when (French President Nicolas Sarkozy) visited Egypt, three other French news channels were present but, at times, we were the only ones who got images because we had this system." — Thomas Jumel, Chief Operating Officer, BFMTV

Last December when he visited Egypt, three other French news channels were present but, at times, we were the only ones who got images because we had this system."

Much the same thing happened when reporters were covering a major trial of French nationals in Chad last year. "Other French channels counted on a professional SNG provider, but it was so busy they could book only one or two live standups a day. With BGAN, we broadcast live dozens of times each day and covered the events more efficiently."

Stratos Value-Added Services

Stratos is one of several Inmarsat Distribution Partners offering BGAN service worldwide. One reason SeaMobile Europe partnered with Stratos in this particular case was the value-added services Stratos offers its Channel Partners. In 2007, Stratos was the world's top BGAN distributor, and won the Frost & Sullivan Product Innovation of the Year Award for development of BGAN value-added services.

"Stratos has very dedicated customer service, and provides value-added applications that help us efficiently manage communications," says Warter.

"With the tools they give us—Stratos Trench and Stratos Dashboard—we can make sure BFM TV's journalists use BGAN just to send videos, not to surf the Web or download movies. At the end of each month, we can report how much data has been sent, how many hours they used, and ensure they're paying only for footage they received."

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Media ClipWay's easy-to-use Compression Module offers 8 video bit rates from 500 to 4000 kbps, in standard PAL or NTSC formats.





BGAN for Media from Stratos. First on the Scene. Anytime. Anywhere.

www.thepowerofbgan.com

BGAN Key Benefits

BGAN users can access e-mail, corporate networks, the Internet, transfer files, make telephone calls, and transmit streaming IP data via satellite. Key benefits and features of BGAN include:

- A range of small light-weight, highly portable and rapidly deployable terminals
- Ability to communicate from anywhere, even when terrestrial networks are not operational
- High-speed wireless IP data and circuit-switched network
- Shared capacity IP data rates up to 492 kbps
- Streaming IP data rates up to 256 kbps
- Simultaneous voice and data – on different channels
- Optional guaranteed bandwidth
- Support for legacy applications and a platform for new IP-based solutions
- Support for supplementary services, e.g., call hold, call waiting, call forwarding, SMS card and voicemail
- Stratos Dashboard for BGAN

The Stratos Advantage

Stratos Dashboard for BGAN – to monitor and control costs, our extensive online BGAN customer care Dashboard provides real-time information on the amount of traffic used for voice and data and the associated costs. Stratos Dashboard also allows customers to instantly activate, deactivate and change service configurations.

Stratos Trench for BGAN (Customer Managed Firewall) – a personal firewall between the internet and the BGAN network. Web traffic and applications can be authorized or blocked via a user-friendly interface.

BusinessAccess – customers can now easily extend their LAN networks to BGAN connected laptops using our cost saving and secure BusinessAccess service.

GuaranteedAccess – our infrastructure extends BGAN's guaranteed bandwidth to the terrestrial side, so bandwidth, including end-to-end streaming services, is really guaranteed all the way to the customer's doorstep. Customers using GuaranteedAccess will always get what they pay for.

IP Access – our value added infrastructure allows customers to benefit from all possible types of internet access via public, private, static and dynamic IP addresses.

About BFM TV



BFM TV is a subsidiary of Nextradio TV group, which also owns the radio stations BFM and RMC. Launched November 2005, BFM TV is now the top news channel in France, broadcasting free 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, on French Digital Terrestrial Television, and on its website at www.bfmtv.fr.

About SeaMobile Europe



SeaMobile Europe, formerly Geolink Satellite Services (www.geolink.com) is a pioneer and leading provider of satellite-based broadband communications with extensive experience serving European and global markets. For more about the Media ClipWay solution, visit www.mediaclipway.com.

About Stratos

Stratos is the world's trusted leader for vital communications. With more than a century of service, Stratos offers the most powerful and extensive portfolio of remote communications solutions including mobile and fixed satellite and microwave services. More than 20,000 customers use Stratos products and industry-leading value-added services to optimize communications performance. Stratos serves U.S. and international government, military, first responder, NGO, oil and gas, industrial, maritime, aeronautical, enterprise, and media users on seven continents and across the world's oceans. For more information visit www.stratosglobal.com.



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