

Satbeams

A Website for Professionals



Alexander Derjugin has set some lofty goals for himself. He is the founder and operator of the satbeams.com website the main purpose of which is to reach the professionals. That's a rather ambitious goal so we wanted to find out from him personally how he intends to reach it. We met up with him in Brussels, Belgium, the city he calls home.

First we wanted to know how satellite reception came into his life. He explains, "I'm originally from Moscow. I worked there as an IT manager for a big 'Fast Moving Consumer Goods' company. The company transferred me with my family to their European headquarters in Brussels back in 2001."

There Alexander Derjugin started to work as an IT consultant in the area of web infrastructure. In 2003 his department was outsourced to another big

international company providing global IT services he continues to work as a Managed Web Service consultant.

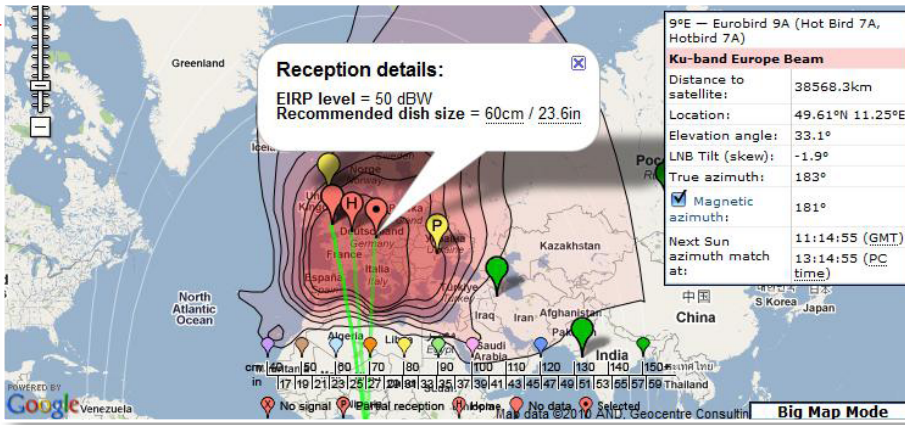
Working in another country is a big challenge and it was very important for Alexander to setup his first satellite dish to receive Russian programs! "If we couldn't receive Russian TV, my wife would be very upset and we would just pack and go back to Moscow", jokes Alexander Derjugin. As it turns out, he has his wife to thank for getting his start

■ Alexander Derjugin, founder and operator of the satbeams website. In the lobby of a hotel in Brussels, Belgium, he uses his laptop to explain the functionality of satbeams.com.

in satellite reception. "My first satellite system consisted of an 80cm antenna that I used back then to receive SIRIUS at 4.8 east and HOTBIRD at 13 east", he explains. Not long after that, he expanded his system to 100cm.

Meanwhile, Alexander Derjugin wanted to learn more about this mysterious technology. As his colleagues and friends also learned of his interest they began asking him more and more questions related to satellite reception. One thing led to another and he eventually became a satellite specialist.

As Alexander worked most of the time with web technologies, he one day came across the idea to combine satellite footprints with Google Maps. That was back



■ An example from the satbeams.com website: the footprint of EUROBIIRD 9A is projected online onto Google Maps. You can zoom into and out of the map with the footprints matching each individual map. Satbeams has created an electronic version of the footprint of every satellite. Professional users can license the data and then use the data on their own website.

in 2006 and after few months of hesitation he decided to implement this idea. "In the Fall of 2007 I contracted several talented programmers who helped me develop the necessary software as well as electronically convert the satellite footprints", he explains. In the middle of 2008 the web site went online with its first version. Initially, Alexander wanted to use the domain name "satcoverage" but a friend suggested that "satbeams" would be better. "That name is short, easy to remember and gets right to the point", he says.

At first Alexander Derjugin wanted to gear his web-site more

towards satellite DXers, in other words towards hobbyists. He implemented the solution that satellite DXers could click on their location via Google Maps and then enter in realistic reception results. But he wasn't satisfied with the results and decided to redesign the website. In July 2009 the new version of Satbeams went live.

Now almost every satellite footprint from around the world was digitized and could be projected onto Google Maps. "Dozens of volunteers help me keep all of the satellite data up-to-date", he says. So in addition to satellite technical details and footprints all of the associated transponder data is also displayed.

Now he's in the process of making his website more user-friendly. "I am focused on 'usability' to improve the user experience", he explains, "you can search by channel name or your address and filter the

charts by any field like 'language' or 'band'. All of the data is linked together and you can reach almost any information with just 2-3 clicks of the mouse."

Alexander is constantly thinking about how he can make his website even more user-friendly. "But above all I want to reach out to professionals and implement additional features that would be useful for them. For example satellite providers would be interested to know if their footprint overlaps with footprints of other satellites." So Alexander is thinking of the best way to overlay multiple footprints on the worlds map which would make it easy to see what satellites cover the same area.

He sees the future of Satbeams with specialised applications. "Interested companies could license the footprint data from me", says Alexander Derjugin, "with the monthly licensing fee the footprint updates are locked in."

What kind of companies could use his services? "First and foremost would be Internet-via-Satellite providers", comments Alexander Derjugin, "Satbeam's first customers came from this sector. The footprint data would also be interesting for uplink stations, for satellite providers and also for SNG operators who need to find the proper footprint for their VSAT systems."

Alexander Derjugin discovered an interesting market segment with Satbeams. A website geared specifically towards the satellite professionals seems to be a very good idea!



■ This is what the home of Alexander Derjugin looks like. A Channelmaster 120cm antenna with a C-band and Ku-band LNB can be seen all the way to the left. This antenna is motorized and can be moved from 57 east to 45 west. A T90 multisatellite antenna is in the center and sports eight LNBs for reception of satellites from 4.8 east to 53 east and all the way to the right is a 125cm antenna for 40 east reception.