

- *Always working enthusiastically on new products*
- *Special focus on signal analyzers for the semi-professional*
- *Enormous growth of the international market outside of North America*
- *Innovative expansion of signal analyzer models for 2012*

■ DMS International could be found here in the Northpoint Business Park with its two buildings and attached warehouse.

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Americas Busiest Satellite Enthusiast Tim Heinrichs from DMS

Actively Involved in Satellite Business for 33 Years

There aren't too many companies that have hung around for decades and at the same time are still in the same business segment. DMS International, which has been in existence since the very early days of TV reception via satellite, belongs to that group. Tim Heinrichs is Founder and CEO of satellite wholesaler DMS International and if you've been in the same business for so long, there's absolutely no doubt that you are a real enthusiast. In the small town of Acworth, not too far from Lock-

heed and Marietta northwest of Atlanta, Georgia, USA, we found Tim Heinrichs and his wife Vicky, the President of the company. We wanted to know how DMS International became what it is today.

Tim Heinrichs has been a DXer for a long time: he was excited about CB communications when it first started and all that could be done with it. It allowed people for the first time to

communicate wirelessly with each other without too much in the form of technical requirements. Oh really? In 1968 Tim erected a tower 25 meters high for his CB antenna. He used it to listen in when railroad employees talked to each other, when construction companies passed on work orders to their builders, when truck drivers warned others of radar traps on the highways and when the police would coordinate road blocks with their headquarters. But Tim was especially fascinated with the phenomenon of "skip" transmissions: under certain weather conditions CB radio transmis-



■ Tim Heinrichs, DMS International's CEO, in his office in Acworth, Georgia, northwest of Atlanta. He's testing an FS2 signal analyzer beta model.



sions in the 27 MHz range would skip off the ionosphere or troposphere allowing for two-way communications over extremely long distances. "Back then I collected QSL cards from my contacts and managed to collect nearly 1000 of those cards."

Tim also worked for the railroad in Nebraska and when word got around among his friends and coworkers that he liked to tinker with radios in his free time, they began bringing him defective radios, TVs and CBs. At first it was tedious, but later on it became routine for him to repair these devices. "Even the police came to me to repair their radios." Tim was becoming more and more experienced in radio technology. In 1979 he read an article in a technical magazine about satellite reception. This new technology was irresistible to Tim; he simply had to have it. He spent a lot of money on his first three-meter dish. "Back then the dish antennas were

quite heavy; they were made of fiberglass with metal braces and weighed 400 pounds." Tim still remembers today what an experience it was to be able to receive a TV picture with his new dish. "It was an absolute sensation to be able to receive a signal from space from so far away."

Then came the turning point in Tim Heinrichs' evening job: a farmer bought that dish from him. "That's when it all started, next I bought two new dishes." That was in 1980 and it was at this point that Tim Heinrichs recognized that there was a new business brewing. He sold and installed these dish antennas at a faster and faster rate. The breakthrough came in 1982: "I invested \$40,000 and bought my first truckload of dishes - it was 500 three-meter antennas." Tim Heinrichs young company became a satellite wholesaler.

"At first I worked both jobs; my regular job at the railroad and at nights and weekends at my own company DMS International." That only worked for a few months: he had to make a decision and naturally he chose his own company. "My wife Vicky worked along side me from the beginning; at first she took care of the books and now she's the

President of the company."

In 1991 another big decision had to be made: the market in Nebraska was covered so in order to better expand his business the decision was made to move his company to Atlanta, Georgia. DMS International can still be found there today. "Transportation costs are cheaper here", rationalizes Tim regarding this decision and then grins as he adds, "Besides, the weather is much better here." Sure enough, the company experienced quite a boom in business. Vicky provides us with a few sales figures: "In 1991 DMS managed sales of roughly \$2.0 million." The company's best year was 2008: "Back then we had sales of \$12 million. Sales have pulled back a little bit since then although in 2009 they were still at about \$9.0 million."

For many years DMS International was a small company with very few employees: It was Vicky and Tim along with one or two warehouse and administrative employees. "Today we have 10 employees with a warehouse that is 14,000 Sq-ft in size." Up until recently DMS International was mainly focused on the North American market, "that is, the USA, Canada and Mexico", explains Tim. As recently as 2009/2010

1. Vicky Heinrichs is the President of DMS International and runs the administrative side of the company.
2. Ivy Bliss is the receptionist and takes care of DMS International's website (www.dmsiusa.com). If you call the company, Ivy is your first contact.
3. Tina Ryan handles the accounting



70% of all shipments were sent to this local market. "That all changed dramatically in 2011", reveals Tim to us, "Export shipments sharply increased to 60%." The largest increase was for shipments to South America (30%); other large markets for DMS International are India, Africa and surprisingly Portugal. "Some shipments from Portugal find their way back to Brazil", says Tim regarding the occasionally roundabout paths that can be taken in the global marketplace.

As a satellite wholesaler, DMS International for many years sold everything that an installer would need. It's not like that today anymore. DMS International is now concentrating on a few product segments. "Our largest sales item is satellite signal analyzers at around 50%. We produce analyzers under the brand name 'First Strike.'" Tim wants to take the newest version of these analyzers and further expand his export business: "My goal is analyzers that can be used anywhere in the world." Another important segment is LNBS: "They account for roughly 25% of our sales." That is only accomplished because DMS International sells large numbers of LNBS; the margin with LNBS has in the meantime become very small. "We also sell multi-switches, receivers and dishes."

Vicky has some more numbers for us: "In 2011 we sold about 30,000 signal analyzers, roughly 100,000 LNBS and around 15,000 receivers." In 2008 DMS International began marketing their own line of signal analyzers under the brand name 'First Strike' and the first model FS1. The successor model FS2 is planned for release when this report is published and will soon after be supplemented by the FS2Pro. The FS2Pro will be for DVB-S2 with a color display and - according to the plan - a GPS receiver for the direct display of satellite antenna data (azimuth and elevation). "Our signal analyzers are not modified satellite receivers; instead they are true measurement instruments", comments Tim, "that provide comparable measurement data." Additional 'First Strike' models include a cable TV analyzer as well as a terrestrial model. "We're making sure that these signal analyzers can be used internationally. The cable analyzer will operate on an expanded frequency range so that it will cover every possible cable TV network." Tim has something special in mind for the terrestrial analyzer model: "It will be able to receive every known signal standard - ATSC, ISDB-T and DVB-T."

Obviously, Tim Heinrichs still has the

Who needs a satellite dish? Warehouse Manager Luis Burrión is responsible for shipping their products.



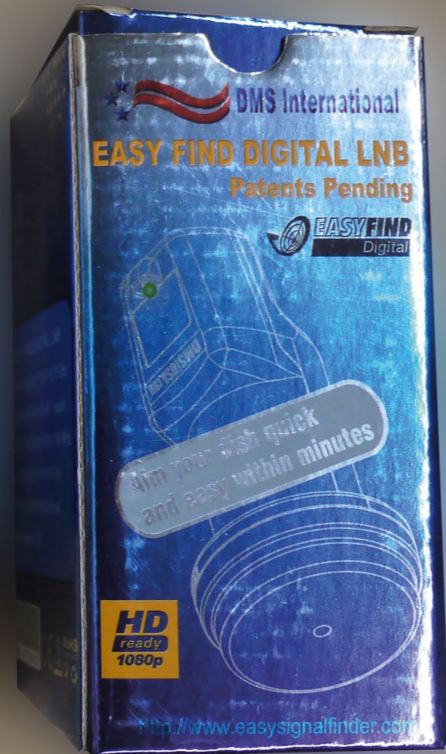
DMS International
www.dmsiusa.com
sales@dmsiusa.com
HOTDISH90

Ku BAND SATELLITE ANTENNA

Model	HOTDISH90
Specification	90 cm
Weight	kg
Thickness of steel	0.7 mm
Thickness of finished product	0.8 mm
Lot Number	



■ An antenna by the stockroom serves as a test bed to check out the LNBS.



■ A selection of LNBS that DMS International distributes. The Avenger model using PLL technology is one of their best sellers.



1

1. Extremely popular just a few years ago, today there's not much demand for C-band scalar rings.
2. Demand has also declined here: Combi LNBS for the C-band and Ku-band
3. DMS International has a specialty to offer: LNBS from INVACOM that can receive both circular and linear polarizations at the same time

same enthusiasm that he had 33 years ago. He consistently comes up with new ideas and new products that allow him to conquer new markets. After so many years of experience he knows that existing markets can disappear but that there are always new markets that provide new opportunities. Tim Heinrichs remains devoted and is always keeping an eye out for the latest technological advancement.



2



3



■ An interesting side business is reception dishes for commercial services such as wireless data transmissions. Tim Heinrichs shows us a reflector from one of these professional reception antennas.