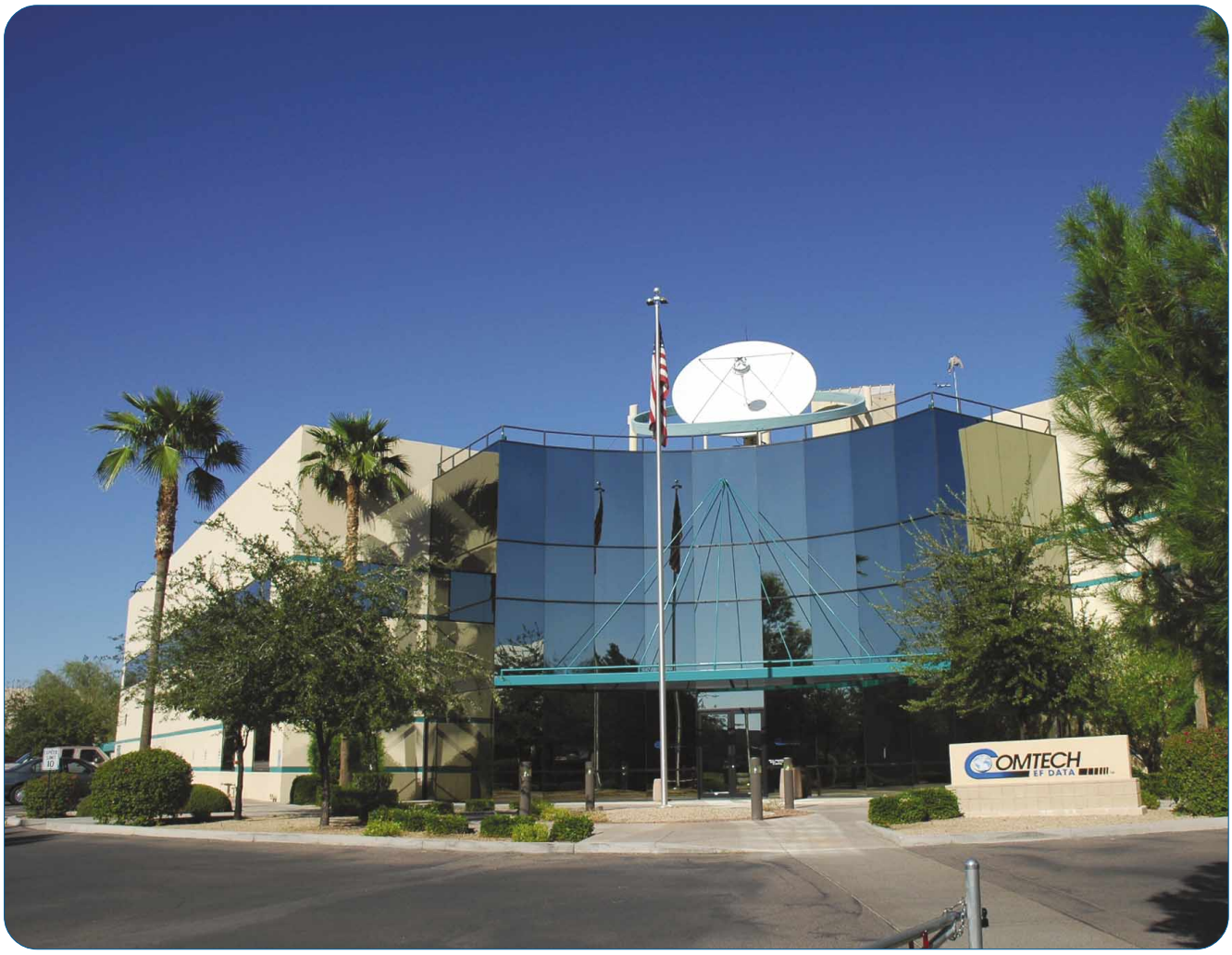

High-speed development

Headquartered in Tempe, Arizona, Comtech EF Data develops an assortment of satellite communications equipment deployed in commercial and government applications around the world. Their products optimise satellite links in a variety of applications and their latest product has been developed specifically for in-demand high-speed applications. Helen Jameson finds out more.

In April, Comtech EF Data Corporation introduced its next generation DVB IP encapsulation platform, the CMR-8500 DVB IP Encapsulator. The CMR-8500 encapsulates IP data into multi-protocol encapsulation format for distribution over an asynchronous serial interface (ASI). The technologically-advanced platform features expanded functionality over the prior generation, and is ideally suited for high-speed data applications. The CMR-8500 will most commonly be deployed by broadcasters, Internet service providers and enterprise users.

The CMR-8500's 1RU rack-mountable platform utilises the latest technology in high-speed packet processing on an embedded platform. Equipped with two Gigabit Ethernet inputs and dual ASI outputs, it is capable of network throughput up to 155 Mbps and an aggregate packet processing of 140,000 packets per second. Supporting 80,000 simultaneous routes enables users of the CMR-8500 IP Encapsulator to increase network density and maximize the number of clients supported in a single DVB outbound carrier.

The CMR-8500 provides ease of use, flexibility and reliable operation. It is configurable in real-time, software upgradeable, and can be managed via Web, console, Telnet and SNMP. For proactive management and control, the CMR-8500 supports a variety of SNMP commands, and includes both a public Management Information Base (MIB) II and a private MIB.

Daniel Enns, Senior Vice President Stra-

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tegic Marketing and Business Development said: "Providing unrivalled value and performance, the CMR-8500 offers users a cost-effective migration path from DVB-S applications to higher speed applications using DVB-S2."

Helen Jameson spoke to Jon Braunsma, General Manager, Digicast Products and Fred Morris, General Manager, Vipersat Network Products Group about the new product.

Question: What does the launch of the CMR-8500 mean to the company?
Jon Braunsma: We announced the CMR-8500 at NAB and we're really excited about this product. This is our next generation IP encapsulator and what will differentiate this product from the previous products that we have on the market is the performance rating – it is 155mbps and 140,00 packets per second, with 80,000 simultaneous routes.

This product opens doors for us into VoIP applications where smaller packet processing is important, it opens doors for digital cinema and other high-speed applications where just raw throughput is important and it really gives us the foundation to build on the DVB-S2 advanced features moving the product line forward.

Question: What was the thinking behind the development of the CMR-8500?
Jon Braunsma: The thought that led to the development of this product line was the niche market for higher speed applications and advanced DVB-S features. DVB-S2 opens doors for newer features that are not part of DVB-S and the product platform that we had just did not have the horsepower to tackle the additional need.

Question: What features make the platform unique? What are its main selling points?
Jon Braunsma: Today, the media differentiation is performance. It's the speed, the number of routes, it's the throughput. We will grow this product line and continue to release new versions – the boxes are all upgradeable. You will start to see some new advanced features that will distinguish the product from others in the field.

Question: How far into the future do you envisage new additions to the product line?
Jon Braunsma: The product line will be evolving over the next year and beyond. Our roadmap shows releases as early as this summer and this goes all the way through the calendar year 2009.

Question: What applications is the platform going to be suitable for? Who do you envisage as the prime users?
Jon Braunsma: The platform is really suitable for satellite Internet service providers who want to support a high number of customers, high bandwidth and a high number of users. It's also suitable for file delivery applications such as digital cinema where the movie must be delivered as quickly as possible. So that's why we've got the high speed – the 155mbps – for digital cinema and satellite ISPs and IPTV service providers who also will want to carry more channels. Those are the three key markets for this product.

Question: And in terms of research and development can you tell me about any more next generation products that you are working on?
Jon Braunsma: I can tell you that this platform designed for the encapsulator will be used in other Comtech products and as we get closer to IBC we will have some further announcements. We are actually anticipating two derivative products from this line to be launched at IBC.

Question: What results are you seeing in terms of sales of the encapsulator ?
Jon Braunsma: Well, this product has just been released and it has been approved by one of our strongest customers for use in their network moving forward. We feel that this is really the catalyst that will open doors to other customers, specifically in Europe and the Middle East that are looking for these higher speed data applications.

There is a lot of interest in it even though it was just announced at NAB. As we travel around the world and visit out customers, we hear from them what they want. Our customers have demanded higher speed applications, more throughput, more bits per second, advanced feature sets – all of these are things that we have heard directly from our customers.

Fred Morris: We have also certainly had a good amount of interest from our existing customer base. I don't have any doubt that our customers are going to go forward with this because of the DVB-S2 platform. They themselves see savings from the DVB-S2 architecture. We are looking at something like a thirty percent increase in utility on existing capacity. People love it because of that fact, and certainly on the digital cinema side that will be a key feature also. ■

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