

VISTA BRINGS THE WORLD CLOSER

By Debra Siegal

Satellite technology continues to make our world smaller, bringing people together to share live experiences. VISTA recently used satellite technology to join an ailing father with his only son during his wedding ceremony 1500 miles away and a mother suffering from a housebound condition watched her son graduate from the West Point Military Academy.

Roy Liemer, President of VISTA, produced the wedding ceremony for his cousins Thelma and Gunther Lenhoff of West Palm Beach, Florida and Oceanside, New York. Gunther, the father of the groom, was in a weakened condition due to a blood disease called Agnogenic Myeloid Metaplasia. His son, Larry Lenhoff and his future daughter-in-law Tasha Benson, scheduled their wedding in Lowell, Massachusetts on April 9, 2000. Much to the dismay of all their friends and family, Gunther doctor's would not allow him to make the trip to his son's wedding.

What does a satellite entrepreneur due when such a problem develops? He creates a satellite network that will deliver the live ceremony to the Lenhoff home in West Palm Beach. With Thelma and other relatives in Massachusetts and Gunther with family and friends in Florida, a wedding took place that not only linked husband and wife but also linked Massachusetts Florida.

Roy Liemer said, "this event could not have taken place without the help of some wonderful satellite vendors who made themselves available." New England Satellite of Shrewsbury, Massachusetts provided the uplinking, Vidsat Communications of Odessa, Florida provided the downlink and VISTA Satellite Communication in Fort Lauderdale provided the space segment.

"A mitzvah," says Jack and Shirley Schorr, neighbors of the Lenhoffs. Tears and smiles adorned the faces of both the Northern and Southern relatives as the satellite link was connected. While thanking VISTA for what they had accomplished Thelma Lenhoff said, "you made what could have been a most difficult day, a day I will never forget." A loud "Mazel Tov," was heard in both states as the groom broke the Jewish ceremonial glass and both mother and father were there to share the experience.

Similarly, in May of 2000, VISTA was able to join the Sawyer family together for an educational milestone, creating another satellite link. Dan Ross of Centrex Communications brought news of then-cadet Adam Sawyer to Anthony De Vita's, VISTA Vice-President of Satellite Services, attention. Anthony responded immediately donating VISTA's in-house capacity on GE-5. GE-5 is currently being revenue-shared with New York Network. In turn, Dennis Mest of New York Network agreed to move programming to accommodate the airing of the cadet's graduation.

Adam's life story is one of sacrifice, courage, and the love of family. Adam's mother had been housebound most of his life due to conditions associated with Multiple Sclerosis. Although experiencing a difficult childhood, Adam was determined to achieve his ultimate goal of attending West Point Military Academy and he accomplished this goal, graduating at the top of his class. Much to the joy of his family, his mom was able to experience the graduation live via satellite from her own home.

VISTA is proud to be part of an industry that responds to the needs of the community. Both the Sawyer and Lenhoff families were able to realize dreams that would have been impossible just years ago. Physical restrictions can be overcome as technology continues to advance.

VISTA ADDS VALUE

By Jay Lebowitz

Buzz-words such as turn-key, value-added and one stop shopping are bandied about by the satellite industry and are typically used to distinguish one company's services from another. However, since I have joined the VISTA team, I can now say assuredly that nowhere is this distinction more self-evident than at VISTA, for it is our unique ability to provide the "complete package" that sets us apart from other service providers. But don't take my word for it, read on!

Always renowned in the international videoconferencing business, VISTA was asked to design a global transmission path for a series of eight, four-hour satellite seminars, to run throughout the year. Each conference focused on common-sense approaches to successful business applications, including production, distribution, marketing, and managing people. The seminars were scheduled to originate in New York and were taught by Eli Goldratt, a renowned author and educator who had been described by Fortune Magazine as a "Guru to Industry."

As is often the case with corporate communications only a two-month lead-time was given to VISTA for the first event. Our videoconferencing and international division designed a comprehensive transmission plan for distribution throughout North and South America, Europe and the Middle East, as well as the Pacific Rim, including Australia and Japan. In addition, VISTA was called upon for the New York production, which would include facilities large enough to support a local audience. (Offering one-stop shopping to a client that needed a network, space segment and production services and they needed it, as always, ASAP.)

Of course, like most corporate clients, changes in the network occur throughout the planning stages of an event. It was therefore no surprise to us when our customer decided to shift the origination from New York to the Netherlands. And this, in turn, required a complete re-mapping of our transmission plan, to include remote transmission facilities from the new source. Patience, resourcefulness and international networking expertise enabled the VISTA staff to re-create the network and successfully deliver the message.

The event was received by more than 500 locations worldwide, which included over 200 corporate locations and universities throughout the U.S. and Mexico. Reaction to the seminars was overwhelmingly positive, and demonstrated the pervasiveness of the satellite as a tool for education and distribution.

As noted, VISTA's involvement in this event went far beyond simply providing the production and transmission facilities. Although sufficient test time had been arranged prior to the first event, we found that many of the recipients were working with old satellite equipment, or simply lacked the expertise and engineering support necessary to receive the signal. On the day of the first show, the VISTA staff assisted dozens of recipients in setting up their receivers, finding the proper satellite, and identifying the correct audio channel for their particular region.

Value-added – absolutely! Turn-key – without a question! One stop shopping – You Bet! I am proud to be part of this VISTA team that utilizes all of its resources to deliver seamless messages to corporations worldwide.

Please send all comments and/or future articles to Geri Liemer, Editor, at VISTA's corporate headquarters in South Florida: 954-838-0901 (FAX) or geri@vistasat.com.