Sea Launch Signs with DIRECTV for Launch in 2007

Satellite will Expand Capacity for HD services

Sea Launch has signed a firm launch contract with DIRECTV, for a mission scheduled in early 2007. The contract includes an option for an additional launch.

The new contract calls for a Zenit-3SL vehicle to launch a DIRECTV spacecraft to geosynchronous transfer orbit from Sea Launch's *Odyssey* Launch Platform, positioned on the Equator. Sea Launch's reliable direct insertion into equatorial orbit is expected to yield additional years of life for this spacecraft.

The DIRECTV spacecraft, with a mass of about 6080 kg, is one of three Boeing 702 model spacecraft DIRECTV has ordered from The Boeing Company and is among the largest and most powerful Ka-band satellites ever built. The new satellite will optimize DIRECTV's advanced transmission techniques and state-of-the-art video compression technology. It will deliver national high-definition (HD) programming and will be capable of supporting spot beams carrying local HD broadcast channels in all 50 states.

DIRECTV is in the process of launching several spacecraft to expand its capacity to serve the growing market for satellite-delivered, HD television in the United States. This is the seventh new contract Sea Launch has signed in 2005 and the fourth launch contract award for a mission with DIRECTV. Most recently, Sea Launch successfully delivered the Spaceway 1 satellite to orbit, on April 26, 2005. Earlier launches include the DIRECTV 7S satellite on May 4, 2004, and the DIRECTV 1R satellite on October 9, 1999.

"With three successful launches to date for DIRECTV, Sea Launch is proud to be entrusted with yet another spacecraft launch to occur in early 2007," said Jim Maser, president of Sea Launch. "From local-to-local broadcast to HD television, which is taking off in the United States, we are excited to be a part of DIRECTV's evolution and future. We are very pleased to include this award as our seventh addition of a commercial spacecraft to our growing backlog this year."

"Dependability and the commitment to meet our scheduling needs are two attributes that we value in a launch service provider," said Jim Butterworth, senior vice president, Communications Systems, DIRECTV, Inc. "Sea Launch has consistently delivered with three successful launches within our time schedule requirements that enabled us to move forward with key programming initiatives, such as the current expansion of local and national HD programming."

Sea Launch Company, LLC, headquartered in Long Beach, Calif., is the world's most reliable heavy-lift commercial launch service. This international partnership offers the most direct and cost-effective route to geostationary orbit. With the advantage of a launch site on the Equator, the reliable Zenit-3SL rocket can lift a heavier spacecraft mass or provide longer life on orbit, offering best value plus schedule assurance. For additional information and images of this successfully completed mission, visit the Sea Launch website at: www.sea-launch.com
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