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Profile of Kay Sears

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Kay Sears, President of Intelsat General is responsible for implementing the Company's strategic and operational plans and for the overall mission of providing a range of sustainable, cost-effective and secure communications solutions to government and civilian customers.

She has more than 20 years of experience in the satellite communications industry including extensive experience in rapid response solutions for the US Government, both Military and Civilian agencies. Ms. Sears is an industry spokesperson for how commercial satellites can be utilized by the military to solve mission-critical needs and she has worked over the past several years to advance the commercial / DoD partnership.

Previously, she helped launch Government services business units at both G2 Satellite Solutions and Verestar. Ms. Sears has also held sales and product development positions with Intelsat and Comsat World Systems. Ms. Sears has a Masters in Business Administration from George Washington University and a Bachelor of Science from the University of Richmond.

Ms. Sears is currently serving on the SATCON Advisory Board and is on the Board of Directors for Women in Aerospace.

Podcast with Kay Sears: <http://theleadersspot.com/archives/270>

1) How did you get started in the satellite business?

Right out of college I went to work for the Commerce Department auditing weather satellite systems for NOAA. I found satellite technology and the benefits it was bringing very compelling. I looked for ways to expand in the satellite area and joined COMSAT, moving from weather satellites into communication satellites.

2) How have you been involved in changes brought about in or by this business (innovations, technologies, services)?

Two important technological changes that mark my career include the move from analog to digital television and the introduction of IP over satellite. Both of these technologies created new demand for satellites and lead to new services and ground equipment. Satellite became a household word and cost effective TV platform were born around the world. This year Intelsat will launch an IP Router

In Space (IRIS) on the IS-14 satellite, demonstrating that we continue to evolve IP capabilities that will improve services and create new applications.

3) What do you think was the greatest event/situation/opportunity you experienced?

The opportunity to lead Intelsat General is the highlight of my career so far and has been incredibly rewarding and challenging. To be part of Intelsat is, in itself, a rewarding opportunity. But to lead a subsidiary that focuses on providing secure solutions to the Government and associated commercial companies is a privilege. I can say I look forward to going to work every day.

4) What was the greatest obstacle?

The greatest obstacle was and is the work/life balance. It is difficult to strike a good balance and hold it in place for any length of time. Work comes in ebbs and flows and so does life and when those flow together it can be challenging. The key is having a great team that can get the job done and support each other.

5) What do you see happening in the next five years in this industry?

I see a continuation of IP-based solutions, perhaps leveraging the router in space concept. Everything will need to be mobile and the challenge will be to deliver increasing data rates to smaller, mobile devices. Space is getting crowded and so hopefully the industry will come up with new spectrum to expand into or technologies that make better use of the precious spectrum we have today. And I think security, both on the satellite and on the ground, will become more important.

6) What advice do you have for women interested in entering the industry?

Understanding satellite technology to some extent is important in this industry even if you are in a non-technical field. It is still a male-dominated industry so know your skill set and leverage it!