



Case Study: British Council / Global Crossing

Connecting the world through English language education and Skynet's Digital Link Service

+ THE BACKGROUND +

The British Council, a registered charity which promotes cultural relations and education between the United Kingdom and the rest of the world, wanted to reach more people and more global locations with an expanded suite of services.

+ THE CHALLENGE +

The British Council's network, using the telecommunications carrier, Global Crossing, had been delivering English language academic and professional courses to students throughout the world since it began operating in 1934. To support "Strategy 2010," the British Council's plan to serve more people with more services, the network needed to reach additional locations, including 130 remote locations with no reliable terrestrial communications infrastructure. The solution needed to support applications ranging from email to videoconferencing, and be:

- **Adaptable** – to work seamlessly with existing terrestrial facilities
- **Global** – to reach more than 200 locations worldwide
- **Flexible** – to handle the seasonal peaks common to the educational calendar
- **Cost effective** – to meet the British Council's fiscal management standards

+ THE SKYNET SOLUTION +

The Loral Skynet answer was a full-service *SkyReach*SM solution addressing all of the British Council's requirements through a consultative approach. Skynet offered an end-to-end solution using its Digital Link SCPC technology, and a full solution, end-to-end approach which included project management, implementation and operational support. The Skynet team installed the *SkyReach* platform at Global Crossing's U.K. hub and began its ambitious implementation plan to connect 130 sites to the hub, most of which will be up and running by the end of the year. Another 140 sites connect to Global Crossing's terrestrial network, a privately-managed multiprotocol label switching (MPLS) infrastructure that enables virtual classrooms and content delivery using a very small aperture terminal (VSAT) satellite network and capacity on Skynet's Telstar fleet. Site surveys, installation, and preventative and corrective maintenance were also included.

With data rates of up to 50 Mbps, the hybrid network can cost-effectively broadcast virtually any digital content to multiple sites, from data files to live programming. The network's ability to offer aggregated bandwidth for continent-size area plus flexible usage allows individual sites to use only the bandwidth they need – for appreciable cost savings.

+ THE IMPACT +

To date, with the network not yet fully implemented, the British Council has taught English to almost one million people and administered more than a million professional and academic exams. When implementation is complete, those numbers are expected to increase dramatically. Supporting a suite of two-way services and applications, including Internet access, email, file transfer, content distribution, videoconferencing, and voice over Internet protocol (VoIP), the network is poised to transform the lives of millions, offering them invaluable opportunities to learn English, acquire marketable skills, and achieve their creative potential.

+ WHY SKYNET? +

With its unique expertise in combining satellite and terrestrial capabilities to create hybrid networks for customers' specific applications, and the ability to implement these networks quickly, Skynet was the logical choice. Skynet's consultative approach to network design and architecture, and its experience working with partners as part of a customer-focused team, helped ensure a precise fit for the British Council's needs – today and for years to come.

