

Niche Market of FTA

by Tim Heinrichs
CEO of DMS International



Here's what the dictionary has to say, at least the part that I think applies to FTA.

- a. A situation or activity specially suited to a person's interests, abilities, or nature: *found her niche in life.*
- b. A special area of demand for a product or service: "One niche that is approaching mass-market proportions is held by regional magazines" (Brad Edmondson).

I like "a". I believe "a". I think most FTA installers/resellers started because they have a special interest in this area. That special interest pushed them on to have "specially suited abilities". FTA requires skills not needed for most other types of satellite installations. FTA requires a true professional. FTA is a challenge that that will reward you with the

satisfaction of knowing you have the ability to install it.

I also like what Mr. Brad Edmondson said, only I think he was talking about FTA satellite and not regional magazines. FTA is here to stay and it's growing quickly.

So where's the niche?

It's all around us. When I started bringing in digital hardware there was only three channels, and they were all foreign channels. MPEG compression has allowed low costs for everyone by making better use of the available bandwidth. Many companies that couldn't afford to go on satellite five years ago now find it very affordable. We've had an explosion of FTA in the last few years. It has created jobs and opportunities for many people.

Foreign Channels: The first and still biggest niche is the foreign channels. Take a look at <http://www.lyngsat.com> and you'll see lots of foreign channels on lots of satellites. It amazes me to find out how many foreign folks are living in this great country. They are providing you (the installer) a wonderful opportunity to expand your business. They want to watch channels from their home land, and a lot of times they can't find anyone to buy from or anyone to install their system. It amazes me how many calls we get

from people looking for a way to receive their homeland channels. They know it exists, they just can't find people to buy from or an installer that understands it.

It also amazes me that some dealers pick a niche within a niche by servicing a certain group of people. We have dealers who only service the Greek people, the Chinese, the Vietnamese, the Arabic, and so on. Don't say you can't make it in this business until you've talked to one of these guys. A lot of them are doing very well.

Religious Channels:

Another niche is religious channels. If I weren't selling to a good number of these organizations I wouldn't believe this niche is so big. It's big and getting bigger.

Hobbyist: There are thousands of hobbyists buying digital satellite equipment. There are lots of forums on the internet hosting support groups for satellite hobbyists. Take a look at <http://www.satelliteguys.us> and <http://www.satforums.com> that are totally dedicated to satellite. I have not been to a satellite forum site that didn't have a FTA forum. FTA forums are alive with hobbyists who love satellite. Want to learn some new tricks? Visit these forums. See what these people are doing. They are helping

each other enjoy a great hobby.

Radio Channels: There is a lot of audio only (Radio) channels available and lots of customers who want to get these radio channels.

Background Music Channels: With the price of Ku systems so low it's very appealing to use them for background music.

Niche? I'm not sure it's the right word to use for this market now. Three years ago it was a niche. Every day it becomes bigger and better.

You might wonder how I got involved in FTA. Well, it wasn't by accident. Allow me to give you a little bit of my background.

In 1970 I was repairing and tinkering with two-way radios in the basement of my home. It was a hobby of mine. In six months or so it outgrew my basement and I rented a small shop on the main street of the small town that I lived in. Within another six months my "hobby" had grown to a size that allowed me to quit my daytime job. My interest and fascination in electronics kept me buying and trying new things. In 1979 I bought my first satellite system. With a ten foot, 400 pound fiberglass reflector I set out to find my first satellite. It took me a full day to attach the mount and feed support to the reflector. In those days there were no

"pre-drilled" holes. Everything was done by hand. After three days of searching every inch of the sky I finally locked on to my first satellite. I was hooked "big time". I can't describe the thrill of that first picture popping in on my small black and white TV. It was like I had just performed a truly magical feat.

So there I was with a huge amount of money and time invested in a satellite system that I felt sure that no one else would ever consider it to be a good buy. To my surprise I sold that system within a short time. More to my surprise I soon found out that more people shared my interest and excitement in receiving signals from the sky. People were willing to pay for entertainment that they couldn't get from any other source.

I was off on a new electronics adventure. My "hobby" continued to grow. Other retailers started buying from me and I moved from retail to wholesale. Several years of ups and downs in satellite brought us to MPEG digital FTA. When I started to bring in the digital equipment there was a grand total of three digital channels available. Today there is hundreds of channels and you can't find a satellite that doesn't have digital channels on it.

Today a FTA system is affordable to almost anyone. In most areas you can use a small thirty-

inch dish to receive the popular satellites. Digital receivers have become better and lower cost. I like to think that DMS International had a big part in driving the prices down so more people could enjoy satellite programming.

Today we have an excellent line of receivers, LNBFs and dishes. DMS International has partnered with powerful professional companies like Traxis for a growing line of receivers, Xtreme and Invacom for leading edge LNBFs, and several others.



DMS International has also partnered with some of the most powerful professional resellers to deliver our equipment to the end user.

DMS International Resellers can provide the equipment you need as well as installation information, equipment set-up, and satellite/channel information so you can make the most out of your FTA experience.

DMS International will continue to develop new and better receivers,

LNBFs and dishes, like our DBS5400 cost effective CI receiver, DBS3500 our new "Blind Search" receiver, Xtreme Twin our new 0.3dB dual output LNBF, and more.



FTA channels will continue to grow. Don't miss the excitement. There are several sources of information on the internet.

Check our site at <http://www.dmsiusa.com> for news and updates. We even provide a free public email newsletter to keep you up to date with what's happening at DMS International and in the industry.

November 21, 2005