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FIND A NETWORK AND BANDWIDTH MANAGEMENT SYSTEM TO KEEP YOUR YACHT COMMS SEAMLESS

By CHRIS WATSON

STAYING CONNECTED at the dock, at anchor and under way is easier than ever with the rise of affordable multi-orbit, multi-channel solutions encompassing VSAT, low Earth orbit services such as OneWeb and Starlink, 5G cellular networks, shore-based Wi-Fi and more.

But with these options comes the potential for overwhelming complexity. How do you manage the performance and use of the SATCOM, cellular and other channels that comprise the yacht's wide area networks (WANs)? What about below deck, where the yacht may rely on multiple local area networks (LANs) to support owners, guests, crew, operations and more?

That is where a modern network and bandwidth management solution comes in. Systems such as the KVH CommBox Edge Communication Gateway can deliver next-level flexibility, visibility and granularity when controlling your yacht's connectivity.

So, what should you expect of a network and bandwidth management system and how do you determine if a system meets your requirements?

First, there's WAN management for greater efficiency and reliability. The minimum is simple prioritization, in which the system shifts from one WAN to the next based on availability. But don't stop there. Be sure your solution supports channel balancing, where WAN traffic is routed over multiple connections simultaneously (for example

using OneWeb, 5G and VSAT) to share the data load, and advanced bonding, which combines WANs to multiply their data rates (for example Starlink and 5G together boosting download speeds to 400 to 500 Mbps.)

Does your solution include Performance Enhancing Proxy (PEP) WAN optimization, which can further boost your data speeds and efficiency? Though remember to check the fine print. There could be a limit on how much data can run through PEP before incurring additional fees.

Can you create and manage multiple LANs and then assign specific WANs to

Do you need a management solution showing what applications are being used, how much data they consume and by which devices?

them? For example, would your owner LAN use OneWeb as its priority channel followed by 5G and VSAT, while your crew LAN relies solely on VSAT?

Do you need a management solution showing what applications are being used, how much data they consume and by which devices? What about dynamically altering the operation of selected WANs or LANs based on different behaviors, perhaps slowing Starlink for the guest LAN but not the owner LAN when you consume 50 percent of your monthly data package? And for superior technical support, will you want to offer secure remote access to networked devices on board for shore-based technical support?

All these features and more are at your fingertips with an advanced network and bandwidth management system. A modern solution ideally should offer drag-and-drop configuration, a mobile-friendly interface, a secure app, real-time reports and customizable notifications.

Choosing the right network and bandwidth management solution is the difference between having multiple, disjointed communication channels and having a unified connectivity solution that maximizes your investment and reliability on board. ⬤

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