



Satisfying the Need for Speed With Tachyon's Broadband Satellite Service

**TEAMING UP WITH HENDRICK
MOTORSPORTS TO REACH
THE WINNER'S CIRCLE**



In the world of NASCAR, where last-minute technical adjustments can make the difference between taking the checkered flag and spending the day making repairs on pit row, high-speed communications networks are critical. The 40-plus week NASCAR schedule is a 10-month road trip. Dynamic management decisions about repairs and performance monitoring are made from remote locations, far away from the home garages of NASCAR teams.

The days of exchanging faxes and FedExes are no longer viable for racing teams, as decisions need to be made immediately, especially on race day. However, NASCAR racetracks are usually not equipped with affordable high-speed broadband Internet access, and the onus is put on each team to develop a communications strategy.

THE HENDRICK TEAM

Hendrick Motorsports (HMS) is one of the most successful racing teams in NASCAR. Its members include Jeff Gordon, Jimmy Johnson, Mark Martin, and possibly the most famous racer in NASCAR – Dale Earnhart Jr. HMS owns four cars on NASCAR's Sprint Cup circuit and many cars in the Nationwide Series all needing the most reliable, robust and most importantly, a portable solution to support its large mobile operations. HMS needs to quickly deploy a system and take it down daily. After viewing several solutions, HMS chose the Tachyon Networks broadband satellite solution. HMS was no stranger to criticisms of broadband satellite technologies, as the team previously used a VSAT provider that could only provide low bandwidth, unsecured Internet access for e-mail and Web browsing. The team was skeptical, and required Tachyon to guarantee its network performance with a service level agreement.

Tachyon: The Racer's Edge

THE TACHYON SOLUTION

Utilizing Tachyon's Auto Deploy solution, a satellite dish, a secure communications network and patent-ed TCP/IP compliant technologies, Tachyon provides HMS with a 3072 Kbps download x 1024 Kbps upload link which supports its entire onsite crew for open internet as well as connecting back to its corporate data server.

NASCAR may not be rocket science, but it is pretty close. Horsepower, aerodynamics, tire pressure, tire tread, and fuel efficiency can cause a tenth of a second difference, affecting pole positions or, even worse, a crash. Even changes in barometric pressure and humidity can alter a team's race strategy and require adjustments to a car.

HMS leverages Tachyon to obtain critical information on race day, allowing the team to anticipate changes. Even rain delays or changes in track conditions are predicted using an SQL-based application, MS Exchange. The ability to predict weather scheduled to occur within the next 5-10 minutes has placed HMS in a competitive advantage in several races where HMS delayed pit stops until the rains came. The Tachyon advantage allows HMS cars to make up time on other teams that did not have up-to-date weather intelligence.

THE FIRST THING: BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY

When HMS's caravan of crews and equipment arrives at the track, setting up the Tachyon broadband satellite network is the first order of business. Within 20 minutes, HMS engineers have the network up and running. Integrating products from Proxim, Omni, and Motorola, Tachyon is the centerpiece of Hedrick's innovative 802.11 secure Wi-Fi network, which is set up and dismantled every six days.

GETTING AN EDGE: THE TACHYON ADVANTAGE

To judge the Tachyon network by Sunday's races alone would miss the weekly preparations enabled by the Tachyon network. NASCAR crews put their cars through a labyrinth of tests every day and evaluate the results. The crews work with technical teams back at headquarters to assess repairs and adjustments for each car. Repair and engineering manuals are measured in pounds, not pages. HMS technicians access critical data from the company's corporate network in a secure and efficient manner, speeding repair times and giving the drivers more testing time and less time waiting on the sidelines.

"Tracks don't have dial tones, let alone broadband access in the garage areas, and we need to get into our corporate network multiple times during the day," said Chris Newsome, Director of IT at HMS. "We utilize Tachyon to rapidly access critical information, through an integrated, highly secure network environment. Without the Tachyon transportable broadband network connection, we would still have enough knowledge to get the cars ready to race, but we would not be prepared for crisis/disaster recovery situations, or have information-based dynamic decision-making capabilities."

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In today's Internet age, HMS leveraged Tachyon's portable broadband satellite to take a competitive advantage and take the comforts of the 'home' LAN from Daytona to Dover and from Talladega to Texas. In an industry where the fastest and most dependable cars win, the top teams require the same attributes from their communications networks.

A WINNING FUTURE

Since their initial rollout of the Tachyon solution, HMS has continued to leverage satellite communications for competitive advantage. The team has deployed a Mobile Communications Truck designed to carry four cars for scheduled track testing. Leveraging HMS's wireless data network and the Tachyon Auto Deploy satellite network, HMS will have network connectivity during both testing and racing days. Prior to even starting their engines, the #88 and #24 cars already have a lead on their nearest competition.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

Tachyon Networks Incorporated

9339 Carroll Park Drive, Suite 150
San Diego, CA 92121 USA

T 877.589.3278

T 858.882.8100

F 858.882.8137

E info@tachyon.com

W tachyon.com