

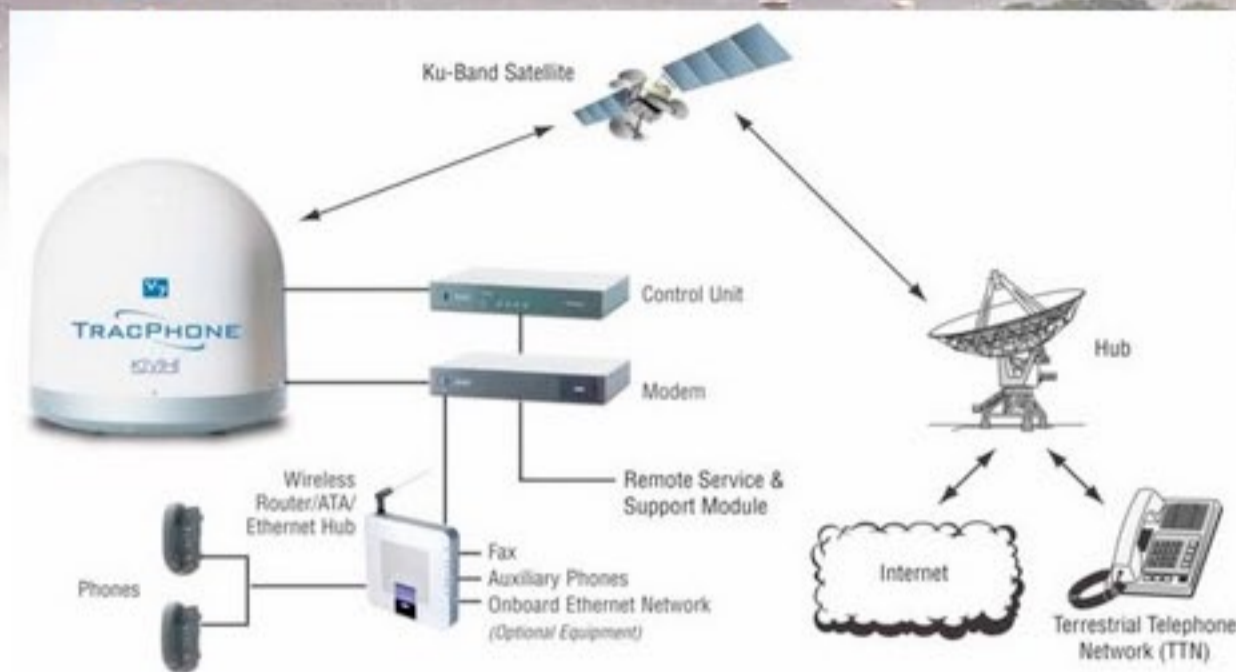
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The Marine Electronics Weblog

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KVH TP V7, big news for big boats

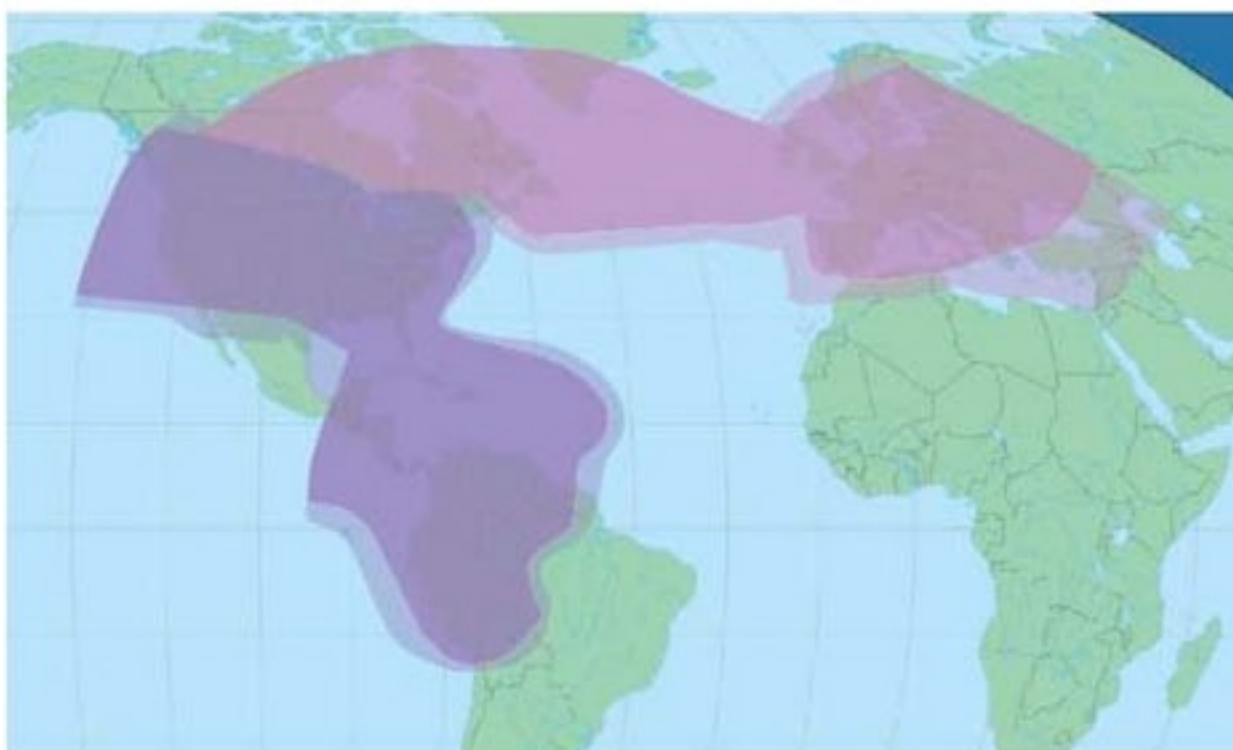
Jul 12, 2007



Game change! This morning [KVH announced](#) the TracPhone V7, a marine VSAT system capable of delivering truly broadband Internet, including telephone (VOIP), to big-budget yachts cruising much of the Americas and Europe (including transatlantic, see below). But you don't need a mega-size platform for the V7's dome, which is an astounding 85% smaller than what it currently takes to get this level of service (and 65% smaller than slower Inmarsat Fleet 77 domes). Hence the "mini-VSAT Broadband" name for the associated satellite service, whose costs are also said to be radically smaller than existing offerings. For instance, the per megabyte price at 512Kbps-up/1024-down is \$5 versus \$32 for Inmarsat's 128/128 F77 service, and there are various bundles and monthly plans that bring it down further.



The V7 hardware itself is \$33,000, and is said to work seamlessly even as you switch continental base stations, and since [installing and testing](#) one of KVH's M3 TV systems last summer, I tend to believe the company's claims. I also wasn't surprised to find excellent literature about the TP V7 at its [new mini-VSAT mini-site](#), including a useful comparison with existing Inmarsat services (also [available here](#)). The paper doesn't, unfortunately, get into how the TP V7 will compare to [Inmarsat marine BGAN](#), but a representative told me that while BGAN will certainly have wider coverage, and be fairly petite, data costs will still be considerably higher. I hope KVH also puts up its white paper about the tech innovations underlying the whole system, because there's a lot going on under the dome and elsewhere. Finally, while it's hard to think of \$5,000 a month for unlimited (sort-of) 512-up/2meg-down broadband—V7's premium plan—as a good deal, I guess it is, and that right there defines the vast gulf between onshore and offshore Internet.



Posted by Ben on July 12, 2007 10:03 AM

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