

DELIVERING HD ACROSS AFRICA



CANAL+ AFRIQUE and SES

Case Study

Industry
Broadcasting

Location
West Africa

SES▲

Together with CANAL+ AFRIQUE, we're redefining reach and viewing experiences in West Africa.

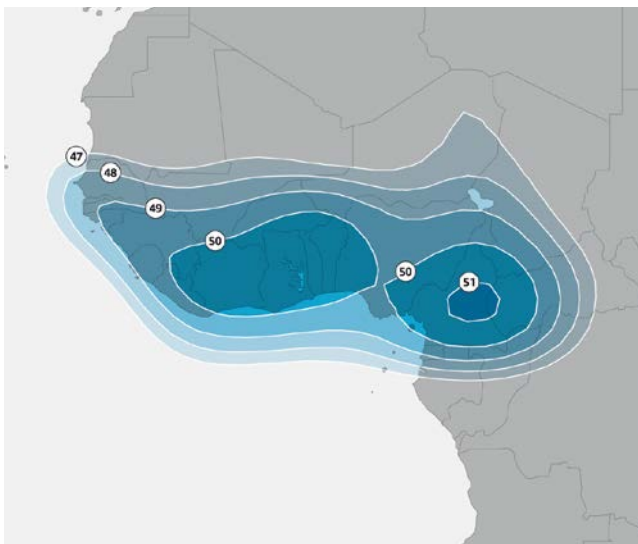
With 100% coverage over the region, CANAL+ AFRIQUE has increased its subscriber base from 1 million to more than 4 million subscribers in just a few years.

TV consumption is on the rise in West Africa, with daily viewing times reaching four hours per viewer. Much like anywhere else in the world, viewers are demanding greater choice, better local content, and superior video quality.

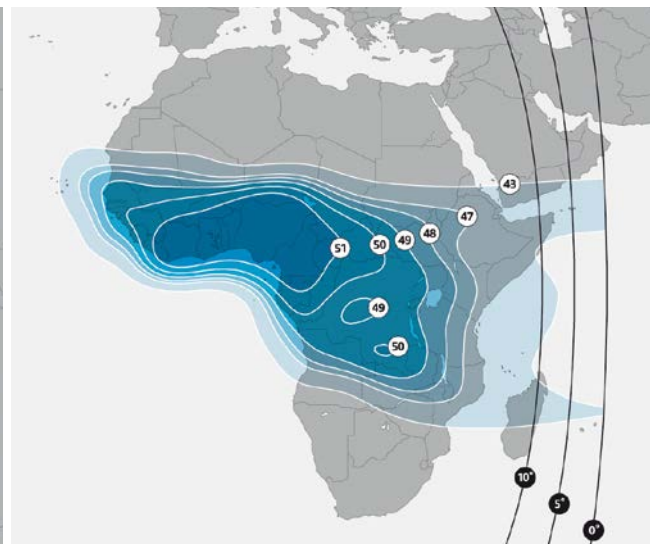
CANAL+ Group is the leading pay-TV operator in French-speaking Africa with more than 4 million subscribers (December 2018). When we started working with CANAL+ AFRIQUE in 2002, the electrification rollout opened the door for new potential customers in rural areas. The company needed to serve a growing audience distributed over a wider region, while also delivering high-quality viewing experiences. Our partnership has facilitated geographical expansion to bring new markets within reach, boosted the company's subscriber base, and brought broadcast-quality high-definition (HD) channels to African communities—even in remote locations.



Redesigning our satellite footprint in West Africa



NSS-7 FOOTPRINT - KU BAND - WEST AFRICA



SES-4 FOOTPRINT - KU BAND - WEST AFRICA

100%

coverage over
West Africa

4M

subscribers

50

HD channels



CANAL+

www.canalplusgroupe.com

In 2002, CANAL+ AFRIQUE was using the NSS-7 satellite, which provided fairly limited coverage in West Africa. With the goal to penetrate new markets, we started working together on replacement plans for NSS-7. Together, we outlined capacity requirements, target markets, and other technical features, including the size of the dish needed to receive the signal. We then redesigned the new SES-4 satellite footprint to go further south and across towards the Great Lakes to include the new audiences and territories we had identified.

“The sub-Saharan French-speaking African market consists of 50 million families—of which 15 million have access to electricity and TV sets,” says David Mignot, CEO of CANAL+ AFRIQUE. “Today, out of 15 million families, more than 6 million are equipped with a set-top box, and a dish pointing to the SES-4 satellite.” By providing coverage over 100% of the TV households in the region, we have helped CANAL+ AFRIQUE increase its subscriber base from 1 million to over 4 million subscribers in just a few years.

For CANAL+ AFRIQUE, the goal was to reach 50% of TV households by 2020. They have already exceeded expectations by increasing their reach to roughly 40% of TV households by the end of 2018. With a line-up of more than 200 channels, radio stations, and services, the CANAL+ AFRIQUE platform has the largest HD offer in Africa at more than 50 channels.

“It’s a really great achievement by CANAL+ AFRIQUE,” says Nick Stubbs, VP Western Europe at SES. “It has quadrupled its subscriber base in just a few years—helped by the redesign of the footprint. The company has increased its capacity with us, and that’s obviously good news for us. It’s also good news for African viewers who will now have access to HD programming in addition to standard definition, as well as more local productions.”

In terms of compression choice, CANAL+ AFRIQUE decided to move directly from MPEG-2 to HEVC, getting around the MPEG-4 step. “By making this jump, CANAL+ AFRIQUE has not only future-proofed itself, but it has also proven the market’s readiness for HD, and even Ultra HD.” The HD-ready set-top boxes are currently deployed over more than one third of the company’s subscriber base.

As the electrification roll out across Africa continues, satellites will be key to serving new territories they bring within reach. “The role of satellites is more important in Africa than Europe because terrestrial presence here is sporadic at best,” says David Mignot, CEO of CANAL+ AFRIQUE. “Since internet connectivity is not widespread, CANAL+ AFRIQUE continues to rely on satellite broadcasting.” With more than 6 million dishes pointed at SES-4, we are working consistently with CANAL+ AFRIQUE to identify growth opportunities, and provide African communities with the best quality of reception possible—whether it’s HD today, or Ultra HD in a few years.

“Together with SES, we have discussions about how we can expand the market and bring additional services to African audiences. Within the next three years, we expect to be full HD, and hope to start rolling out some Ultra HD programming.”

“The partnership between SES and CANAL+ AFRIQUE looks bright. Customer feedback in West Africa has been overwhelming. Audiences appreciate both the quality of the stream and the channels, and they are looking forward to a lot more HD content.”



DAVID MIGNOT

CEO, CANAL+ AFRIQUE



JÉRÔME TRIFT

CTO, CANAL+ INTERNATIONAL

For additional information on this project,
please write to info@ses.com

SES HEADQUARTERS

Château de Betzdorf
L-6815 Betzdorf
Luxembourg

Published in September 2019.
This document is for informational purposes only and it
does not constitute an offer by SES.

SES reserves the right to change the information at
any time, and assumes no responsibility for any errors,
omissions or changes. All brands and product names
used may be registered trademarks and are hereby
acknowledged.

For more information about SES,
visit www.ses.com

