
NOW and US-based satellite firm AST team up for Space-Based Cellular Connectivity

10 November 2023
Manila City, Philippines

NOW Telecom Company, Inc. ("NOW Telecom"), NOW Corporation's associate, and AST & Science, LLC ("AST"), a renowned global satellite company, are pleased to announce the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding to enhance communications solutions in the Philippines. NOW Telecom will leverage AST's expertise in global satellite communications through this partnership.

The collaboration of NOW and AST seeks to broaden telecom offerings globally, reaching both urban and remote regions not reached by traditional land-based cell towers. This initiative focuses on providing comprehensive communication services, including voice, video, data, and internet connectivity, to remote regions with limited or non-existent infrastructure. NOW can cater to its desired markets with always-on availability and fast recovery during disaster and emergency scenarios, eliminating the lingering denial of service to people in underserved and unserved areas.

Mel Velarde, Chairman of NOW Telecom, said: "Every Filipino could connect his mobile phone from anywhere nationwide through NOW partner AST's single cell site in the Sky!"

This strategic move brings both a fundamental and transformative impact on the lives of many Filipinos, uniting people of the archipelago and linking them to the world's largest interconnected machine: the Internet.

AST's prime mission is to build a global broadband cellular network in space. The network is designed to operate in Low Earth Orbit (LEO). It aims to provide seamless connectivity that can be directly accessed by standard mobile phones without needing specialized hardware. AST is publicly traded on the NASDAQ exchange.

The partnership with AST supports NOW's Trusted Network initiative as it seeks to work with only trusted vendors in the telecommunication industry in the Philippines. Recently, NOW also unveiled its Respond and Replace Program and has partnered with global tech players such as CISCO, Fortinet, Mangata, and Celona.

NOW possesses a mobile telecommunications system license from the National Telecommunications Commission with a mandate from the Philippine government to operate in outer space. It can be recalled that in November 2022, NOW was recognized by the U.S. Government as its partner in deploying 5G technologies and nationwide broadband network.