

Africa Satcom

Kenya Airways, Africa's third-largest airline, has reached a five-year, \$10-million agreement with Switzerland's SITA to upgrade its information technology network through a low-cost, VSAT satellite network. VSAT, or very small aperture terminal, uses small two-way ground stations to relay data between terminals on Earth via a communications satellite in geosynchronous orbit. The SITA VSAT network is designed to allow each of the airline's 46 remote sites to communicate through the satellite to both corporate offices in Nairobi and the reservations host in Europe. The network technology upgrade "is part of our business strategy to focus on investing in and developing our people and systems in the next two years," says Titus Nainkuni, Kenya Airways' CEO. In places like Africa, VSAT is more reliable than earth links and ensures fewer outages, according to both companies. Geneva-based SITA is deploying a similar network for Air France in Africa and has already deployed VSAT networks for Air Tanzania and Air Madagascar.
