

# The New DXer: HDTV

*TELE-satellite regularly reports on satellite DXer's. Up until now, this category covered all those who play around with satellite reception as a hobby. Now there exists a new category: the HDTV DXer! They are only interested in HDTV channels in DVB-S2, and nothing else. We met up with one of the first of these specialized HDTV DXer's oddly enough in Beijing – or maybe that's the reason why. Private satellite reception is not allowed in China except in flat-land areas and the concentration on HDTV is therefore twice as uncommon.*



■ Purchased only two days ago: the new 2.4-meter antenna that Applesat plans to set up in the next couple of days. The 1.0-meter dish is fixed in place and is pointed to ASIASAT.



■ Applesat's 60cm antenna with three LNBs receives TELSTAR 18 at 138° east, AGILA at 146° east and APSTAR 6 at 134° east.

This HDTV DXer adopted the nickname "Applesat". He explained why: "At 15 I started getting interested in satellite reception. Back then China was still quite isolated and the reception of foreign programming opened up a new world for me. Back then I thought that the Earth was like an apple with satellites flying around it."

His parents didn't really like his new hobby, but Applesat didn't worry about it too much and started with a 1.5-meter dish for ASIAsat 1 reception. That was 1992. Three years later he expanded his system with a 2.1-meter dish for APSTAR 1.

In January 2009 he moved into his own apartment in a new building in northern Beijing. He chose this particular apart-



■ Applesat has hidden his antennas very nicely in this modern apartment building: invisible from the ground, they are located on the balcony of his apartment on the ninth floor.



■ This feedhorn is specially designed for offset antennas and is recognizable by its conical feedhorn. "Normal prime focus antenna (PFA) feeds would have too much signal loss", explains Applesat.

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■ By the south-facing window in the living room Applesat set up a small offset antenna that he is aligning with a Trimax meter. "I do this mostly in the evenings", says Applesat, "this is my manual motorized antenna."

ment for a reason: it is on the ninth floor directly under the roof. For the most part this protected him from any curious glances. "You can only install dishes legally out in open land areas for CHINASTAR reception with channels in ABS-S", explains Applesat, "but private reception in the city is not allowed."

There are exceptions though for those apartment buildings in which foreigners are allowed to reside and then only in those apartments in which these foreigners live. The Beijing-born Applesat cannot use this as an excuse, so for this reason he doesn't want to draw any attention to himself. "I love HDTV", says Applesat, "and that's why I am willing to take some risks." His dream is to one day have his own piece of land near the Great Wall of China so that he can erect a real satellite antenna farm. "But current laws don't allow city residents like me to own any land outside of the city."

Until that day comes, he keeps in touch with like-minded people. He exchanges new HDTV channel information through his own Internet forum [www.hdtvstar.cn](http://www.hdtvstar.cn); he acquires new transponder frequencies from [www.cnsat.net](http://www.cnsat.net).



How does someone like Applesat get ahold of satellite products in Beijing? While you can find shops with satellite equipment in provincial cities, you won't find anything in Beijing. "I buy much of my equipment through Internet auction sites", reveals Applesat, "Using the word 'satellite' is really not allowed so you have to use other similar terms to find products like that."

Applesat knows how to get around all the obstacles to expand his hobby. His rack already contains five satellite receivers plus he also has a 32" HDTV flat-screen TV. "I'd really like to turn my hobby into my job", explains Applesat, "and eventually that will happen." The energy that Applesat puts into his hobby makes that a certainty.

■ Applesat in front of his shack with five receivers, one for terrestrial HDTV signals in DMB-TH, a DVB-S2 receiver, two DVB-S receivers with modules and a DVB-S FTA receiver. "My favorite channels are Luxe.TV on ASIASAT 2, Fashion TV, Voom, National Geographic, History Channel, AXN and ASN from MEASAT", explains Applesat, "The new HD channels from Korean provider Skylife recently started on KOREASAT 3 on 11.900L and 11.938L."