

JT is COWMIX

Satellite reception has been linked with PayTV for many years in the USA. But this has slowly been changing; free-to-air (FTA) reception is becoming more and more popular. The USA is a land of immigrants and since many providers from around the world send their programming to the USA for free, it makes sense that so many want to be able to watch TV in their mother-tongue or perhaps even their grandmother-tongue. Why should you pay a monthly fee to watch English-language programming when you can watch channels in their original language for free?



■ Who does this car belong to with this license plate? Right, JT stands for Jeremy Tieman and ORG is for his organization.

This trend here in the USA was recognized not only by TV viewers but also by many daring technology enthusiasts who started their own satellite dealer business and thereby promoted this trend. One of these freshly-baked satellite dealer newcomers is Jeremy Tiemann who can be found in Phoenix, the capital of the state of Arizona located in southwestern USA. His company COWMIX has been in existence since 2006 and it turns out that the start of his company did not exactly go according to plan: "I originally planned to sell MP3 players."

At the beginning it was only an idea to make himself independent in the Engineering field. "The deciding factor turned out to be a friend of the family, a doctor, who regularly traveled to Las Vegas for the CES consumer electronics show." Jeremy tells us. In 2005 this doctor asked Jeremy to simply come along to the CES. While walking through the trade show they both began to real-



■ The COWMIX showroom in Phoenix, Arizona.



COWMIX.com



■ Jeremy Tieman (centre), President of satellite dealer COWMIX with Alexander Wiese (left), TELE-satellite's Editor-in-Chief

ize that they had the same desire to use their engineering interests commercially. No sooner said than done: an LLC (limited liability corporation) was formed. The doctor controlled a large portion of the finances but stayed out of the way of the company's day-to-day operations.

"The attempt to be successful in the MP3 market quickly failed", remembers Jeremy of those early days, "No sooner did we get a delivery than we found out that newer models were already available that had twice the memory." A small, newly-started company could not keep up with a pace like that. And then by sheer coincidence, a friend showed off his newly acquired FTA satellite system to Jeremy. "It was like getting struck by lightning", says Jeremy, "That's it!" Jeremy immediately sat himself in front of his laptop and began to familiarize himself with satellite technology. He bought different receiver models and



■ Ben Salazar adjusts a 75cm dish on the roof of COWMIX's offices in Phoenix, Arizona. It is pointed to 97° west.



■ Ben Salazar (left) runs sales with the help of Iris Cortez (right). An additional 11 freelancers are responsible for complete system installations.

thoroughly tested each of them. "I will stick with SonicView; those are the best receivers," he finally declared.

He met Tony Lively, SonicView's sales manager, at the CES show in 2007 and placed his first receiver order: 250 boxes! In February 2007 the delivery truck arrived: but where to put the palette? "COWMIX was founded in my garage", explains Jeremy, "that was the only place where I could store the receivers." But now the big question for his new business: how do you get rid of these 250 receivers and make a profit?

Jeremy is a Systems Administrator by trade and that means he knows his way around computers. And that also means that he is intimately familiar with the Internet too. That's where he began his selling offensive: "I started by putting my receivers for sale on E-bay and Craig's List." Craig's List, available in every city,

is a place to put small ads. It happens to be very popular in the USA. It didn't take long for Jeremy to see the difference between E-bay and Craig's List: "On E-bay you hear from people from all over the country and beyond while on Craig's List it is mostly just the locals because I only placed the ads in Craig's List for Phoenix.

So, is Jeremy planning to stop offering receivers through E-bay? "I'm going to tell you a little secret", whispers Jeremy, "I will continue to offer the receivers on E-bay simply because it is the most cost-effective way to publicize my company." E-bay visitors often only look for experts in their vicinity and interested parties in Arizona will quickly find their way to COWMIX. Jeremy explains, "Actual receiver sales can be attributed more to Craig's List; from 20 receivers that are sold via Craig's List, only one is sold via E-bay." Jeremy has a suggestion

to all the potential business opportunists among TELE-satellite's readers: "Offer your products via E-bay. In this way your address will quickly become known at a very cheap price!" That's a great inside tip.

Sure enough, the 250 receivers from that first delivery were gone in four months. Jeremy soon after took the next step and rented an office with a storeroom. He explains, "In the first year 2007 I sold 1500 receivers; the following year it was 4000 receivers." In 2009 the economic crisis hit home: "I definitely felt the pinch", says Jeremy, "by the end of the year it will only be around 2500 receivers." Despite this setback, Jeremy is once again optimistic for 2010: "Sales should substantially increase since the FTA market is the market of the future!"

We certainly agree with that.