

# Shenzhen Satellites

*As of now private satellite reception is still illegal in China, but in actual fact you can always find a loophole if only you look hard enough. Satellite installers advertising their services in English and setting up systems for foreigners, for example, don't have much to fear from the authorities.*



■ Laoge works on setting up a reception system with three LNBs.

Laoge shows us a picture of one of his first installations on his laptop computer in a busy Starbucks right at the Dongmen Markets in Shenzhen. One of the Dream receivers he likes to use for AGILA reception is on the table. "The LAN interface is quite important," Laoge whispers with the blink of an eye. Professionals among our readers will know exactly why. ■



Take Laoge, for example. We met him on a busy Saturday at a Starbucks right in the helter skelter of Dongmen Markets in Shenzhen. He has been installing satellite systems for foreigners in Shenzhen since 2006 and tells us how everything started: "It was back in 2006 when I virtually stumbled across the [www.tv88.cn](http://www.tv88.cn) website while googling." The site is run by Daxue, one of the heavy-weights of the satellite community in southern China. "He taught me everything about satellite reception," Laoge remembers. The two got in touch and soon became friends. One day a Filipino living in Shenzhen



■ Thanks to his skills as software engineer Laoge has written a little application for recording the video stream of the Dreambox. He calls it Dreambox Recorder v1.0 and offers it for download at tv88.cn/Soft.

approached Daxue because he wanted to have a satellite system set up at his home. Daxue hardly speaks any English, however, and forwarded this request to Laoge. "This Filipino became my first customer," Laoge tells us with pride. And his first job was to install a 60 cm antenna for reception of AGILA at 146° East.

Laoge was commissioned to set up five more systems in 2006, one year later the number of jobs had risen to 15 and in 2008 Laoge installed a total of 32 antennas. "But it's still only a hobby. I'm a software engineer by profession," Laoge explains and adds that "I charge 2000 RMB (approx. 200 EUR) for each installation – and this includes antenna, LNB and receiver." Where does Laoge



■ Daxue (left), one of the more known satellite enthusiasts in China, and Laoge (right) meet at a satellite exhibition.

source his components? "I buy them at auctions on www.taobao.com," Laoge tells us. Taobao is something like the Chinese version of e-bay.

90 percent of Laoge's customers originally come from the Philippines and most of them live in the Nanshan area of Shenzhen. The AGILA offering, however, includes more than 30 English language channels and therefore might be interesting for foreigners with other nationalities as well. The following satellites can also be received quite easily in Shenzhen: APSTAR 1 at 138° East, APSTAR 2R at 76.5° East and ASIASAT at 122° East.