



DIGITAL RADIO UK PRESS RELEASE

RECORD NEW CARS WITH DIGITAL RADIO



In September, 58% of all new cars registered came with digital radio (CAP/SMMT), it was announced by Ed Vaizey, Minister for Culture and the Digital Economy at the annual industry Radio Festival in Salford today. Almost 250,000 cars were registered in September 2014 with digital radio as standard, up nearly 50% on the previous September. He also confirmed that BBC coverage for its national stations on DAB digital radio was now 95%, and that this programme of work would be completed before the end of 2015.

Attendees at a conference session hosted by broadcaster Suzi Perry heard from Ford Ennals, CEO of Digital Radio UK, that the proportion of new cars with digital radio has grown from 0% to almost 60% in 4 years and over 1.25 million new cars with digital radio were sold in the last year, according to CAP/SMMT. During 2014 the sales volume of in car DAB radios has now overtaken domestic digital radio sales for the first time, and overall DAB digital radio sales (car + domestic) are now up 18% year to date (*GfK + CAP/SMMT*).

According to radio industry audit company RAJAR, the car is one of the favourite places to listen to the radio, and 61% of all radio listeners listen in the car (*RAJAR Q2 2014*) and overall 22% of radio listening takes place in car.

The fitting of digital radio in cars as standard is part of a transformation of in-car information and entertainment technology.

Ford Ennals confirmed that the top 10 vehicle brands were introducing connected cars with internet access into the UK and announced findings from Digital Radio UK's Digital Dashboard Audit. This audit highlighted the continuing importance and prominence of broadcast radio (DAB + FM) in connected cars. The expanded availability of entertainment options in cars could create potential for driver confusion and distraction and Digital Radio UK confirmed that they were working with the Society of Motor Manufacturers, individual vehicle manufacturers and DCMS to address these issues.

Ed Vaizey, Minister of State for Culture and the Digital Economy, says: *"A quarter of a million new cars hit the roads in September fitted with a digital radio. This demonstrates the welcome commitment of the car industry to providing drivers with the full range of radio available today."*

Suzi Perry says: *"I love listening to radio in car - it's as automatic as putting on my seat belt. It's great news that most new cars now come with digital radio, as it means that I can listen to all my favourite stations on the move."*

Ford Ennals, CEO of Digital Radio UK, says: *"There has been a real transformation of radio in car and we have gone from 0% to 60% in just 4 years. This is great news for drivers as digital radio offers a much wider choice of great radio stations."*

Mike Hawes, CEO of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, says: *"We are delighted to see the ongoing growth of new car registrations in September and the continuing drive to digital. The great progress being made by manufacturers in the line-fitment of digital radio - and the introduction of new products in the aftermarket - demonstrates the importance the automotive sector attaches to this technology."*

Helen Boaden, Director of Radio at the BBC, says: *"We are delighted that now even more car drivers will be able to listen to our digital-only stations while they're on the move."*

For further information

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