

PRESS RELEASE

WorldDAB Workshop at Geneva International Motor Show is held as all major brands show car models with DAB/DAB+ digital radio

10 March 2016, Geneva, Switzerland

- WorldDAB workshop drives home importance of digital radio at Geneva International Motor Show
- All major automotive manufacturers exhibiting have at least one model with digital radio on show
- Ford supports DAB+ with specific on-stand promotions

In the second week of Geneva International Motor Show 2016 visitors to the event are being shown that digital radio is very much a key feature in cars today.

All major automotive manufacturers have at least one model with DAB/DAB+ digital radio on display on-stand. A feature on the Ford stand is a demonstration dedicated to the DAB+ in their vehicles organised by Swiss digital radio marketing body MCDT.

On Tuesday 8 March, WorldDAB held a workshop for consumers, dealers, importers and manufacturers to promote DAB/DAB+ digital radio in cars. The workshop focused on how the broadcasting and automotive industries can work together to ensure a smooth transition to digital radio in-car, keeping drivers needs at the core of their activities. The latest WorldDAB infographic was distributed at the event highlighting the growth of DAB/DAB+ outdoor network coverage and driver adoption in key markets.

A host of international speakers from organisations including WorldDAB, the BBC, Strategy Analytics and the European Broadcasting Union gave presentations on the status of digital radio roll-out, with examples of joint projects with auto manufacturers and information on the future plans for digital radio.

WorldDAB President, Patrick Hannon opened the workshop. Addressing the audience, Patrick spoke about the progress that DAB is making across Europe. *"DAB is clearly established as the core future platform for radio in Europe. With the first countries setting dates for Digital Switchover, now is the time for automotive manufacturers to ensure that all new cars are fitted with DAB digital radio as standard."*

This was followed by Michael Hill, Radioplayer, who spoke on newly released research which demonstrated the continued importance of radio to all drivers. *"Our research shows there's an incredibly strong bond between drivers and their car radios. They use words like 'friend' to describe it, and the quality of the radio definitely influences how they feel about their car purchase. We want to partner with manufacturers to improve this crucial part of the dashboard."*

At the workshop supported by the European Broadcasting Union, Graham Dixon, the Head of Radio, called for radio and especially digital radio to be 'frictionless'. *"Radio reception is not frictionless, or easily ubiquitous, when it is not present in the car."* He went on to say that many EBU members are strongly committed to digital. Over 70 public service radio stations across Europe are digital-only; this shows the huge investment made by broadcasters. He welcomed progress that had been made, and called for the car industry to continue and strengthen its commitment to digital radio.

The UK has long led the way with the roll out of digital radio in cars and last week launched the second national DAB multiplex which will feature 18 stations, further increasing the choice of stations available to consumers. Laurence Harrison from Digital Radio UK reported, *"Close collaboration with the automotive industry has seen the UK make great progress in rolling out digital radio in cars. 80% of new cars now have DAB as standard and the biggest launch of national digital stations ever in the UK, plus the introduction of new car adapters, means we are well placed to grow the car conversion market this year."*

Roger Lanctot, Strategy Analytics, presented the current automotive plans for the infotainment system in cars and other market data. *"There are two important takeaways from the conference today. Consumers demand and use radio in the car on a daily basis and they are strongly interested in digital services - the very same digital services enabled by digital broadcast technology including traffic, weather, parking availability and fuel pricing."*

Digital radio has an important role to play in the connected car. Nick Piggott, Project Director of RadioDNS, explained that, *"Digital radio broadcast is the most effective way of delivering live audio to the car, but that the burgeoning availability of connectivity in the car can be used tactically to deliver additional data. Broadcasters can deliver a range of high quality meta-data and assets over IP to a digital radio that would allow manufacturers to design more attractive and functional user interfaces for broadcast radio in the dashboard."*

Mark Friend of the BBC gave a presentation by video on digital radio in the car and where the BBC is supporting the developments which the BBC sees for digital radio in the car in the future, *"People love radio...digital radio is hugely important to the BBC. We are just about to launch a new pop up station, BBC Radio 2 Country, which will boost popularity of digital radio in the UK. The BBC is bringing its full power of it's cross promotion to this pop up station by promoting it on one of its major stations, BBC Radio 2."* He went on to say specifically about in-car that it's *"important when you turn on your radio in the car...that radio evolves in the connected car space - radio needs to become more sophisticated but stay simple to use."*

Carsten Friedrich, Media mobile, covered both the benefits of DAB+ TPEG and also market developments in Germany including coverage figures which continue to improve, *"There are already services and solutions in many markets such as Norway, Belgium and in the Netherlands and more will come for both OEM solutions and in the aftermarket. Radio is a life saver, especially inside cars when travelling. It is free and can get you to where you are going – radio reaches everybody, anytime, anywhere."*

In Germany, an important area for government is the use of DAB+ for the communication of emergency warnings. Olaf Korte, Fraunhofer IIS, told the audience *"DAB+ allows transmission of information outside the area where a disaster takes place. Emergency warning is essential to the general population. In a general test DAB+ works well as an emergency warning system."*

The dealership expert, Steve Young, ICDP, gave a general overview of the problems faced by dealerships and within this context some insights into selling of additional options such as digital radio, *"In conclusion, digital radio should be pushed during the online research phase where most consumers make their key choices about the car, dealers generally just want to sell a car and will not make the effort to upsell complex options."*

The Netherlands is one of the fastest growing digital radio markets and Jacqueline Bierhorst, Digital Radio NL, highlighted key campaigns which have the successful deployment of DAB+. *"DAB+ is the successor of FM. Nationwide DAB+ networks are in place and more than 60 DAB+ public and commercial radio stations are available in the Netherlands. Public and commercial broadcasters, the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the car association (RAI Vereniging) and Uneto-vni (retail association) and manufactures joined forces. Collaboration and continuity in marketing is key to inform listeners on the advantages of DAB+ on the road and other places people listen to the radio. Although DAB+ was only introduced at the end of 2013, already more than 16%* of all newly sold cars have DAB+. More than 141 models* of different brands have DAB+ as standard or an option. The goal is for all brands in all models to have DAB+ as standard."*

Swiss digital radio body MCDT, the organiser of the DAB+ promotion on the Ford stand presented an overview of their current work. Rosie Smith, WorldDAB, presented on behalf of MCDT's Ernst Werder. His presentation noted, *"Last year, around 60% of all new cars were fitted with DAB+, and this figure will rise again for the 2016 model year because in Switzerland, Ford is now supplying all new cars with DAB+ radios fitted as standard."*

The workshop was the first to be held of its kind at the Geneva International Motor Show and will be followed by an industry event organised by WorldDAB in Brussels on 11 May 2016.

**source JATO Dynamics, 2015*

Links

[WorldDAB Automotive 2016](#)

[Automotive Infographic \(Q4 2015\)](#)

For more information, please contact:

WorldDAB Project Office



+44 20 7010 0742



projectoffice@worlddab.org



@WorldDAB

About WorldDAB

WorldDAB is the global industry forum for digital radio promoting DAB, DAB+ the digital radio broadcasting standards of choice in Europe and much of Asia Pacific. Its global membership includes public and commercial broadcasters, network providers, receiver manufacturers, chip manufacturers, and car manufacturers. Members collaborate to deliver advice and tailored solutions on all aspects of the switch from analogue to digital radio including regulation, licensing, technology trials, network build out, marketing and production of new digital radio content. Broadcast radio professionals have access to this body of expertise which is delivered through leading-edge industry events, car manufacturers' workshops, tailored workshops and seminars and the WorldDAB website via the members-only information portal that includes an extensive online ETI library. More than 500 million people worldwide are within range of a DAB/DAB+ Digital Radio transmitter, there are well over 1,000 services on air and several hundred models of receivers are available to market.