Norway: from FM to DAB+ lessons learned

ABU Digital Broadcasting Symposium 2019
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Norway: radio’s digital switchover – from FM to DAB+

1. Why
2. How
3. Results
4. Lessons learned
WHY
MEDIA TRENDS 1960 – 2016/17

Source: KANTAR MEDIA

Daily use newspaper, radio, tv and internet
DIGITISATION OF RADIO
ONLY 5 NATIONAL STATIONS ON FM

- Radio is a national business
- Topography – scattered population
- No room on FM
- DAB+ made it possible to multiply the national offer to reach the whole population
31 STATONS ON DAB+

- Radio is a national business
- Topography – scattered population
- No room on FM
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HOW
Teamwork was essential –

- Compete on content
- Collaborate on cost
PROCESS

First - period

- DAB launch
- Few, expensive radio sets
- Less channels on DAB than FM
- Limited coverage

- A little info/marketing
- Some more radio sets
- A couple of new channels
- A little better coverage

- 1995 Start - 22 years - 2011

White paper

- A little info/marketing
- Cheaper radio sets
- Real added value, many new channels
- A little better coverage
- Full coverage

DSO- period

- Info/marketing
- 2017 FM-shut off
2011 White Paper

• Industry driven
• Political support
FM switch off criteria

1. Public radio: 99.5% coverage
2. Commercial radio: 90% coverage
3. Added value of digital radio
4. At least half of radio listeners must listen to a digital radio-platform on a daily basis
5. Technically satisfactory and reasonable solutions for radio reception

RESULTS
REVENUES- STABLE THROUGHOUT DSO
LISTENERS FOLLOWED ONTO DAB+

Official stats (Feb 2019) -

• Listening figures are back to pre-DSO levels and continue to rise
• Listeners are listening for longer
• How listening is measured has had to evolve
A NEW DYNAMIC RADIO MARKET
LESSONS LEARNED
DAB+ as the backbone secures free to air radio for everyone

- Every market is unique and digital radio consists of many platforms
- Collaborate on cost, compete on content
- People love more content - listeners prefer more choice
- Radio must offer more to everyone in competition with more rivals
- No digitisation without a switch off plan - speeds up the conversion
- Regional switch off works
- Public Service Broadcaster with robust license income to switch off first
- There is a big need for information - DAB is a little different
- DAB in cars - especially demanding
- Listeners are loyal, but need time to upgrade all radios
- A national rollout body representing one voice was necessary and successful
NEW IMPACT REPORT DUE END MARCH 2019

A Norway DSO impact report is currently in preparation, ready by end March 2019 covering -

- Detailed analysis on listener behaviour
- Impact on advertising and revenue
- What DSO has meant for radio stations
- How the structure of the radio industry is evolving
- How radio content has changed and evolved
- New stations, new formats
Thank you

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