



WORLD DAB Newsletter

International News and Strategic Analysis on Digital Sound Broadcasting

The right to reply...

In the next editions of the Newsletter, we plan to carry an editorial from different parties involved in the introduction of DAB. The aim of this is to get different insights into how to boost the roll-out of DAB.

DAB promotion, a manufacturer's plea

Pity the DAB receiver product manager. The person, who, for years has been promising great things in the rosy future of digital radio. For many, the time for the second generation product launch is fast approaching, and pressure is starting to grow. This pressure is coming from many quarters:

- From top management, who, in these days of constantly evolving media technologies, have committed precious engineering resources to the development DAB.
- From broadcasters and service providers who, focused as they are on the availability of low cost receivers, think receiver pricing is just an indicator of the level of greed of manufacturers, rather than a realistic reflection of the cost of building a complex and sophisticated electronic product
- From the sales force, who have to go out and try to sell this confounded product to dealers. Dealers who are more interested in selling Navigation systems, mobile phones or DVB receivers than DAB tuners, for which there is almost no spontaneous consumer demand.

For the industry, it is on this last point that attention needs to be focused. Poor consumer awareness is the biggest obstacle to the successful take off of DAB. Admittedly receivers are expensive and in

many countries coverage and service content are issues, but all of these problems are being addressed. Many manufacturers are preparing second generation products at more attractive prices, whilst in most countries coverage and service content are being gradually improved. Given this, now is the time to finally get over the old chicken and egg problem of receiver pricing and service availability and for all parties concerned to work together, making a concerted effort to finally get DAB off the ground.

From a receiver manufacturer's point of view the most useful tool for raising awareness of DAB among the radio listening public is through on-air trailers for DAB services.

- Broadcasters should advertise their own digital services over their existing analogue networks.
- When frequency information is provided, the fact that a service is also available on DAB should always be mentioned
- In the radio listings, availability of services on DAB should always be clearly indicated.

Each of these 3 things can be easily realised by broadcasters. Manufacturers and retailers can build on the passive awareness generated from this kind of activity, and through marketing activities of their own, can turn to it into concrete sales opportunities.

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DAB promotion, a manufacturer's plea

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DAB has a credibility problem at the moment. Many people, particularly retailers, have the feeling that radio networks are not really committed to their DAB services. If broadcasters are not promoting their own digital services, retailers, especially the kind of specialist retailers who are best equipped to sell DAB in this start up phase, understandably feel reluctant to recommend DAB to their customers, or even to carry DAB products. If the service provider is not confident enough to recommend the service to their listeners, why should a retailer?

Consumers have had their fingers burned many times in the past, by manufacturers' introduction of new media. There have been several instances of manufacturer developed or supported media quickly dying in the market, leaving consumers with obsolete hardware, and a feeling of disillusionment. This disillusionment means that it is very difficult for manufacturers to lead the way in the introduction of DAB. Broadcasters must lead, showing that DAB is indeed their initiative and not just the latest whim of manufacturers. Witness the huge success of Digital Satellite TV in many markets. In every case, these are perceived as broadcaster led services, with receiver manufacturers taking very much a back seat, supportive role, rather than being the front line driver of the innovation. This is the way it should be, inspiring as it does confidence in consumers that they are indeed buying into the future of broadcasting, rather than just adding to their collection of obsolete electronic paraphernalia.

So from this DAB product manager the plea to broadcasters and service providers is simple - promote your DAB services whenever possible. Let the public know that this fantastic medium is available, that it will offer better quality audio, a bigger choice of services and that this really is the future of radio. Once the consumer demand is there, receiver pricing will not be the problem.

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DAB ~ The Winning Strategy

Stockholm, 18-19th May 2000

Convinced that DAB is essential for the long-term vibrancy of radio and eager to increase the confidence of manufacturers the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), the collective organisation of public broadcasters in Europe, is organising a high level DAB conference entitled "DAB the Winning Strategy". This important event in the DAB calendar will take place in Stockholm on 18th and 19th May of this year.

This unique and imaginative programme has been arranged to include manufacturers, and both private and public broadcasters, with the main aim of analysing the current issues affecting the launch of DAB. It is also hoped that it will encourage radio organisations to launch new programmes and services, which in turn will increase the speed of DAB roll-out.

Participants to this high level event will be able to find out what is being done in different countries concerning DAB and will also get a unique insight into the content providers' plans for the near to long term. It will also be an excellent opportunity to analyse the possible benefits of closer co-operation between public and private radio.

The conference is aimed at the highest possible level of all organisations involved, the EBU, AER and EACEM, in the roll-out of DAB. The EBU's current priority is to get decision makers on board and convince them that DAB is here to stay; they will thus see that the broadcasters are fully committed to its roll-out.

**For more information on this event
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UK Launch goes from strength to strength

**Plays, books and
comedy station gives
commercial Radio one
more national station**

Commercial radio now has the greatest number of national Digital Radio channels following a landmark deal by Digital One, the UK's national commercial multiplex operator. The deal will provide the world's first non publicly funded station dedicated to plays, books, comedy and reviews. The new station will be called Oneword.

The agreement between Oneword Radio Ltd and Digital One, will increase the number of full time national commercial radio stations to seven, one more station than the BBC currently operates on its digital multiplex.

This number will soon rise to eight when Digital One finalises its agreement to operate a business, finance and money channel with The Wireless Group, owners of the national commercial station talkSport which also broadcasts on the Digital One Network.

The shareholders of the newly formed Oneword Radio Ltd are The Guardian Media Group plc (30%), publishers Chivers Communications plc (30%), radio production house Unique Broadcasting Ltd (30%), and audio book publishers Heavy Entertainment Ltd (10%). These new players in the field show that Digital Radio is an attractive option to investors.

Oneword will have a contemporary and populist feel and will broadcast some of the very best of the English spoken word, from Michael Jarvis and Miriam Margolis to Griff Rhys Jones and David Suchet.

Oneword will begin broadcasting on Digital One's network in March following the launch of five of its stations on November 15th 1999 and the launch of Capital Radio's new adult contemporary music channel called Life on 31st January.

Professional
equipment news:

RadioScape Launches Digital Broadcast Product Range

*RadioScape
technology provides
backbone for
ntl's transmission
launch of Digital One*

RadioScape, a leading developer of digital broadcast products, launched on 12th January 2000, a complete product set targeted at international broadcasters and transmission providers. The products, developed to meet ntl's needs for the transmission launch of Digital One, create a new and highly flexible way to implement, monitor and control digital radio transmissions.

Built around a software approach to development, the monitoring and management products run in an IP environment on Windows NT, allowing engineers to control transmissions via standard office PCs or remotely from laptops through the internet.

Features of the RadioScape product range that enable the transmission of multiple data sources include: scheduling, monitoring, billing, and reporting.

RadioScape's technology will go a long way towards accelerating the adoption of the Eureka 147 digital radio standard and fully support the launch of DAB that is currently moving ahead in the UK.

MOVING TOWARDS DAB

By Gerhard Petrick



I recently spoke to a good friend of mine who manages a DAB Pilot project in Germany. On my question on what progress he could report he responded something like: "We can't detect any movement right now but I've been told that its the same with the earth's rotation: Although we don't detect the movement we're actually spinning at more than 1700 km/h".

I have not quite worked out if Johannesburg at its latitude spins around the earth's axis faster than Baden-Baden in Germany does, but momentarily the movement towards DAB progress seems much the same.

The proud progress that South African DAB can report includes the following:

- Since 4 November 1999 seven audio services are included on the Pilot transmissions over Johannesburg. The broadcasts cover approximately 10% of the South African population.
- A successful Industry Workshop on digital broadcasting was held on 10 November 1999. Industry leaders, broadcasters, legal representatives and receiver manufacturers attended the event organised by the Southern African Digital Broadcasting Association (SADIBA)

- Growing co-operation and enthusiasm for DAB is evident in the SADIBA Technical Taskgroup - DAB Pilot transmissions. SADIBA facilitated the establishment of the team that consists of technical representatives of the 7 broadcast services on the Pilot transmission and the multiplex operator. Next to discussing the programme feed arrangements, the bit-rate allocations and the coverage, the team is assertively pursuing the introduction of data services on the Pilot broadcasts.

- February 2000 saw the first trickle of DAB receivers into the country. These receivers will expose stakeholders and industry leaders in broadcasting in South Africa to DAB, its CD-like quality and the data services.

- The establishment of the Digital Advisory Council that is to advise the Minister of Communication on digital broadcasting is anxiously awaited. Contentious issues such as regulation and frequency management will be on the list of things to do once the council is established. Current developments suggest its establishment by the end of March 2000.

With a DAB data-casting workshop planned and stakeholders and industry leaders exposed to DAB signals, South Africa is bound to report a more tangible movement towards DAB in the future. In the mean time, hold on tight and remember: We are moving.

S A D I B A
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DIGITAL BROADCASTING ASSOCIATION

Asian DAB Committee

During the 5th WorldDAB General Assembly, which took place in Rome in October 1999, it was decided to establish an Asian DAB Committee which would be led by the Singapore Broadcasting Authority. The Asian Committee of the World DAB Forum will push for a rapid roll-out of DAB in Asia.

The President of the World DAB Forum, Mr Michael McEwen, said "This is a fantastic opportunity to encourage the roll-out of DAB in Asia which represents a huge potential market for Digital Radio. The World DAB Forum is extremely grateful to

the SBA for the leadership that they have shown in setting up the Committee - it is a real demonstration of their commitment to Digital Radio and their determination to make it a success in Asia and, by implication, in the world".

To keep readers of the WorldDAB newsletter informed on the latest developments in Asia, there will be a dedicated section of the Newsletter for the Asian DAB Committee.

The WorldDAB web site (www.worlddab.org) will also have a dedicated link on the home page to a section referring to the activities of the Committee. This area of the site will contain all the latest information from the Asian Committee and will be up-dated on a regular basis.

Singapore elected as member of WorldDAB Forum Steering Board

By Koh Tin Fook, Singapore Broadcasting Authority

At the 5th Annual World DAB Forum General Assembly held in Rome from 28 to 29 October 1999, which was attended by about a hundred people from member organisations, SBA was elected a member of the World DAB Forum Steering Board for a two-year term. Membership on the Board will provide us with a crucial link to the actual workings and discussions of the World DAB Forum.

Mr Michael McEwen, the President of WorldDAB Forum, reported to the General Assembly that Singapore, at the request of the World DAB Forum, had agreed to take the lead in forming an Asian DAB Committee to help WorldDAB promote the knowledge and implementation of DAB in the region. This would be a challenge for Singapore, and SBA would be working closely with the World DAB Forum to meet the objectives of the Asian DAB Committee.

At the General Assembly, SBA gave a briefing on "DAB in Singapore and the Asia Pacific Region". The briefing covered the milestones on DAB developments in

Singapore and an overview of regional DAB developments.

Two noteworthy points were highlighted to the General Assembly:

- a. Singapore had achieved a breakthrough, however small, when in August 1999 Komoco Motors teamed up with Pioneer to install the Pioneer DAB radio receiver for Komoco's flagship car, the Hyundai Grandeur XG. It was suggested that this should be one of the business models to adopt in order to promote the mass introduction of DAB receivers. Members at the General Assembly noted the matter with interest, as no other country had yet initiated such an arrangement between a car dealer and a radio receiver company.
- b. With RCS, Singapore's largest radio broadcaster, launching commercial DAB services on 19 November 1999, Singapore would be the first country in the world able to provide DAB services nationwide.

RCS launches SmartRadio

Summary of an article by Daniel Lum, Radio Corporation of Singapore

The future of radio has never looked so exciting as we approach the 21st Century. Earlier this year, the Radio Corporation of Singapore (RCS) launched its first and Asia's first commercial digital radio service. The technology, Digital Audio Broadcasting or DAB, promises interference-free CD-quality sound, wherever you are.

Now, as long as you are equipped with a digital radio receiver, you will be able to enjoy SmartRadio. Why SmartRadio? Mr Chng Kai Jin, Vice-President, Development and Communications at RCS explained, "Digital is objective, smart is emotional. The word 'smart' has meanings of emotion, growth, evolution and development." And this is what SmartRadio is all about.

For starters, SmartRadio searches for radio stations according to the name. All you need to do is to choose the name of the station and the digital set will pick up the right frequency for you.

That's not all. The digital set is programmable to suit your listening needs. So if you prefer news and information programmes but enjoy classical music, simply pre-programme the digital set to tune in to the station at pre-scheduled times. Hence, immediately after the news and information programme is finished, the tuner immediately "skips" to classical music.

Listeners with digital radio receivers can enjoy clear, uninterrupted transmission of their favourite RCS stations at home or on the roads.

For a start, they can tune in to

- *Y.E.S. 93.3FM, Singapore's most popular Mandarin radio station*
- *NewsRadio 93.8FM, the only local English station featuring news and current affairs*
- *Class 95FM, the most popular English station*
- *Symphony 92.4FM, Singapore's premier classical music station, and*
- *a Showcase Channel, featuring popular programmes from select RCS stations*

Listeners can also look forward to timely news and information as RCS will start a trial service relaying the Bloomberg Radio service "live" from New York.

RCS sees SmartRadio as continuing to evolve, improve and grow as RCS continues to work and collaborate with more partners to exploit the vast potential of DAB technology for the benefit of radio listeners.

In total, RCS will be investing some \$20 million over the next few years to develop more innovative services for consumers. With SmartRadio, radio listeners enjoy excellent sound quality, better programming quality and diversity, and innovative multimedia services. At the same time, RCS will fine-tune road safety guidelines with the relevant authorities and continually communicate them to the public.

The Future of Radio is here. And the Future of Radio is RCS SmartRadio

For more information, please visit RCS' website at rcs.com.sg/smartradio

DRAFFT Project -

new UK initiative targets 'live' multiplex demonstration at receiver manufacturers

A new Digital Radio demonstration service aimed at receiver manufacturers is now operational in London. The DRAFFT Project - which stands for Digital Radio Advanced Feature Flex Transmissions was conceived by Commercial Multiplex licensees and discussed in detail with the BBC, and is actively supported by the UK Digital Radio Forum. Following experience of early receivers, which was not encouraging, the DRAFFT transmissions have been designed to guide developers in the design and specification of receivers. By generating a highly dynamic model multiplex signal, manufacturers have a working demonstration of how UK digital radio services will operate.

By providing a reference multiplex that complies with the Digital Radio specifications, receivers can be developed privately in manufacturers' laboratories where their staff and equipment resources are available. Manufacturers based outside the coverage area will have the opportunity at least to thoroughly test their products and may wish to establish temporary development facilities.

The UK Digital Radio market is one of the largest in the world. The BBC has been actively broadcasting its National stations and a range of new services on digital radio since 1995. This year sees the launch of eight local commercial multiplexes serving the major metropolitan areas in England, Scotland and Wales. This will bring the number of digital radio services available to well over 70. With so many new services, the performance of receivers is crucial to assure the success of Digital radio not only in the

UK, but also throughout the world. Clearly, receiver manufacturers need clear guidance about the way real world services will work, and which features of the EUREKA 147 system will be adopted in the UK.

The DRAFFT service is now on-air in the London area on channel 12A of Band III; L-Band transmissions will also be available by the end of March. However, the service will run at least until the end of June 2000, so manufacturers who have not yet tested their receivers have a limited opportunity to evaluate their Digital Radio products. The value of the service has already been recognised by several key manufacturers, and has allowed them to ensure that their receiver software and hardware will cope with real services in real listening environments.

Currently the DRAFFT multiplex is carrying four audio services that embody

multiple bit rate audio channels, dynamic label segment (DLS) messages and a broadcast web site. Commercial multiplex licensees and BBC Digital Radio are working jointly to devise the various configurations and transmission schedules. These will change from time to time but information about the active configurations both for Band III VHF and L-Band will be available via the WorldDAB Web site. Where possible, special configurations can be arranged to test specific functionality. As the transmissions are cyclical, developers can test and retest their receiver software many times in the working day - which will increase productivity.

Based on the feedback from this project, UK broadcasters plan to develop a Digital Radio Code of Practice aimed at implementing the more advanced features in a consistent fashion. This will go hand in hand with the refinement of receiver designs by manufacturers, offering the general public a sophisticated and robust implementation of the exciting new features which digital radio has to offer.

To get the full benefit of the DRAFFT service, manufacturers and developers should register their interest with Philip Bond, who is co-ordinating, the project.

He can be contacted via the UKDRF office on +44 1793 488007 or by email on philip.bond@bond-digital.com.



New members: Bayern Digital Radio

Bayern Digital Radio are the Multiplex operator for DAB in Bavaria. They plan to build up Digital Radio services and extend the transmission network for Digital Radio in the state of Bavaria over the next couple of years...



BDR plays an important part in promoting Digital Radio in Bavaria and in Germany as a whole; this includes cooperating with other multiplex operators, content providers, institutes for research and development and the receiver manufacturers in Germany.

The main shareholders of the company are Bayerischer Rundfunk, Deutsche Telekom, Bayerische Medien Technik GmbH and the General Manager is Mr Helwin Lesch.

There are currently 17 transmitters in operation and 55% of the Bavarian population are within reach of a DAB signal though by the end of this year it is expected that 79% of the population will be covered.



EBU organises new technologies exhibition at European Parliament

From February 8 to 10, WorldDAB participated in an exhibition at the European Parliament in Brussels organised by the European Broadcasting Union (EBU). The event, accompanied by meetings with various MEPs, was meant to stress the importance of public service broadcasting in a media age that is more and more dominated by commercial interests. WorldDAB demonstrated the variety of receivers available and informed the Members of the European Parliament on the current roll-out of DAB in Europe.

FIAT DEAL IS NOT A DREAM

Christmas came early this year with the news that FIAT UK are offering a Grundig DAB receiver in their Accessories Catalogue. Even more amazing is that the receiver, priced at £499 including fitting, is £200 cheaper than in Dixons (one of the UK's largest consumer electronics retailers). BMW are also offering Sony and Pioneer DAB receivers as an option - the price is not as competitive as the Grundig receiver but it looks like the receiver manufacturers are now working closely with car manufacturers.

LfK Announcement

LfK recently announced that they will spend 3 million Marks (about 1.4 million Euro) in 2000 to support local and regional DAB broadcasters in Baden Wurttemberg. The media authority plans to subsidise 85 to 90 per cent of transmission costs and 75 of the costs for digital feeds to the sites.

Psion to unveil new Digital Radio



Psion InfoMedia, the new multimedia subsidiary of British computer manufacturer Psion, unveiled its first product at the CeBIT computer show in Hanover, Germany: the Wavefinder DAB receiver.

The Wavefinder is a DAB receiver with a very futuristic design that connects to the USB (Universal Serial Bus) port of any PC or Laptop computer. The receiver not only plays digital audio programmes but also makes use of the great data capabilities of Digital Radio.

The receiver, a small egg-shaped box in the centre of a dipole aerial, delivers the DAB signal to the PC where it is decoded by the standard computer CPU. Via the USB port, it is possible for the first time to receive digital radio on a portable computer.

Psion announced that the Wavefinder will be commercially launched in the third quarter of 2000 at "a price far below anything that is on the market right now".

Other Digital Radio exhibitors at CeBIT included PC card manufacturers Terratec, TechnoTrend and Bosch/Blaupunkt. Although regular DAB transmission in Northern Germany, will only begin in the middle of the year on the occasion of the Expo 2000 World Exhibition, public broadcaster Norddeutscher Rundfunk already had a Digital Radio ensemble on the air in Hanover.

WorldDAB Web 2000



With the new millennium comes a new look to the World DAB Forum Web Site. Retaining a very simple design, the WorldDAB web site has been restructured to accommodate the vast amount of information available to members and the public alike.

The new web site was launched on the 14th February, 2000 and is now much easier to navigate and therefore a lot more useful and interesting to the visitor.

There are new highlights to the site including exclusive sections dedicated to DAB's status around the world and to DAB products.

Visit the re-structured World DAB Forum web site on the usual address www.worlddab.org and inform yourself on everything there is to know about DAB.

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