

Free to Air DMB Mobile TV Launches in Norway

Norway today launched DMB mobile TV services in Oslo called 'MiniTV'.

London, 15th May 2009

Norway's broadcasters will launch six live TV channels enabling viewers to watch programmes ranging from children's content to sports and even live news highlights. MiniTV is aimed at providing mobile TV on all personal handheld devices, not only mobile phones, which receive both free-to-air DMB mobile TV and DAB digital radio. Some pay TV channels will also be introduced at a later stage.

DMB receivers are already on sale in a number of stores throughout the city and new products from other brands are expected in the summer.

The service is being launched by the Norwegian Mobile TV Corporation (NMTV), a joint venture between the three largest broadcasters in Norway: NRK, TV 2 and MTG. NRK's channels will be free to air whereas TV 2 and MTG are planning to introduce billing for some or all of their channels.

"This is a groundbreaking launch as three competitors are together building the mobile TV market to handhelds while still competing on content. This is MiniTV which means the content will be received by not only on mobile phones but other devices such as PMPs. These free-to-air services are aimed at the user offering a wide range of content" said Gunnar Garfors, CEO, NMTV.

The TV channels offered by NMTV will be NRK1, NRK2, NRK3, TV 2, TV 2 News 24 and Viasat TV 3, 15 DAB digital radio channels can also be received by all DMB handsets, giving an impressive channel offering. Additional services providing interactivity, traffic information and on-demand programmes will be offered later in 2009.

Quentin Howard, President of WorldDMB said "The launch of free-to-air DMB mobile TV in Norway comes at an exciting time for the digital broadcasting industry. There are many countries with compatible DAB and DAB+ digital radio networks in place to which DMB mobile TV can be added very simply. Norway's MiniTV will show consumers and broadcasters in Europe the potential of free-to-air mobile TV which have already been embraced by millions of consumers in South Korea."

MiniTV uses DMB mobile TV, part of the same core standard as DAB digital radio. The DAB network in Norway currently covers 80% of all households with further plans to upgrade this coverage in 2009. Adding DMB mobile TV coverage to the existing DAB digital radio network infrastructure is the most cost effective way to provide mobile TV coverage across the country avoiding the need to build expensive, new, dedicated mobile TV infrastructure.

MiniTV will initially be available in Greater Oslo covering 30% of Norway's population. NMTV's DMB license is valid until July 2011 and may be lengthened if the initial period proves a success.

DMB mobile TV is available in South Korea, China and Ghana with tests and trials of the technology taking place or planned in many more countries worldwide during 2009.

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Notes to Editors: The DAB family is the most successful set of digital radio standards in the world today. Created from the outset for mobile and portable reception of audio services, the standard has been developed to offer multimedia and video with DAB+ and DMB digital radio and DMB mobile TV. Collectively these are often referred to as the Eureka 147 Family of Standards, having originated as an EU funded Eureka project. The system is on-air in nearly 40 countries across Europe, Australia and the Far East. More than 500 million people are within range of DAB, DAB+ or DMB services, with over 1,000 services on-air. In Europe, digital radio is available in the UK, Denmark, Malta, Norway, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland and Spain with digital radio launches planned for France, Ireland, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands and Czech Republic. The world's first DMB mobile TV services launched in South Korea in 2005 and is now one of the most successful markets in the world. DAB is also on-air in China as the only industrial standard for digital radio with DMB successfully used for mobile TV during the 2008 Olympics. Other DMB mobile TV services and trials are taking place in Norway, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Indonesia. In 2008 the industry body responsible for the Eureka 147 family of standards, the WorldDMB Forum, created the 'Digital Radio Receiver Profiles' which specify a set of minimum requirements and features for different types of consumer digital radio receivers. The Receiver Profiles ensure interoperability of new receivers and services between countries whose broadcasters may be using different combinations of DAB, DAB+ or DMB. WorldDMB's Receiver Profiles create a harmonised digital radio and multimedia market across the world.

About WorldDMB

WorldDMB is an international, non-governmental organisation with a mandate to promote the awareness, adoption and implementation of Eureka 147 based technologies worldwide. The organisation's name refers to 'digital multimedia broadcasting' and encompasses radio, mobile TV and broadcast new media services. Its members include public and commercial broadcasters, receiver manufacturers and other companies and bodies committed to the promotion of services and equipment based on the Eureka 147 family of standards.