

Digital radio for all European motorists

The European digital radio industry today moved closer to ensuring digital radio is standard in all new cars sold in Europe.

London, 2nd June 2009

At an international workshop organised by WorldDMB, European broadcasters met with major car industry companies last week to discuss the future of digital radios for the automotive market. This positive move signals a closer cooperation between the two sectors in the future development of digital radio as standard in cars.

In the first session of the day, public and commercial broadcasters from France, Germany, Italy, the UK and the Nordic countries shared information and confirmed their commitment to the DAB family of standards (DAB, DAB+ and DMB radio) as the digital radio solution for their countries.

Mr Quentin Howard, President, WorldDMB said "The digital radio industry sees the car sector as key to the successful uptake of digital radio in Europe and worldwide. By working together we can ensure the effective migration from analogue to digital across Europe. This workshop has been a positive step towards achieving this aim and understanding the requirements of the automotive sector."

Representatives from the leading car manufacturers Audi, BMW, Daimler AG, Ford, Land Rover & Jaguar, PSA Peugeot Citroën, Renault, Skoda, Toyota, Volkswagen as well as chip and OEMs from the car industry attended the event, which was supported by the German Automobile Association the VDA (Verband der Automobilindustrie). Open and constructive discussion took place on key topics influencing the take up of digital radio in cars, including new and attractive content from broadcasters, production cycles for receiver equipment, transmission coverage, metadata to ensure uninterrupted listening on the move, live traffic information and many other issues. There was agreement that by working together digital radio could become standard fit in all cars, with much interest centred around the French requirement to achieve this by 2013.

Dr Schott, VDA said "By bringing together the key players from both industries WorldDMB and its members are taking further steps to ensure that digital radio continues its success in Europe. Currently there are 45 million radios in cars in Germany alone and the relationship of drivers with their radios remains strong with radio by far the most frequently used medium."

DAB digital radio is currently available as an option in over 50 German manufactured car models from brands such as Audi, BMW, Mercedes, Volkswagen, Opel/Vauxhall and around

90 models including Ford, Jaguar, Seat, Toyota, and Volvo and is available as a standard option in models on sale in the UK and Norway.

This Workshop provided a hitherto unique opportunity for all major manufacturers and broadcasters to meet, and marks an important step towards the European automotive industry offering digital radio as standard in all cars.

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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 planned for 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 and creates 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' including 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.