

DAB+ digital radio for Italy

The Italian regulator approves regulation to allow DAB+ digital radio to launch in Italy

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In a historic move, Italy's regulator approved the regulation to allow the commercial launch of DAB+ digital radio services for the first time.

Following wide industry consultation the Italian radio broadcasters, public and commercial, worked in collaboration to produce regulation which allows the radio sector to move to digital adding benefits for both broadcasters and listeners. The regulation will allow broadcasters across Italy to migrate their services from analogue to digital offering listener's new content and multi-media services. Listeners will also have access to a growing number of exciting new DAB+ receivers from manufacturers such as PURE Digital.

Mr Fabrizio Guidi, President of Club DAB Italia said "We are very happy that the regulation has been approved paving the way for digital radio for the Italian broadcasting industry".

"Digital radio is the future. The Italian industry and the regulator are making a strong statement that radio is important. A well designed regulatory framework will give this developing market the stability to roll out efficiently and keep the industry competitive within the highly dynamic media world. We know regulation produced in this way, with the input from all interested parties, is most effective in making digital radio a success and we urge other markets considering going digital to adopt this approach" said, Jørn Jensen, President of WorldDMB.

The Italian regulation clearly states that DAB+ digital radio will be launched in Band III. It provides regulation on coverage, networks for national services, spectrum allocation for services, local coverage and rules on simulcasting and new content. The regulation will be put into effect from January 2010 and digital radio development will move forward from here.

Digital radio is currently commercially available in Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Norway, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and the UK. The symbolic launch of the digital radio took place in Paris recently with the launch of 60 services using DMB radio. Ireland, Hungary and Sweden are also in a phase where clear regulation guidelines are needed to accelerate the adoption of digital radio on the DAB, DAB+ and DMB.

ENDS

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Notes to Editors: The foundation standard DAB and related standards such as DAB+/DMB can be seen and heard in nearly 40 countries from Canada to Australia, across Europe and the Far East. Countries including India and South Africa are testing DAB and developing consumer trials. More than 500 million people worldwide are within range of a DAB/DMB transmitter, and there are over 1000 services on air. Created from the onset to enable mobile reception with audio, video and multimedia capabilities, the DAB standard has recently extended its lead into the world of mobile multimedia delivery through its compatible DMB application. DMB is DAB's Mobile TV solution and shares the same core standard, infrastructure and receiver technology. The launch of the world's first Mobile TV services took place in Korea in December 2005 using DMB technology. DMB is on-air in China in five major cities including Beijing, and more DAB, DAB+, and DMB services are expected to launch in Europe during the next year. The addition of DAB+ as a highly efficient audio coding has been ETSI standardized and many countries throughout Europe and in the Asia Pacific are planning commercial launches of DAB+ digital radio services in 2009.

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.