



European Broadcasters committed to digital radio

Calls for a single European market for digital radio

London, September 8th, 2011 Europe's biggest consumer electronics trade fair, IFA, was all about digital radio this year. Held in Berlin, September 2 – 7, the show came just one month after Germany, Europe's biggest radio market, launched its first national digital radio services. So, it's no surprise that Europe's broadcasters were out in force to support the growing move to digital radio that's sweeping across the continent.

The main event was a "Digital Radio Day" on Monday 5th September hosted by WorldDMB and the German Digital Radio Project Office, the ARD and DRD. Broadcasters from the UK, France, Italy, Belgium, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and, of course, Germany, called for a single, European market for digital radio and listened to speaker after speaker voice their country's commitment to rolling out the digital radio standard of choice.

The affirmative pan-European pro-digital radio message was clearly emphasised by **Helmut Bauer** of **Digital Radio Deutschland** who opened the event saying: "We did it! Digital radio's been on-air in Germany since August 1, 2011. It's good to be part of the worldwide digital radio family!"

Thomas Saner of Switzerland's **SSR SRG** told the conference "DAB+ in Switzerland is no longer the radio of the future but the radio of today," adding, "The launch of DAB+ in Germany is the trigger for a pan-European solution for digital radio. Let's support Germany!"

For the UK's **BBC**, **Lindsey Mack** highlighted the Corporation's commitment to DAB as a broadcast platform and underlined the importance of collaboration with manufacturers and retailers across digital radio planning. This was followed by an update by **Antoine Baudel** of **Radio FG** on the positive developments in France where a demonstration in Lyon continues to impress broadcasters. He said: "Digital radio is for those broadcasters who are visionaries." And in Italy, where 65% of listening is in-car, the digital radio industry has prioritised working closely with the auto industry, said **Rai Way's Giuseppe Braccini**.

The final part of the session saw the **Director General of RTBF Radio, Francis Goffin** state that “Radio over IP is not a complete solution...switching to digital radio has many benefits for radio and society in general including reduced power consumption”. He added that DAB+ roll out in French speaking Belgium will be based on close cooperation between public and private broadcasters, with the public authorities and the industry. This was followed by the Norwegian representative **Ole Jørgen Torvmark** of **Digitalradio NORGE** who highlighted news relating to the work being carried out in preparation for the FM switch off, with the keys to success so far having been “co-operation, long-term perspective and clarity”. Meanwhile its neighbour Sweden is optimistic about its own digital radio future, confirmed by **Swedish Radio’s Mats Akerlund**.

The digital radio theme continued elsewhere at IFA with press events, on-stand consumer promotions, retailer focused training, the latest digital devices from major manufacturers and examples of radio content currently broadcasting on Germany’s national multiplex.

The event showed that there is renewed confidence and optimism amongst Europe’s broadcasters that radio’s future is, and can only be digital. With so many voices present at the ‘Digital Radio Day’ from the European market calling for unity, the **WorldDMB President Jørn Jensen** took the opportunity to urge broadcasters to unite to strongly recommend that their own national administrations draw up a digital radio roadmap which will enable Europe to bring radio into the digital age.

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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. 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.

Notes to Editors: The DAB family is the most successful set of digital radio standards in the world. Created for mobile and portable reception of audio, multimedia and video services, the family includes the compatible standards DAB, DAB+ and DMB digital radio and DMB mobile TV. Collectively these are 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. 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. 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.