



DIGITAL COUNTDOWN FOR CARS HAS BEGUN

At the Drive 2 Digital conference held by Digital Radio UK at BBC's New Broadcasting House today, Broadcast Minister Ed Vaizey announced that the countdown to radio switchover now had inevitable momentum and that Government would announce a decision on radio switchover in 2013.

Over 300 automotive industry and broadcaster attendees heard about the progress being made on fitting digital radios in cars from the Minister, Top Gear's James May and from a range of senior car and broadcasting executives.

The Minister announced that digital listening had increased to nearly third of all listening and that a quarter of new cars were now fitted with digital radio as standard. He said that this great progress demonstrated that listeners love digital radio and that the car industry was fully engaged with the transition to digital.

Tim Davie, BBC Director of Audio & Music, confirmed the BBC's commitment to digital radio and said increases in digital listening meant that the road to a future radio switchover was now clear and inevitable. He said this was due to listeners loving the expanded choice on digital radio and the success of the BBC digital radio stations such as Station of the Year 6 Music, Radio 4 Extra and the digital pop-up station BBC Radio 5 Live Olympics Extra.

Davie announced that specific plans for BBC National DAB coverage buildout to 97% would be confirmed in spring 2013, with a focus on ensuring that all motorways and major road networks were covered.

Anthony Ireson, the Marketing Director of Ford of Britain, the UK's largest vehicle manufacturer, confirmed that plans were well advanced for digital radio as standard across their range, and announced that from mid-December Ford would offer digital radio adaptors fully-fitted through their national network of 650 Authorised Repairers, in preparation for a future digital radio switchover.

Attendees heard that there is a wide range of digital adaptors that will enable any motorist to get digital radio in their existing car and The Institute of the Motor Industry announced the launch of a new digital installer training scheme for the industry.



Paul Everitt, CEO of the Society of Motor Manufacturers, welcomed the launch of digital radio adaptors throughout the Ford Dealer Network and the launch of the IMI digital radio accreditation scheme saying it was good news for drivers and demonstrated the commitment of the vehicle industry to accelerating the transition to digital radio for all cars.

Ford Ennals, CEO of Digital Radio UK, announced new consumer research conducted by Digital Radio UK and Auto Trader which shows high satisfaction levels (82%) among drivers with digital radio in their car and high willingness to recommend to others. It also confirmed that motorists are increasingly keen to convert their existing cars to receive digital radio, and that drivers consider a car worth less without digital radio. The research also shows that 60% are aware that a radio switchover is being planned.

Ennals said that the £10 million two-year industry communications campaign would be ramped up over the next 12 months with heavyweight campaigns running on BBC TV, BBC radio and commercial radio. The next phase of the campaign, created by ad agency RKCR/Y&R, builds on the strong consumer advocacy for digital radio and introduces a digital evangelist D Love who encourages listeners to 'spread the love' for digital radio. The campaign launches on BBC TV on mid-November, followed by heavyweight commercial and BBC radio, and supported online and instore. Cars will be an important focus for the communications campaign.

Communications Minister Ed Vaizey said: *"Digital radio continues to go from strength to strength and the decision on whether we are to switch to an all-digital future will be made next year. We are already looking at the logistics of how and when a full switchover would be possible."*

Tim Davie, BBC Director of Audio & Music, says: *"While it is encouraging to see record numbers for BBC digital stations, the real breakthrough will come when DAB radio is in all cars. Therefore, it is excellent news that while the BBC builds out coverage, more and more car manufacturers are now announcing that DAB will be standard fit in all their models."*

Anthony Ireson, Marketing Director of Ford of Britain, says: *"As we head towards the radio switchover, I'm pleased to announce that Ford UK is launching a new DAB product upgrade for our customers who have not yet been able to enjoy the benefits and variety of in-car digital radio."*

Ford Ennals, CEO of Digital Radio UK, says: *"I'm delighted with the response we have had from car manufacturers to the Digital Drive 2 Digital conference and with the progress being made with digital radio in cars. During the countdown to the 2013 Government switchover announcement broadcasters are committed to communicating to listeners that they can get*



digital radio in their car and encouraging them to 'spread the love' ."

Paul Everitt, CEO of the Society of Motor Manufacturers, says; *"It's good news for drivers and good news for digital radio that manufacturers are now well placed to offer customers a range of audio options both at the point of sale, and later through the franchised dealer network."*

Sarah Sillars, Executive Chair of the IMI, who are the governing body for the ATA scheme, says: *"It's testament to the strength of the ATA brand within the automotive sector that Digital Radio UK has sought our involvement in the creation of a solution that will recognise technical competence in this field. We are approaching a crucial point in advancing the country's communication infrastructure and are proud to have collaborated in delivering a new benchmark standard for the retail automotive sector."*

Top Gear's James May says: *"Surely every reasonably-priced car should be converted to receive digital radio."*

NOTES FOR EDITORS

- 20% of radio listening is in-car (source: RAJAR Q3 2012)
- 5% of cars are estimated to have a digital radio (source: Ofcom Digital Radio Report 2012)
- 42% of homes have digital radio
- 31.3% of all radio listening is to digital platforms
- 26% of new car registrations have digital radio as standard (source: CAP/SMMT Q3 2012)

ABOUT DIGITAL RADIO UK

Digital Radio UK works with Government, broadcasters, manufacturers, retailers, and a wide range of stakeholders to accelerate digital listening, to enable the expansion of the digital radio platform, and to ensure that industry meets the consumer-led criteria to be achieved for a proposed radio switchover. Digital Radio UK's Board comprises representatives from the BBC, RadioCentre, Arqiva, Global Radio, Bauer Media, Real and Smooth Ltd. and Absolute Radio, together with Intellect and the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders.

For further information

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