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Radio industry targets automotive aftermarket sector

Commercial Radio Australia (CRA) continues to drive the uptake of DAB+ digital radio, beginning the year with a DAB+ digital radio Installers Workshop for the automotive aftermarket retail and installer sector.

The early morning breakfast workshop on Wednesday 20 February will include the most up-to-date information on DAB+ digital radio aftermarket products, how to optimise in car reception and guidelines for antenna placement to receive the best digital radio coverage. In addition, the workshop will provide an update on DAB+ coverage and the status of the rollout to areas outside of the five state metropolitan capitals.

The industry has made significant inroads with Australian vehicle manufacturers throughout last year with Toyota, Lexus and Hino now offering DAB+ as standard in selected new vehicle models, plus Audi, BMW and most recently Land Rover and Mercedes with DAB+ digital as an option in a number of models.

Commercial radio listening figures for 2012 show 34% of radio listening is in the car and the radio industry is keen for those listeners to experience digital radio.

Chief executive officer of Commercial Radio Australia, Joan Warner said: "There are around 16 million registered vehicles in Australia, mostly with analogue radios; the DAB+ digital radio aftermarket sector provides a great opportunity for aftermarket retailers, installers and manufacturers."

Figures released this month from the United Kingdom revealed one third of all new cars (33%) in Q4 2012 now have a digital radio as standard. This compares with 25.5% in Q3 2012, 20.8% in Q4 2011 and just 7.5% in Q4 2010.

Digital radio was launched in the UK in 1999 using the less spectrum efficient DAB technology, however many of the receivers in these vehicles would include a multi chip that would enable DAB services to be received in the UK and DAB+ services in much of Europe.

As the vehicle manufacturers aim to implement global solutions this will mean that support for the DAB+ standard by Japanese and European vehicle manufacturers and aftermarket receiver manufacturers will also be available soon in Australia.

Commercial Radio Australia chief executive officer, Joan Warner said: "The uptake of digital radio continues to climb and the industry's goal throughout 2013 is to ensure as many cars and other devices include DAB+ digital radio."

Places at the workshop are limited. Aftermarket retailers and installers should contact Commercial Radio Australia on 02 9281 6577 or email info@commercialradio.com.au for more details.

Media contact: Melissa Fleming 0417 499 529

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