



## The DAB Family – an international digital broadcasting standard

16<sup>th</sup> December 2005 - It is estimated that by the end of 2005, nearly four million people around the world will be listening to unique new radio services in digital quality sound through a DAB digital radio. And with mobile television and multimedia delivered via DMB (Digital Multimedia Broadcasting) and DAB-IP – both part of the DAB family of standards - launching commercially in 2006, this number is set to escalate rapidly.

Leading the charge are the UK, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Holland, Switzerland, Korea and China, with other countries close behind.

- **The UK** has the most mature DAB listening audience with nearly three million sets estimated to be in use by the end of the year. The market here is worth around £120 million a year. DAB mobile TV and Multimedia (DAB-IP trials) have concluded and commercial multi-media services are expected to launch in 2006.
- **In China**, where many DAB devices are made, the market is growing rapidly from a recent start.
  - \* Eighty million people in Guangdong Province can receive DMB trial services.
  - \* Trials began in Beijing in 2005 broadcasting two DAB radio services to 12 million people. Six more services are planned.
  - \* Video and multi-media trials using DAB's IP application are broadcasting to 16 million potential listeners in Shanghai . Six video and 12 audio services are planned.
- **Korea** is the first country to go beyond trials and commercially launch DMB services, a mixture of television, data and radio services. In just a few months, an estimated 22,000 mobile devices have been sold, with sales of two million expected by the end of 2006. DMB enabled mobile phones will be on sale in Korea this month.
- Services broadcasting on DAB radio in **Germany** continue to grow with at least 10 new stations launching in 2005, bringing the total on-air to around 90 and indoor reception is set to improve exponentially throughout 2006.

Germany will lead two major DMB trials in 2006 focused on the World Cup with radio and television services. One is a project called *Mi Friends*, which has

received official status as a European project with a budget of around 18 million euros over the next two years.

- **Switzerland** was a big success story in 2005 and with DAB radio receivers now available in shops, there are plans to raise coverage to 73% early in 2006. By the end of December 2005, a new multiplex in the Ticino region will bring a further nine radio stations to DAB (six of them exclusive to digital radio) giving Switzerland a total of 30 French and German speaking DAB radio channels. SRG, the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation, has said it will not invest in expanding the FM network, but will focus on growing DAB coverage instead. 84% of media companies surveyed in Switzerland said they want to see a second layer of DAB as quickly as possible. A new DAB marketing bureau in Switzerland will promote products and services to consumers.
- In **The Netherlands**, public service broadcast NOS has applied for a second national multiplex, and commercial licences will be allocated in Summer of 2006. Coverage is around 70% of the population, expected to rise to 90% following the roll-out of commercial DAB licences next year. Unique DAB Radio services are already on air, and a digital radio marketing bureau has been formed to promote products and stations to consumers. The Netherlands has a proposed analogue switch-off target of 2019.
- **Denmark** has seen strong growth in DAB Radio with sales more than trebling year-on-year in 2005 (up from 40,000 in 2004 to 135,000 before Christmas in 2005). With 70% coverage, firm government support, commitment from public broadcaster Danmarks Radio (DR) and a vigorous promotional campaign from a newly formed DAB marketing bureau, Denmark is a rapidly developing market.

These examples of international growth and commitment to DAB and its family of standards are just the tip of the iceberg. **Norway** is set to grow coverage to 80% and the public broadcaster has set an analogue switch-off target of 2014; **Taiwan's** DAB licences have been awarded and services expected to launch in 2006; in **Italy** new regulation for DAB came into place in 2005 and licensing is expected to be awarded in 2006; a legal framework for digital radio is now in place in **Australia**; and **Singapore** has 100% population coverage, strong government support and much broadcaster enthusiasm.

With new technology there will always be the isolated hiccup. Stations come and go, governments backtrack on legislation, broadcasters fear to embrace new technology. But ultimately it is the consumer who drives new innovation and if the medium is appealing enough and if it delivers added value, then market demand will overcome any individual set backs. The fact is that the DAB (radio and mobile TV) standard is proving itself in nearly 40 countries around the world. The market is growing and it shows little sign of slowing down.

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**Notes to Editors:** DAB Digital Radio has become an internationally adopted standard that can be seen and heard in nearly 40 countries from Canada to Australia, across Europe and the Far East. Countries including India, China and South Africa, are testing DAB and developing consumer trials. More than 500 million people worldwide are within range of a DAB Digital Radio transmitter, and there are nearly 1000 services on air. Wherever there is DAB infrastructure there can be DMB. The technology behind DAB and DMB is sometimes referred to as Eureka147, the European consortium that developed the system. The core Eureka147 standard has expanded into a family of DAB standards which now include other multimedia applications and features, including DMB. Because all of these share the same core standard, infrastructure and receiver technology they can co-exist in any combination.

**About The World DAB Forum**

The World DAB Forum is an international, non-governmental organisation whose role is to promote the awareness, adoption and implementation of DAB Digital Radio worldwide. Its members include public and commercial broadcasters, receiver manufacturers and other companies and bodies committed to converting the technology behind DAB into a commercial marketing success.