

# International broadcast & media briefs

A monthly summary of web-based news

February 2004

## Asia

### Korea sticks to ATSC

The Korean government has reaffirmed its decision to go with the US ATSC digital transmission system rather than the European-based DVB. South Korea selected the ATSC system back in 1997, with a view to launching digital television four years later, but the commercial launch has been put back amid complaints from the pro-DVB local broadcasters.

Source: Broadband TV News, [www.broadbandtvnews.com/](http://www.broadbandtvnews.com/)

## Europe

### Canal Plus in deal with France Telecom to supply TV via ADSL

Vivendi Universal unit Canal Plus said it agreed a partnership deal with France Telecom to supply a television service via ADSL, marketed by both companies and to begin this year.

Source: New media markets daily newsletter, 27 January 2004

## DTT

The six French public service channels will be grouped on a single multiplex (on the R1 frequency network), enabling the public service channels to establish their multiplex operator rapidly and to prepare for the launch of DTT under optimal conditions.

Source: [www.ebu.ch](http://www.ebu.ch) 30 January 2004.

### Italy's controversial media bill heads back to vote

Italy's controversial media bill has gone back to parliament after its rejection late last year by the president. The bill relaxes limits on media ownership meaning the (Prime Minister) Berlusconi family's holding company Fininvest could expand from television, publishing and film into radio and ultimately print. The bill has seven amendments addressing the criticisms.

Source: New media markets daily newsletter, 30 January 2004

### Finnish DTT soon to achieve 99.9% coverage

Digital terrestrial television in Finland will soon achieve full national coverage: the public broadcaster YLE's is in open negotiations with transmitter owner-operator Digita to expand DTT coverage from 72 per cent to 99.9 per cent of the country.

More: [www.dtg.org.uk/news/world/-finnish\\_99pc\\_coverage.htm](http://www.dtg.org.uk/news/world/-finnish_99pc_coverage.htm)

### Commission launches inquiry into the sale of sports rights to Internet and 3G mobile operators

The European Commission will launch an investigation into the sale of sports rights to Internet companies and to providers of third generation (3G) mobile phone services.

More: <http://europa.eu.int>

### 2005 launch for DTT in East Germany

Germany's DTT plans to extend the rollout to East Germany in the next year. The State of Saxonia-Anhalt wants to start transmissions around the major conurbations of Erfurt, Weimar and Leipzig.

Source: [www.broadbandtvnews.com](http://www.broadbandtvnews.com)

## Safer Internet Day across Europe

Safer Internet Day, 6 February 2004, focuses on children's rights to a safer Internet and is celebrated simultaneously in 12 European countries and in Australia, where national authorities, the Internet industry and hundreds of multiplier organisations are also involved.

More: [www.safer-internet.net/sid-programme.asp](http://www.safer-internet.net/sid-programme.asp)

## European Commission launches anti-spam campaign

The Commission has adopted a Communication on spam, which identifies a series of actions that are needed to complement the EU rules and make the 'ban on spam' as effective as possible.

More:

[europa.eu.int/information\\_society/topics/ecom/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/information_society/topics/ecom/index_en.htm)

## 'Momentum is building' for DAB, says Bernard

GWR Group's executive chairman, Ralph Bernard, has called on the government to set a date for a switch-off of analog radio transmissions.

More: [www.digitalspy.co.uk/article/ds13116.html](http://www.digitalspy.co.uk/article/ds13116.html)

## UK Government Issues Report on DTV e-Government Policy

According to the UK government's Office of the e-Envoy report, *Digital Television: a policy framework for accessing e-government services*, more than 45 per cent of UK homes now have access to DTV.

More: [www.govtalk.gov.uk/documents/digital\\_tv.pdf](http://www.govtalk.gov.uk/documents/digital_tv.pdf)

## The TV revolution: take two

Video on demand was going to be the next big thing – letting you watch television shows you forgot even to record. Yet, five years on, the leading operator has just 3000 customers.

More: [news.independent.co.uk/uk/media/story.jsp?story=482810](http://news.independent.co.uk/uk/media/story.jsp?story=482810)

## Sky targets UK Asians with free Star TV

BSkyB plans to attract more Asians to its service by scrapping charges for Hindi-language entertainment channels STAR Plus and STAR News.

More: [www.broadcastnow.co.uk](http://www.broadcastnow.co.uk)

## BBC TV to move online

The BBC plans to make its broadcast programming available online using an interactive media player. Seven days' television programming will be made available for view as the BBC attempts to promote broadband adoption in the UK.

Source: New media markets daily newsletter, 22 January 2004

## Ofcom publishes Annual Plan 2004-05 for consultation

Ofcom has published its annual plan for its first full year of operation from April 2004 to March 2005.

More: [www.ofcom.org.uk](http://www.ofcom.org.uk)

### **Switzerland: more DAB stations**

SRG SSR idée suisse has announced the expansion of the DAB (Digital Audio Broadcasting) offer. La Première, Rete Uno and Swiss Classic will become available in DAB mode in German-speaking Switzerland and Swiss Classic in French-speaking Switzerland.

More:

[www.ebu.ch/news/press\\_archive/2004/press\\_breves\\_007\\_dab.php](http://www.ebu.ch/news/press_archive/2004/press_breves_007_dab.php)

### **RAI launches two Italian DTT multiplexes**

RAI has unveiled its two DVB-T multiplexes which will carry eight television channels produced by RAI, two run by third-party content providers, and four radio channels.

More: [www.dtg.org.uk/news/world/-rai\\_muxes.htm](http://www.dtg.org.uk/news/world/-rai_muxes.htm)

### **The regulation of electronic program guides**

Ofcom is seeking views on the regulation of electronic program guides (EPGs) as well as proposals to continue access regulation on the EPG provided by British Sky Broadcasting Limited (BSkyB) for satellite television viewers.

More: [www.ofcom.org.uk/whats\\_new/](http://www.ofcom.org.uk/whats_new/)

### **Ofcom announces guidance on media mergers public interest test**

Ofcom has set out its draft guidance on the public interest test to be applied to media mergers in the event of a request for further investigation from the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry.

More: [www.itc.org.uk/media\\_office/latest\\_news/nr\\_20040105](http://www.itc.org.uk/media_office/latest_news/nr_20040105)

### **Jowell orders BBC self-assessment**

Media secretary Tessa Jowell has asked the BBC to produce an assessment on each of its new digital television and radio channels.

Source: [www.broadcastnow.co.uk](http://www.broadcastnow.co.uk)

### **Record digital TV STB sales in 2004**

According to the latest study from research firm Strategy Analytics, digital television set-top box sales are to rocket by 39 per cent to a record 50.3 million units in 2004.

More: [www.dtg.org.uk/news/world/-stb\\_rocket.htm](http://www.dtg.org.uk/news/world/-stb_rocket.htm)

### **Attitudes to digital television**

A study on how the change to digital television will affect, and be perceived by, different sectors of the population.

More: [www.digitaltelevision.gov.uk/attitudes\\_to\\_DTV.html](http://www.digitaltelevision.gov.uk/attitudes_to_DTV.html)

## **New Zealand**

### **TV local content targets for 2004**

New Zealand's main free-to-air channels have demonstrated their commitment to locally produced programs by agreeing to television local content targets for 2004.

More: [www.nzonair.govt.nz/pag.cfm?i=717](http://www.nzonair.govt.nz/pag.cfm?i=717)

## **US**

### **FCC releases tenth annual report on competition in video markets**

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has released its tenth annual report on competition in the market for the delivery of video programming.

The report and full news release: [www.fcc.gov](http://www.fcc.gov)

### **FCC's multichannel video distribution and data service auction concludes**

The Federal Communications Commission auction of spectrum for Multichannel Video Distribution and Data Service (MVDDS) ended on 27 January 2004, raising total net bids of US\$118,721,835.

The auction, which began on 14 January 2004, ended after 49 rounds of bidding.

More: [www.fcc.gov](http://www.fcc.gov)

### **FTC seeks public comment on adult content spam rule**

The Federal Trade Commission has announced a proposal to establish a mark or notice that will be required for inclusion in spam that contains sexually oriented material.

More: [www.ftc.gov/opa/2004/01/adult.htm](http://www.ftc.gov/opa/2004/01/adult.htm)

### **Senate OKs 39% Cap**

Legislation setting the national television ownership cap at 39 per cent of television homes is headed to the President's desk.

Source: [www.broadcastingcable.com](http://www.broadcastingcable.com)

### **New technology**

Chip manufacturer, Broadcom, unveiled the BCM 7038, a single-chip solution which integrates support for dual-channel HD video, audio and graphics with PVR capabilities, and is intended for use in digital television sets, cable set-top boxes, satellite receivers and HD-DVD players.

More: [www.itvt.com](http://www.itvt.com)

### **Worldwide cable TV industry manages to grow in 2003, but challenges abound**

Although the total number of worldwide cable television subscribers increased last year, the rate of growth in 2003 was the slowest in over a decade.

Source: (In-Stat Research Report Highlight)

[www.broadcastingcable.com](http://www.broadcastingcable.com)

### **Powell, Upton call for increased indecency fines**

If FCC chairman Michael Powell and a key lawmaker get their way, broadcasters could face dramatically higher penalties for airing indecent programming when kids are likely to be in the audience.

Source: [www.broadcastingcable.com](http://www.broadcastingcable.com)

### **Pew Internet and American Life Project America's Online Pursuits**

A broad analysis of over three years' worth of Pew Internet Project data illustrates shifting trends in Internet use by Americans. The US online population totalled about 126 million in August 2003, about 63 percent of the online population is over 18, while pronounced distinctions remain between those who are active on the Internet and those who are not.

More: [www.pewinternet.org/reports/toc.asp?Report=106](http://www.pewinternet.org/reports/toc.asp?Report=106)

### **Are 'smart radios' a solution to spectrum scarcity?**

The FCC seeks comment on so-called 'smart radios' or software-defined radios. Smart radios can adapt their spectrum use in response to information external to the radio. The FCC is looking at the devices as a possibility for using spectrum – both occupied and vacant – more efficiently.

Source: [www.rwonline.com/dailynews/one.php?id=4343](http://www.rwonline.com/dailynews/one.php?id=4343)