

press information



Sony sustains European Digital Radio

Technology leader lends its weight to commercialisation

Paris, 4 September 2003 – In a clear sign of its commitment to help expand the markets for digital radio in Europe, Sony has lent its support to both the World DAB (Digital Audio Broadcast) forum and the DRM (Digital Radio Mondiale) consortium by recently joining the commercial arms of both organisations. Sony has been a member in both organisations for many years in creating the digital standards that underpin digital radio and now that these are agreed, is determined to play a full role in its commercialisation and promotion in Europe.

“We are actively supporting the spread of digital radio broadcasting in Europe and through our partnership with members of DAB and DRM we believe we can expand the usage of digital radio in Europe,” explains Fenno de Boer, Group Marketing Manager Business Developments, Sony Personal Audio Europe. “Sony launched the world’s first transistor radio for the mass market in 1955 and Sony’s success in the radio receiver market was the corner stone on which the company was built. We continue to be technological innovators in radio and are actively supporting the spread of digital radio broadcasting.”

Annika Nyberg, President of the World DAB Forum says "Sony's involvement in digital radio in the commercial field brings the final ingredient for success in a mass market worldwide. Sony is a global player and their greater commitment to digital radio, both DAB and DRM, is fantastic news. The WorldDAB Forum looks forward to seeing the products that will come to market in the near future."

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For information and images from Sony Dream World please visit www.sony-europe.com/sonydreamworld
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Digital radio broadcasting provides a new way of distributing the output of radio stations and delivers a high quality listening experience. Channels are processed digitally then combined for transmission as a multiplexed stream by operators whose coverage can be local, national or international. DAB and DRM are complementary digital radio technologies that can be compared to present-day analogue FM and AM services. DAB, which is based on high frequency signals, is suited to local FM-style coverage, while DRM, which uses lower frequencies, is adapted for long distance broadcasting. The multiplexed transmission method makes efficient use of the radio spectrum enabling more channels to be provided within a given bandwidth. This is expected to lead to wider choice for listeners and lower costs for broadcasters.

Digital Radio not only offers excellent sound quality but is also resistant to interference and greatly improves mobile reception. The digital stream can also carry other data to provide a range of additional services such as text that can augment the audio signal, providing extra information on programming or support for advertisers' messages.

The success of DAB in the UK, the first market in which digital radio has achieved critical mass, has encouraged content providers (chiefly radio stations), broadcasters and manufacturers to step up their efforts to prepare other European markets to go digital. These efforts are being led by the World DAB forum and the DRM consortium.

Sony Europe, which has supported the development of Digital Radio since the early 1990's, is preparing to bring high quality portable receivers based on a new generation of technology to the European market in early 2004.

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Links:

World DAB forum: www.worlddab.com

DRM consortium: www.drm.org



About Sony:

Sony manufactures audio, video, communications and information technology products for the global consumer and professional markets. With its music, pictures, game and online businesses, Sony is uniquely positioned to become a leading personal broadband entertainment company in the 21st century. In Europe, Sony recorded consolidated annual sales of EUR 13.88 billion (yen 1,666 billion) for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2003, based on an average market exchange rate for the same period of yen 120 to the EUR.

For more information on Sony in Europe, please visit <http://www.sony-europe.com>