



PRESS RELEASE

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NEW EUROPEAN INITIATIVE MERGES TELEVISION WITH THE POWER OF THE INTERNET

“Hybrid Broadcast Broadband TV” or “HbbTV” Specification Aims at Harmonising Entertainment Delivery to the End Consumer through Broadcast and Broadband

27th August 2009 – A consortium of European television industry leaders announced today the launch of “Hybrid Broadcast Broadband TV” or “HbbTV”, a major new pan-European initiative aimed at harmonising the broadcast and broadband delivery of news, information and entertainment to the end consumer through TVs and set-top boxes with an optional web connection. The cross industry consortium includes broadcasters Canal+, France Televisions, and TF1, German research institute Institut für Rundfunktechnik, satellite operator SES ASTRA, as well as the software and media solutions providers ANT and OpenTV. A full list of companies, including consumer electronics (CE) manufacturers, can be found at www.hbbtv.org. The HbbTV specification was developed by industry leaders to effectively manage the rapidly increasing amount of available content targeted at today’s end consumer. It is based on elements of existing standards and web technologies including OIPF (Open IPTV Forum), CEA, DVB and W3C.

HbbTV products and services will provide the consumer with a seamless entertainment experience with the combined richness of broadcast and broadband. This entertainment experience will be delivered with the simplicity of one remote control, on one screen and with the ease of use of television that we are used to. Through the adoption of HbbTV, consumers will be able to access new services from entertainment providers such as broadcasters, online providers and CE manufacturers – including catch-up TV, video on demand (VoD), interactive advertising, personalisation, voting, games and social networking as well as programme-related services such as digital text and EPGs. HbbTV products and services will be developed for all broadcasting technologies including satellite, cable and terrestrial networks. The first satellite demonstrations were demonstrated at IFA and IBC 2008.

“HbbTV will build on the success of the existing SD teletext service which is used by more than 14 million consumers each day in Germany by providing a high quality video text service more suited to HD receivers. It will deliver an open platform for broadcasters, manufacturers and service providers to deliver value added on-demand services to consumers of digital content,” said Dr. Klaus Illgner-Fehns, Managing Director, Institut für Rundfunktechnik, “HbbTV not only allows service providers to enrich their offering, but results in considerable benefits to the end consumer who will no longer be challenged by usability issues across multiple platforms. By making the most of today’s hybrid receivers, HbbTV merges broadcasting and broadband services seamlessly to deliver value added content such as web and on demand in addition to traditional linear broadcast TV.”

Implementations of HbbTV in Germany will be on display at the IFA show 2009 in Berlin, in the form of connected TVs and set-top boxes showcasing applications from public broadcasters such as ARD and ZDF who are supporting this development and will give a first detailed impression of the broadcasters' service concepts.

HbbTV activity in Germany is accelerated by the 2009 launch of HDTV services from broadcasters who are providing high quality HD videotext, interactive program guides and enhanced radio services. HbbTV is also the technology supporting enhanced HD Teletext and HD interactive services from leading private broadcaster groups in the already announced HD+ initiative.

External support for HbbTV is also evident in the French market from the HD-Forum "The HD-Forum, an association driving the development and promotion of Digital HDTV, together with the French government's representatives, DGCIS and CSA, are actively working on the HbbTV standard solution in its effort to make DTT interactive in France," said Frédéric Tapissier, President, Technical Committee of the France HD Forum. "A key advantage for HbbTV is the ability to mix broadcast and online services while retaining the broadcasters' control. We plan to quickly agree an IPR regime that benefits the entire value chain so that we deploy an interactive version of TNT, the French DTT platform, in 2010"

Visitors to the IFA show in Berlin will be able to see demonstrations at the ARD stand (Hall 2.2/101). At IBC 2009 in Amsterdam, further examples of HbbTV-based solutions will be showcased at the EBU (European Broadcasting Union) village (stand 10.D21).

About HbbTV

HbbTV is a new pan-European initiative aimed at providing an alternative to proprietary technologies and delivering an open platform for broadcasters to deliver value added on-demand services to the end consumer. The cross industry consortium includes broadcasters Canal+, France Televisions, and TF1, German research institute Institut für Rundfunktechnik, satellite operator SES ASTRA, as well as the software and media solutions providers ANT and OpenTV. A full list of companies, including consumer electronics (CE) manufacturers, can be found at www.hbbtv.org. The companies have aligned to drive compatibility throughout Europe for future products and solutions in the fast evolving hybrid market.

HbbTV has a wide range of supporters from across the broadcaster and CE industries, details of which can be found at www.hbbtv.org where more details about HbbTV draft specifications can also be found.

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