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For Immediate Release

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DVB leaves HDTV resolution to broadcasters

LAS VEGAS, April 6 1997. The Digital Video Broadcasting Project will leave broadcasters free to decide what picture qualities their customers want. It can afford to, since DVB's full range of broadcast delivery systems are flexible enough to carry any picture quality.

High definition television will bring clear, crisp and colourful pictures and multichannel sound. It will provide an unique televisual experience. All DVB delivery systems, for satellite, cable, terrestrial or microwave distribution, are designed to be able to provide HDTV - just as soon as it is needed by the marketplace.

The DVB systems are "containers" which carry whatever the broadcasters decide the public wants. The principal contents for DVB containers will be fully MPEG-2-compliant compressed video and audio. MPEG-2 picture quality runs from VCR level right up to full high definition television. Programme makers will be fully able to respond to public wants and needs in choosing what type of service they want to deliver.

Although DVB systems are HDTV capable and ready, many broadcasters believe that in the early years, viewers will want to use their existing television receivers for digital reception. Starting digital television with conventional picture and sound quality, until full HDTV sets are more affordable, makes good business sense.

This is one route forward, dictated by one perception of public needs. DVB systems can also be used for HDTV from the start, and of course benefit from the backwards compatibility of MPEG-2 coding.

The choice remains for the broadcaster to make: HDTV or conventional quality? DVB has already made this choice possible.

DVB staff and technical experts from DVB member companies will hold demonstrations of DVB's interoperability and flexibility every day at 11 am and 3 pm.

Background

The Digital Video Broadcasting Project (DVB) is a consortium of over 200 broadcasters, manufacturers, network operators and regulatory bodies in more than 30 countries worldwide, committed to designing a global standard for the delivery of digital television. Numerous broadcast services using DVB standards are now operational, in Europe, North and South America, Africa, Asia, and Australasia.