



Digital media broadcast: radio for your pocket

Germany makes cell phone history

Benchmarks were set for many things this past summer: The German national soccer team gave an excellent performance and Germany was a great host. The World Cup also brought about technological innovations: Mobile TV successfully made the transition from a pilot project to mass distribution. More than 15 million people in Germany can now receive mobile TV on their cell phones in all major German cities and population centers. The broadcasting technology DMB (digital multimedia broadcasting) and a new generation of DMB-ready mobile devices make this possible.

DMB is based on the DAB network (DAB = digital audio broadcasting), which was launched years ago for digital radio, and provides audio and visual contents for the network. With a data rate of up to 1.5 megabits per second, four to six TV stations including audio programs and data services can be broadcast via a single DMB channel.

Stable transmission and great image quality

Users do not need a large antenna on their cell phones to receive the digital programs. The receiver is three to five centimeters long, fully integrated into the cell phone and invisible from the outside. Compared to other digital transmission paths, the DAB system's low data rates use only very little energy, making it possible to watch movies on a charged cell phone for two to three hours without interruption. According to user polls, the image quality is surprisingly high. The connection is stable even during a fast car ride and in tunnels or underpasses. DMB reception tests on suburban trains show that even there the devices have uninterrupted reception.

Expandable double feature

Because of the DAB basis, there are several advantages when it comes to the

further development of DMB: The mobile devices can be used for both digital TV and digital radio, which can be received practically everywhere in Germany, Belgium and Great Britain. Moreover, via the so-called L-band (1.5 giga-hertz range) there is a sufficient number of frequencies available throughout Germany via which DMB shows can be aired. Overall, L-band offers enough space for 24 radio stations or eight interactive TV channels in Germany and throughout Europe. This is an interesting aspect because L-band has so far basically remained unused in all European states.

Basis for new business models

DMB enables radio and TV stations to introduce new business models through interactive offers. For example, viewers can rate songs with the push of a button – shortly thereafter, they receive a response via the mobile network as to how other viewers rated the piece and how the average rating relates to theirs. Without having to pick up the phone or go online, users can also download music, book concert tickets or participate in sweepstakes.

The consultancy firm Goldmedia expects an overall sales volume with mobile TV in Germany of around 450 million euros by 2010. The German trade association "eco Verband der deutschen Internetwirtschaft" paints a similar picture of the chances for the mobile radio technology for your pocket: According to the association's study "TV meets cell phone," 86 percent of the experts surveyed expect that TV on mobile end-devices will soon be a normal part of our everyday lives. In South Korea and China, TV on cell phones and other mobile devices has already been accepted and is about to hit the mass market.

MEDIA BROADCAST plans, sets up and operates digital radio networks

MEDIA BROADCAST, as media service provider, has years of experience with digital radio networks: The media specialist has been running DAB networks with wide-area coverage since the mid-nineties. By order of the state media authorities, the MEDIA BROADCAST will take over all of the planning activities for the digital transmission path.

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