

DigiTAG Web Letter, June 2005

DigiTAG seeks to inform members and non-members about important developments in the digital terrestrial television market. Each month, DigiTAG distributes its web letter with news updates and further exploration of one topic. This month, we examine DTT services in Switzerland.

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DTT services in Switzerland

The roll-out of digital terrestrial television (DTT) services continues in Switzerland. On 1 June 2005, the region surrounding the Léman Lake (Bassin lémanique) became the fourth region in Switzerland to launch DTT services. Viewers can now access four television programme services offered by the public broadcaster SRG/SSR from a single multiplex.

As it is a French speaking region, viewers have access to the two television service programmes offered in French (TSR1 and TSR2) as well as to one television service programme in each of the two other national languages, German (SF1) and Italian (TSI 1). By limiting the number of television service programmes on the multiplex, SRG/SSR has put emphasis on the audio and video quality and offered 'DVD-like' quality. In addition, viewers also have access to an electronic programme guide (EPG) and a TeleText service.

The television service programmes offered on the digital terrestrial platform are the same as the services offered on the analogue terrestrial platform prior to the partial switch-off of analogue television services in March 2002. In preparation for the launch of digital terrestrial television, two terrestrial analogue channels were switched off. These channels consisted of the public service channels for the two national languages not spoken in the given region. Thus, a resident of Geneva could receive the two French language television programme services offered by SRG/SSR but no longer receive the television programme services offered in German or Italian on the terrestrial platform (most residents use cable and continue to access all services). However, limitations were placed in the border region between different language groups.

Thus, the launch of digital terrestrial television services has restored the situation prior to the partial analogue switch-off in 2002. By using the available capacity offered by one spare analogue channels, SRG/SSR is now able to offer four of its television service programmes on the digital terrestrial television platform while continuing to simulcast two analogue channels.

DTT News Round-up

For all articles, please go to [DigiTAG News](#)

Croatia starts DTT trials

Croatia has begun DTT broadcasts in the capital, Zagreb, and coastal town of Rijeka. In Zagreb, broadcasts are undertaken through two transmitters - HRT Dom (UHF 56) and Sljeme (UHF 27) - while in Rijeka, broadcasts are employing the Ucka (UHF 28) transmitter.

The transmissions from Sljeme can also be received in parts of neighbouring Slovenia, while those from Ucka cover the Adriatic and Italian region of Friuli Venezia Giulia. A fourth transmitter will soon also be activated in the eastern town of Osijek (UHF 33) and cover parts of neighbouring Serbia.

The DVB-T multiplex currently carries Croatia's four principal channels - HRT1, HRT2, Nova TV and RTL Televizija - and can be received with DVB-T set-top boxes costing around €200.

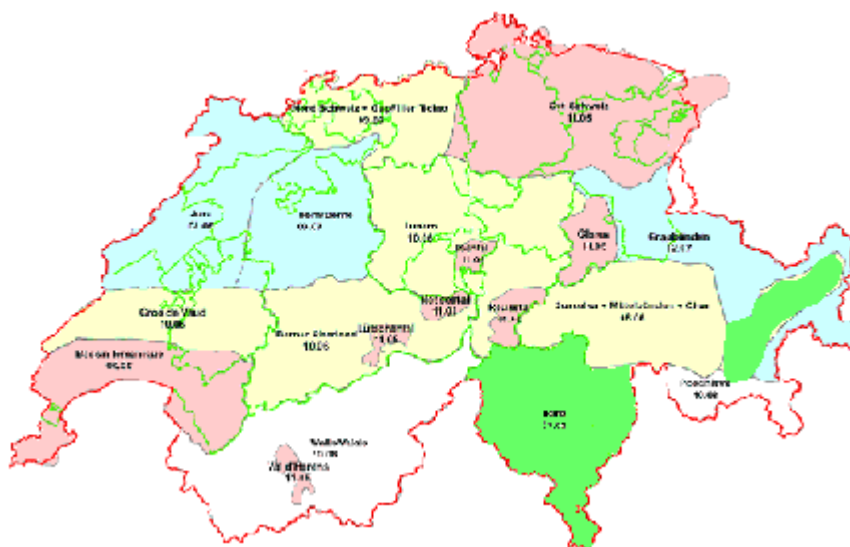
Source: [Broadband TV News](#)

Several regions have already launched their DTT services. In Eastern Switzerland, SRG/SSR conducted trials in the Lower Engadine before officially launching the services to cover the entire Engadine region in February 2003, in time for the World Ski Championship held in St. Moritz. In August 2003, DTT services were launched in the Tecino region (Italian-speaking region). SRG/SSR also launched an EPG in April 2005. A private DTT network has been operational in the parts of the Upper Valais region since October 2001 offering viewers with access permission to 37 television service programmes, although not necessarily in 'DVD-like' quality.

Further launches in north-eastern and parts of central Switzerland are expected in November 2005. Launches will continue region by region with approximately 75% of the Swiss territory covered by the end of 2007 and country-wide coverage of DTT services expected in 2009. However, the continual launch into new regions will depend on the results of frequency negotiations with neighbouring countries.

It is expected that the 98% of the territory of Switzerland will be covered by the services of the public broadcaster, of which 80% of the territory will provide for portable indoor coverage. Those areas not well serviced by cable have been given a priority in the roll-out sequence of DTT services. Complete analogue switch-off is expected to take place in 2011. It is likely that analogue switch-off will take place region by region, with analogue channels switched off two years following the launch of DTT services.

Planned DTT rollout



Green = already launched / Pink = launch in 2005 / Yellow = launch in 2006 / Blue = launch in 2007 / White = launch in 2008

The offering currently provided to viewers on the digital terrestrial television network is limited when compared with the DTT offering made to viewers in neighbouring countries such as France and Germany. While two analogue channels have been turned off, only one multiplex has been made available to provide television service programmes.

However, the priority has been to restore the situation prior to the

France - Musical television services find favour with DTT viewers

Based on a survey conducted by the French magazine *Télé Poche*, NRJ 12, a musical television programme service, is the favourite new offering on the DTT platform.

It would seem that musical television programme services are appealing to viewers. The survey also found that of the four programme services to be launched later in the year on the free-to-air DTT platform, the musical television service programme Europe 2 TV, is most often cited as a reason to purchase a DTT receiver.

In addition, the survey also found that 19% of cable and satellite viewers are considering a switch to the DTT platform for their main television set.

Source: [AFP](#)

France - DVB-H trials in Paris

The CSA, the French broadcasting regulator, has given its approval for three trials of DVB-H mobile television service in the Paris region. After having asked Canal+, TPS and TDF to put forward a joint approach for such a trial, the CSA has confirmed that its enquiries have been satisfied. A one month technical transmission tests will be carried out on channel 37 and channel 29.

The CSA has also authorised the participation of Radio France and Radio Orient in the trials and confirmed that other similar trial requests

2002 partial analogue switch-off and ensure that television services reflect the linguistic diversity of Switzerland. Considering that less than 10% of the population rely on the terrestrial network for television reception, no additional resources have been spent on developing new public broadcasting television programme services for such a small percentage of the population.

In the future, it is possible that the number of television service programmes available to viewers may increase depending on the frequencies allocated to Switzerland as a result of the Regional Radiocommunications Conference (RRC) to be held in June 2006. The conference will establish the plan for an all-digital environment in Europe and it is possible that up to six multiplexes may be allocated to Switzerland for the development of further DTT services. Assuming that the first multiplex is reserved for the public broadcaster, as is currently the case, five additional multiplexes may be available for commercial broadcasters. Other possible services include the provision of broadcast services to mobile receivers.

The launch of further services will likely depend on the uptake of DTT services. With a low percentage of the population relying on the terrestrial network, commercial broadcasters may hesitate before making their services available on the terrestrial platform. Yet some highly-cabled countries, such as Germany, have demonstrated that a market for DTT services exists for secondary television sets. With an appealing offer, this may also be the case in Switzerland.

Much will depend on the role and importance attributed to interactive services. Should governments wish to promote t-government services, it is necessary to encourage households to purchase an interactive set-top box. Broadcasters may use interactive services as a means to increase their revenue and as a result invest funds in the development of appealing content. The priorities of content developers, broadcasters and governments will impact the successful roll-out of interactive services and likely lead to variations between markets.

About DigiTAG

DigiTAG aims to encourage and facilitate the implementation and introduction of digital terrestrial television services using the Digital Video Broadcasting Project's Standard (DVB-T). It has some 60 members from broadcasting, network operators, regulatory, and manufacturing organisations throughout Europe and beyond.

Visit the [DigiTAG website](#)

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specifically for radio services would likely be authorised.

Source: advanced-television.com

United Kingdom - New name for ntl Broadcast

Following the sale in December 2004 of ntl Broadcast to Australia's Macquarie Communications Infrastructure Group, a new name and corporate identity for the transmission company has been unveiled. ntl Broadcast will now be known as Arqiva.

Arqiva CEO Tom Bennie said: "This is a strong and thriving company with a proud heritage of innovation and technical firsts in the broadcast and mobile communications industries. Arqiva stands for the 'energy' behind the 'connections' we provide to our customers and represents the talented and committed individuals at the heart of our business."

Source: [DTG Website](#)