

Mobile TV network to be set up as planned

At the end of September 2007 and following a criteria-based competition, the Federal Communications Commission (ComCom) awarded Swisscom the licence to set up digital mobile TV in Switzerland based on the DVB-H standard. The two partners previously involved in the project – Sunrise and Orange – withdrew from the joint project at short notice. Swisscom still believes that there is growing customer demand for digital quality mobile TV and is continuing with its plan to provide customers with attractive offerings in time for the European Football Championships. Through this commitment Swisscom is underscoring its clear leading role as an innovator in the telecommunications sector and is prepared to take on the investment risks necessary for this.

Innovations, developments in the market and the associated high level of network investment required are the core driving forces behind the advancement of telecommunications. Swisscom invests well over one billion Swiss francs annually in Switzerland as an ICT location, several times more than that invested by its competitors. In the field of mobile communications, too, Swisscom clearly leads the way as regards new technologies: past examples include UMTS, mobile data communication and TV services via mobile phone (100-second news bulletins via UMTS). Some 50,000 Swisscom Mobile customers currently use Live TV.

Development of the DVB-H network to continue

At the end of September this year, ComCom awarded Swisscom what is at present the only nationwide licence for mobile TV (DVB-H) following a criteria-based competition. Swisscom, Sunrise and Orange tested the new technologies in a pilot project at the end of 2006, with a cooperation project subsequently being initiated for the commercial launch of mobile TV. The two partners withdrew from the joint project at short notice.

Swisscom still believes, however, that there is growing customer demand for digital quality mobile TV and is continuing with its plan to provide customers with attractive offerings in time for the

European Football Championships. Swisscom Broadcast is currently working flat out on the development of the new transmission network and is planning to invest tens of millions of Swiss francs.

The target remains to give at least 44% of the Swiss population access to mobile TV by the time of the European Football Championships next June. In the first phase the main priority for network planning is to ensure coverage in the cities where matches will be taking place – Berne, Basle, Zurich and Geneva – so that mobile TV can be launched there in time for UEFA EURO 2008. In the first expansion stage, around 26 transmitters will be required at existing antenna sites.

By the time the new service is launched customers should already have several different mobile phone models to choose from. The core offer will comprise some 20 TV channels as well as additional content conceived especially for mobile TV and UEFA EURO 2008. An electronic programme guide will make it easy to use. The details of this are currently being worked out. Swisscom sees mobile TV based on the DVB-H standard as a supplementary technology that will enable it to provide a full-service mobile telecommunications package.

Mobile TV on the mobile phone is already a reality today thanks to UMTS. Radio technologies such as DVB-H are essential to avoid capacity bottlenecks in future as demand increases.

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