

CHRISTMAS SHOPPERS URGED TO ‘GIVE DIGITAL’

Shoppers will be able to ‘give digital’ this Christmas, thanks to a new retail initiative designed to prepare people for TV switchover.

The Digital SwitchKit is being promoted by Digital UK, the switchover body, to make it easier than ever for people to get digital TV for themselves or as a gift to family or friends.

The SwitchKit consists of a digital box, an aerial check (if needed), installation of the box and a demonstration of how to use it. Prices will start at under £100, depending on what options are taken, and retailers will be free to fix the terms.

Hundreds of stores are already signed up to the project, including independent retailers and major groups such as Comet and Currys. In all, around 700 stores are committed to offering the SwitchKit so far.

Satellite operator Sky and cable provider ntl:Telewest are also supporting the initiative, providing the option for customers to buy a satellite or cable Digital SwitchKit through their call centres.

Digital UK will promote the scheme through a major advertising campaign across national papers, launching 13 November and featuring Digit AI, the friendly robot guide to switchover. The SwitchKit will also be promoted by the Digital UK call centre, and by a website at digitaluk.co.uk/switchkit

Around 70% of homes already have digital TV on at least one set. Digital UK has conducted research to find that, of the 30% who don't, two-thirds are already in Freeview coverage and so can receive digital through their aerial.

Ford Ennals, Chief Executive of Digital UK, said: “Digital TV can enhance anyone’s Christmas. With the switchover coming, the SwitchKit is a great way to help family or friends to get ready.”

The project is also backed by trade body Retra – the Radio, Electrical and Television Retailers Association.

Mark Hayward, Chief Executive of Retra, commented: “We have worked with Digital UK to help develop the Digital SwitchKit, as we believe it’s an exciting and innovative gift idea which should boost digital sales in the independent sector this Christmas.”

Danny Churchill, Technology Consultant for retail group DSGi, which includes the Currys and Dixons brands, added: “We think this initiative will work particularly well for families who are conscious of the needs of their elderly members, or those who aren’t so familiar with what digital TV can offer.”

- ends; notes follow -



**Hi-res image of SwitchKit
press artwork is available**

About Digital UK

Digital UK is the independent, not-for-profit organisation leading digital television switchover in the UK. The company manages the upgrading of the UK's 1,154 television transmitters for digital; explains switchover to the public; and works with industry to ensure understanding and support for switchover. Digital UK is funded by the public-service broadcasters and multiplex operators. Our consumer helpline is 08456 50 50 50. For press pack and material visit digitaluk.co.uk/press.

About Retra

The Radio, Electrical and Television Retailers Association is the UK's leading trade body for independent electrical retailers. Its 1460+ members retail from more than 2,300 locations throughout the UK.

About switchover

Starting in 2008 and ending in 2012, TV services in the UK will go completely digital, region by region. The UK's old analogue television signal is being switched off and replaced with a digital signal. This will create a fairer situation in which everyone has access to a choice of affordable digital services. Switchover will also allow the UK to remain a world leader in broadcasting.

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