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Press release

DIGITAL UK APPOINTS MANAGER FOR WEST COUNTRY TV SWITCHOVER

Digital UK, the independent not-for-profit organisation that is leading digital switchover in the UK, has appointed Bill Taylor as its regional manager in the West Country TV region.

Switchover will affect virtually every home in the UK. Although 70 percent of homes already have digital on at least on TV, up to 40 million sets across the UK still require upgrading.

The public information campaign, which will be spearheaded in the South West region by Bill Taylor, aims to raise awareness that the switchover is happening, build understanding of what households need to do and explain that Digital UK is on hand to provide independent advice and support.

The West Country TV region, which covers all of Cornwall and Devon as well as parts of Somerset and Dorset, will be one of the first parts of the UK to switch to digital, with the process starting in 2009.

The latest research has shown that people in the West Country have a high level of awareness of the issues associated with switchover. 77% of people in the West Country region are now aware of the digital switchover. This compares with a national average of 66% and is expected to rise further as the switchover approaches.

Over the next three years, all transmitters across the region will be upgraded to broadcast a digital signal offering more viewers more choice of channels and services.

Bill Taylor said: "The switchover to digital is the biggest single change to television since the arrival of colour 30 years ago. It's vital that everyone is aware of the switchover and when it will take place in the West Country in 2009.

"With a dispersed rural population, higher than average numbers of older people and lower than average incomes, there will be particular challenges across a large part of the region. My job is to help people understand and prepare for the process so that no one is left behind."

Bill added: "Switchover will make broadcasting fairer by giving people who can't get digital TV through their aerial the chance to do so. Switchover will happen in 2009, but there is no reason for people to wait until then. I'm urging people to act sooner rather than later and start enjoying digital now."

Bill Taylor's background is a writer, journalist and broadcaster, including news and documentary programme-making for ITN, Channel 4, the BBC and BSkyB. He was a former South West Manager at the Independent Television Commission, and is a leading writer on broadcasting issues.

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About Digital UK

Digital UK is the independent, not-for-profit organisation implementing digital television switchover in the UK. The company leads the upgrading of the UK's 1,154 television transmitters for digital; communicates 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 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 digital services, including through an aerial. Switchover will allow the UK to remain a world leader in broadcasting.

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