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Press release



DIGITAL SWITCHOVER NOW A KEY DRIVER OF DIGITAL EQUIPMENT PURCHASES

Latest research by Digital UK and Ofcom reveals that for the first time more than half of people buying digital television equipment were influenced by the forthcoming digital switchover. Digital UK also revealed today that for the first time, a majority of television recorders now sold are digital.

The research shows that fifty-two per cent of those questioned said that that switchover was important in influencing their decision to go digital. The figure was even higher amongst the over 55 age group, with two thirds saying switchover was important in making a purchase.

These studies coincided with the success of the UK's first regional switchover in Whitehaven, Cumbria in November, where sales staff in local electrical retailers were given special training to enable them to give advice on the digital switchover to consumers.

Local retailers reported a huge increase in sales of digital tv equipment, with sales at Currys.digital in Whitehaven up almost threefold year on year in the period leading up to switchover, with the actual date of the switch becoming their busiest day of the year for Switchover-related sales

Ford Ennals, Chief Executive of Digital UK said: "The move to digital only television in Whitehaven went very smoothly and retailers played a crucial part in the success of the switchover. Their ability to provide clear advice to consumers was very important in ensuring local residents were able to switch as easily as possible."

Craig Carruthers, Manager of Currys.digital in Whitehaven, which was fully rebranded for the switchover, said: "We were extremely busy in the lead-up to switchover. The additional training and support we received was really useful. It meant we were able to better explain the technology and choices to customers and reassure them that changing to digital would be easy."

Research carried out for Digital UK reveals that fifty-three per cent of recorders purchased in October were digital, up from twenty-nine percent in October 2006. The percentage of integrated digital large screen televisions sold in October was up to ninety-six per cent, according to the polling carried out by GfK. Overall sales of television equipment were up nearly thirty per cent year on year, of which seventy-five percent were digital equipment.

- ends; notes follow -

Notes to editors

1. The Ofcom/Digital UK Tracker Survey Q3 2007 of 2829 households was carried out by GfK NOP from July to September 2007.
2. The GfK Lek Trak Sales Update was carried out in October 2007

Digital UK is the independent body implementing the UK's switch to digital television. The company communicates switchover to the public; manages the upgrade of 1,154 transmitters for digital; and works with industry to ensure understanding and support for switchover. Digital UK was set up by the public-service broadcasters, and offers independent switchover advice to the public through its helpline (08456 50 50 50) and website (digitaluk.co.uk).

Switchover will create a fairer situation in which everyone has access to a choice of affordable digital TV services. Between 2008 and 2012, all 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, a process that will also allow the UK to remain a world leader in broadcasting.

Images of switchover and Digital UK are available to media, free of charge, from vismedia.co.uk

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