

DIGITAL TV SALES BOOM AS CREDIT CRUNCH BITES *Nine-out-of-ten sets sold are ready for TV switchover*

Sales of digital TVs have hit record levels as cash-strapped households swap nights out for in-home entertainment.

Figures released today by Digital UK show that in the year to October 2008, UK consumers bought nine million televisions. This figure is up almost 10 per cent on the same period in 2007. Ninety per cent of televisions purchased in October 2008 were digital, the highest proportion ever recorded.

Digital TV makes the prospect of a night in front of the box more attractive. Digital viewers can flick between more than 40 different channels, rather than the maximum of five offered by analogue television. Digital TV also offers interactive features and extra coverage of live events via the red button.

Figures published today provide further evidence of the popularity of digital TV in the UK, which has one of the highest rates of take-up in the world. Ofcom's Digital Progress Report for the three months to the end of September 2008 shows 88.2 per cent of households have digital TV on their main set.

David Scott, Chief Executive of Digital UK, the independent body co-ordinating the UK's switch to digital TV, commented:

"With household budgets under pressure, the extra channels and features that come with digital TV offer great value entertainment. It's also good news that in opting to buy digital, more households than ever are ready for the switch to digital TV which will affect more than five million homes next year."

Buying a digital television is one of three main ways to go digital. You can also convert your existing TV with a digital box or opt for a digital service via satellite or cable. Digital UK advises buyers to look for the 'digital tick' logo which certifies products designed to continue working after switchover. For more information, check www.digitaluk.co.uk.

- ends; notes to follow -

Notes to editors

1. Data from October 2008 retail results report from GfK, one of the largest market research companies in the world.
2. GfK's report was compiled using point of sale data from more than 7,000 major multiple retailers in England, Scotland and Wales, including DSGi, Comet, Argos, Tesco, Sainsburys, Asda, John Lewis, Amazon, as well as a representative sample of independent retailers.

Number of TVs sold (year to Oct 07)	8.2m
Number of TVs sold (year to Oct 08)	9.0m
Digital sets as a proportion of TVs sold (Oct 07)	68%

Digital sets as proportion of TVs sold(Oct 08)	90%
UK spend on digital TVs (year to Oct 07)	£2.8bn
UK spend on digital TVs (year to Oct 08)	£3.5bn

3. Ofcom's Digital Television progress report for Q3 2008 can be found at:

Digital Television Switchover is the process of converting the UK's terrestrial television system to digital. Between now and 2012, analogue channels will be switched off region by region and replaced with free-to-air digital TV and radio services (Freeview). Switchover will extend Freeview coverage to the whole of the UK and free up airwaves for new services such as ultra-fast wireless broadband and mobile television.

Digital UK is the independent, not-for-profit organisation established in 2005 to implement digital switchover. It is jointly owned and funded by the public-service broadcasters (BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Five, S4C and Teletext), and the digital multiplex operators.

The Switchover Help Scheme is run by the BBC at the request of the Government to offer help to an estimated 7 million households in making the switch to digital television. Every eligible person will be offered practical help to convert one of their TV sets to digital in the run-up to switchover in their television region.

Images and video clips are available to media free of charge from vismedia.co.uk

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