

Digital Radio A Growing Force

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Eight out of ten adults are now aware of digital radio, a rise of 3% per cent since April 2005, according to research published this week by Ipsos MORI.

Latest figures from the Digital Audience Research Tracker (DART) reveal positive news for digital providers, monthly reach for digital radio has increased significantly in the last six months, from 29 per cent to 35 per cent of UK adults. This rise reflects the continuing impact that digital technology is having on UK consumers, with the report also revealing that almost two thirds, 62 per cent, of all UK households now subscribe to digital TV.

Listening via all channels has increased, with nine per cent of listeners using the internet and DAB ownership increasing from nine per cent in April 2005 to 11 per cent this quarter. Listening via digital TV sets remains most popular, however, with 25 per cent of listeners choosing this method.

David Lucas, Director at Ipsos Media, commented:

"Digital radio is continuing to show its presence in the market, and it is encouraging to marketers and digital providers that all channels have seen increased pickup. However, the most encouraging news is that of the rise in awareness; as this continues to grow, it will filter down into sales and usage and we will see an even larger increase in the impact of digital radio."

Why go digital?

Consumers' reasons for moving to digital have remained almost unchanged this quarter, with two thirds of listeners still claiming that sound quality is the major benefit of the service. Other perceived benefits, again include interference free reception, the number of new stations and the fact that it is a free service; all benefits cited by around a half of listeners.

The ability to obtain artist and track information during listening, however, is a major new motivation to go digital, with 24 per cent of listeners stating this as a perceived benefit, a significant increase since April 2005. This development is a positive sign for digital providers aiming to broaden the range of benefits offered to radio listeners by digital special features.

David Lucas comments:

"It's a general assumption that special features in digital only apply to TV, but these figures show that we are seeing an increased awareness and use of features in digital radio as well; digital owners and broadcasters need to seize this opportunity and give consumers more and more reasons to move digital with their radio as well as their TV consumption."

For further information or a copy of the report, interested parties should contact David Lucas on 020 8861 8000.

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