

DStv launches HD TV with free advertising

Oracle Airtime Sales (OATS) is joining the High Definition (HD) craze sweeping the country by offering free advertising on DStv's first HD channel, which is set to launch on 8 August 2008 with the 2008 Beijing Olympic games. HD PVR recorders will also become available from end-July to ensure the HD experience is complete.

Subsequent to the Olympics, the HD channel will become an entertainment channel featuring content from a variety of MNet channels and the free airtime offering will continue until March 2009, with plans to include more channels in future.

"This offering marks the beginning of the transition from analogue to the exceptional image and sound quality of HD in South Africa," says Chris Hitchings, sales director from OATS. He went on to explain that advertisers have a unique window of opportunity to showcase their clients during a peak sports entertainment event by either converting 35mm to HD or by using international client commercials which are already shot in HD.

Until recently no HD broadcasting has been available to South African TV audiences, however there has been a steady increase in consumers upgrading to HD TV sets and the consequent decrease in prices.

The shift is driven by the availability of HD-DVD and Blu-ray movies giving consumers access to the true HD experience, Xbox 360 and PlayStation gamers engaging more with lifelike images and the general awareness amongst consumers of the telecoms upgrading to HD in preparation for 2010 to be FIFA compliant.

The free HD advertising opportunity will be considered for commercials up to 90" subject to OATS' standard terms and conditions in respect of material quality and content. Public Service Announcements will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

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