

Commercial broadcasters announce trials of DVB-T2

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A select group of Soweto residents will be the first in the country to experience cutting edge digital television. Broadcasters, e.tv and M-Net, today announced plans to bring the latest digital television technology to a group of residents in the Soweto area.

The broadcasters have been running digital television trials since 2008, using the Cabinet approved DVB standard. They will expand the existing trials to include the latest version of this standard, known as DVB-T2.

"T2" is generally accepted to be the most efficient standard available today for the delivery of digital terrestrial television. Its primary advantage is that it is 50% more efficient in the way it uses radio frequency, which is a scarce and limited resource. This means that a single T2 multiplex can carry up to 18 channels. Given the extra capacity available, T2 also gives the scope for high definition services to be provided on DTT. India and Kenya are among the countries to have recently indicated that they will be adopting T2 in their migration to digital.

Marcel Golding, Group CEO of e.tv explains, "The development of T2 shows that DVB is the right choice for South Africa. T2 is a more efficient version of DVB-T and is available should we choose to use it. The T2 standard recently received the Innovation Award for Content Delivery Technology at IBC, the world's premier entertainment and media content exhibition."

Broadcasters started lab tests with T2 in September.

M-Net CEO, Patricia Scholtemeyer, reports that the T2 signal is now on-air in Johannesburg and trial participants are being recruited in Soweto. "We are aiming for these trials to be as inclusive as possible", she says, "once the selected trial participants have had some time to fully experience this technology, we will be inviting the industry bodies, academia and the media to share in the trial experiences and results."

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