



The Digital Interoperability Forum

- **Delivering digital television to Europe's citizens.**
- **Investing in the Information Society for all.**
- **Fostering interoperable solutions for interactive television.**

Europe is a world leader in digital and interactive television. The Digital Interoperability Forum (DIF) is committed to maintaining Europe's lead in digital TV and to realising the full potential of interactive TV in the eEurope 2005 Action Plan. European competitiveness can be ensured through the continued development by the industry of commercial and technological solutions that make digital and interactive television services accessible to the largest number of people on the widest choice of platforms.

DIF's growing membership includes 18 of the leading companies in the delivery of digital TV in Europe: BSKyB, CANAL+, Espial, Flextech, Liberate, Microsoft, Nagravision, NDS, ntl, Numéricable, OpenTV, Pace Micro Technology, Sky Italia, Telewest, TF1, TPS, UPC/Chello Media and ZetaCast.

Members of DIF have driven the advance of digital TV in Europe through the collective investment of billions of euro. They have helped to set technical standards and have made digital TV a reality through a combination of satellite, cable and terrestrial platforms, as well as broadband, mobile and fixed telephone connections.

As a result of their investments, tens of millions of households in all 15 EU Member States can access an unprecedented choice of digital TV channels and innovative interactive services offering information and e-commerce through the TV. Many digital viewers can select in-depth coverage of news and sports through multiple video screens or experience channel interactivity through voting and enhanced information. They can request information about programmes and advertisements or use their TV set as a portal to access Information Society services.

With the creation of DIF, these companies are working together to develop and promote solutions that facilitate the delivery of interactive TV services across different platforms. Just as Europe's leadership in digital TV has been driven by innovation, competition and choice, DIF believes that industry initiatives are the best means to deliver interoperability while maintaining the reliable consumer experience demanded by TV viewers.

Industry initiatives, driven by innovation and creativity, can deliver interoperability without mandation of any technical standard. DIF believes that disproportionate regulatory intervention, or even the threat of such action, could inhibit the investments and innovation needed to sustain current growth in digital and interactive TV. The imposition of mandated technical standards or the use of artificial economic incentives and subsidies will impede digital TV rather than promote continued progress towards eventual switch-off of analogue terrestrial broadcasting.

The reality of digital TV in Europe is an increasingly diverse multi-platform environment. EU member states are at different stages in the deployment of digital TV and each platform demonstrates specific technical and commercial characteristics. Market-driven solutions to interoperability will permit the industry to build on existing investments and infrastructure in order to address these variations without undermining existing business models.

DIF supports choice and diversity in interactive TV and aims to make Information Society services accessible to the widest number of people on the widest choice of platforms. Its members are working together to deliver broad consumer choice in a competitive environment and to achieve interoperability through market-led solutions.