

What will it take for digital radio to fly?

David Wood

European Digital Radio Forum

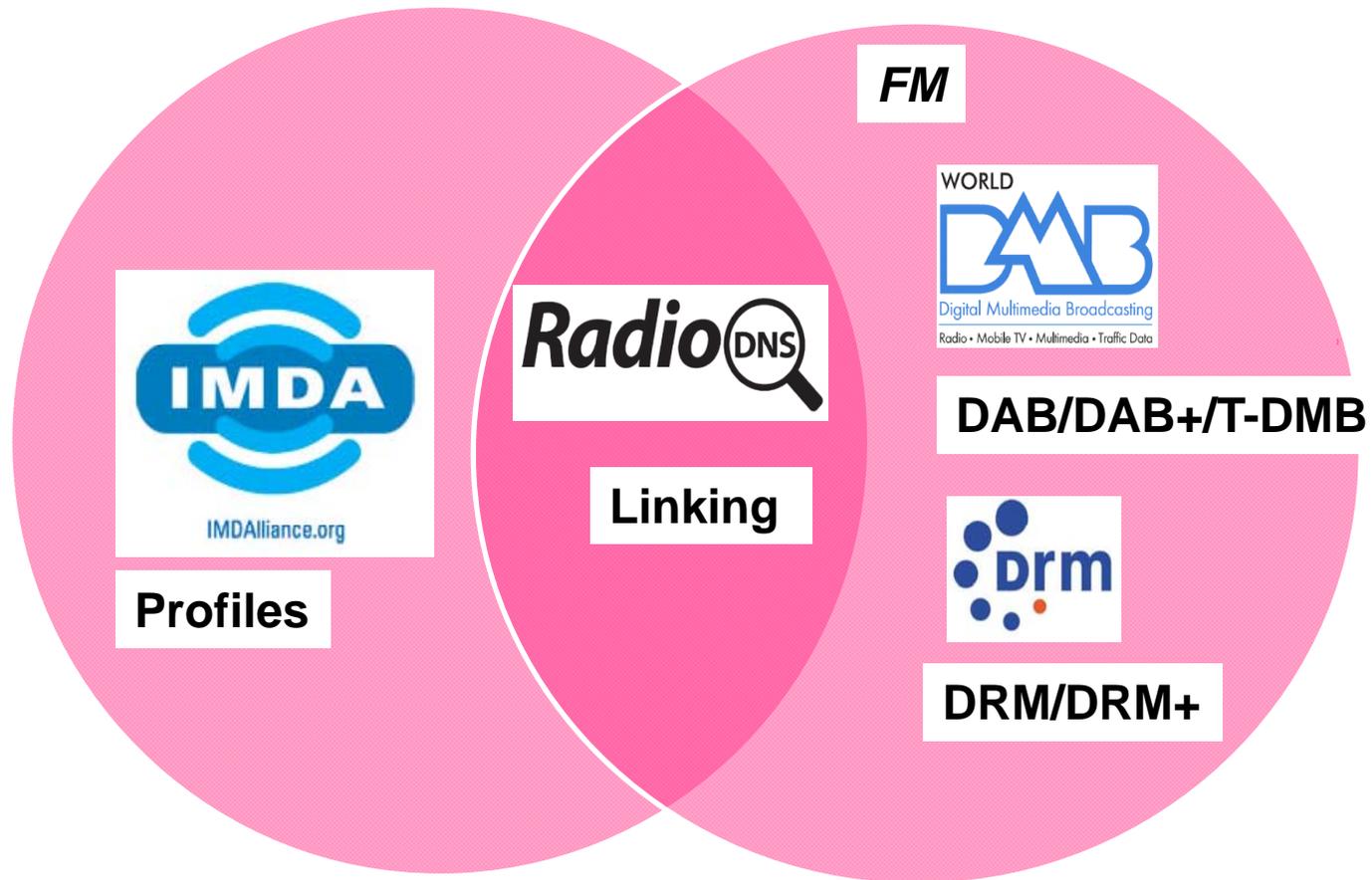


The European Digital Radio Forum (EDRF).

Established by the EBU in 2010, and made up today of: WorldDMB, DRM Consortium, RadioDNS, IMDA (non lobbying activities)

Objective: to work in common cause for the success of digital radio and open standards for Europe (note: not to compare/propose specific technologies)

Systems for Radio today



Our first three areas of work...

- Carrying the **common message** that we all need to make the transition to digital radio
- Looking where digital radio 'has been **successful**' and why.
- Looking at what more we can do collectively to **make profiles more valuable**.
- Your ideas are welcome!

Three pillars of the case.

- What is the ‘value’ of radio?
- What are the gains with digital radio?
- What are the relative roles of digital broadcasting and Internet?

What is the 'value' of radio?

- **The value is the sum of three elements**
- The value of the radio production and distribution industry
- The value of the radio consumer electronics industry
- The '**externality**' of radio (the value of radio to society).

What value is 'radio' to society?

- Helps us to locate ourselves in 'people space'
- Our regular source of news, entertainment and information.
- Provides the 'rhythm of life' listening at regular times in regular ways.
- The ultimate multi-tasking facilitator.
- McLuhan's 'hot media', because it activates the mind.
- "Radio is the theatre of the mind. Television is the theatre of the mindless". radio industry proverb.
- Of particular value to the disadvantaged.
- And more....

Advantages of 'digital' radio

- Listeners find more choice, more relevant multimedia information. In this way, **listeners have a better user experience.**
- **More radio stations can fit** in a determined spectrum space.
- **More robustness** to noise.
- **More options for audio quality, and enhanced audio quality**
- **Improved user features.**
- **Multimedia available.**

Digital Broadcasting and Internet Enhancement

- **Two ways** to deliver audio. Internet can also enhance audio with multimedia features
- Two different sets of strengths
- **Both** will co-exist
- Broadcasting = making content available one to many.
- Internet = the personal choice stations one-to-one.
- Easy linkage possible via **RadioDNS**

What happens today?

- Each country decides for themselves how to approach the introduction of digital radio.
- Decisions are made at different times.
- Different technologies are available.
- Technology evolves.
- Different decisions are taken.
- No central body.
- Countries that are not 'laboratory-rich' face choice dilemmas

“(There is) a huge need to identify ways forward”

“Since development is so disparate between countries (regarding technical aspects and degree of deployment) is it even possible to identify common driving forces for the development of digital radio on a large scale?”

RSPG report on the future of radio
broadcasting in Europe, 2010.

Can we achieve a Single
Internal European Market?

What does Europe need?

- Radio must remain a vibrant, alive, and relevant medium, helping to make Europe a better place to live.
- **A Single Internal European Market** for radios helping European manufacturers to find a larger market, and helping to make available to the public the greatest choice, the highest quality, and the lowest cost radios.

How can we achieve a single market?

- Member States need to develop a clear national framework for digital radio.
- Member States need to coordinate timescales and technology for the introduction of digital radio.
- RSPG report 2010 “In all cases where progress is made (in digital radio) there has been a political interest, and close cooperation between regulators and broadcasters”.

How far can we go ?

- ‘Soft lobbying’ – “digital radio is important”
- ‘Hard(er) lobbying’ – “we suggest this path to achieve success”

Which boxes must be ticked for digital radio to be successful?

- **DEMAND SIDE**

- Programmes need to be compelling and attractive
- Receivers need to be cheap, available, and affordable
- Receivers need to be relatively simple and fit for purpose.

- **SUPPLY SIDE**

- Broadcasters need to be able to afford digital radio
- Receivers manufacturers need to see growth and profit.
- Standards need to be stable
- Spectrum needs to be available and judiciously used.

Making Profiles more valuable?

- Can we identify ‘services’ the public will value?
- Examples; EPGs, slide shows, access services
- Can we should how they can be done with the available broadcast and internet tools?

Conclusions

- The EDRF has only one purpose – to help digital radio to be successful.
- We hope for more clarity about ‘business cases’ and ‘options for achieving services’
- A key to success may be a Single European Market for digital radios.
- We have some impact, but going as far as the Commission suggests is going to be difficult.
- What do you think we should do?

Thank you for caring about radio, and supporting the EDRF

wood@ebu.ch

