



ITV to Commence Trials for Digital Delivery of Advertisements

Commercial trials of ITV's ground breaking digital system for the delivery of advertisements developed in association with IMD, a leading distributor of broadcast advertising, are due to start at the beginning of March.

The system is expected to facilitate major improvements in the transfer of advertisements to the benefit of advertisers and their clients leading to media buying and creative opportunities for time sensitive and multi copy campaigns.

Helen Stevens, Director of Broadcast Resources said "ITV strongly believes in the benefits to both the advertiser and to ITV of going fully digital and we hope to encourage all our clients to make use of this new service."

Distribution of the completed advertisement will now be possible electronically from the post production house through IMD all the way to the ultimate broadcasting channel in the ITV network.

Shelby Akosa, Sales Director of IMD says, "Digital distribution is introducing radical changes to the television industry with more flexible time scheduling, consistent quality, and ease of use for agencies." Akosa also points out that the ITV system is taking a further step forward in embracing the opportunities with its integrated approach allowing faster response and control for agencies. The new digital initiative represents the culmination of eight months planning and development work by the respective engineering teams at IMD and ITV introducing direct benefits from flexible and short delivery times, electronic checking for accuracy and reporting.

Ian Whitfield, Director of Broadcast Technology at ITV notes "ITV is committed to the digital delivery of material and advocates a fully integrated approach from the moment the advertisement is completed to being broadcast whether it is for ITV1 or a sub regional area."

Substantial benefits that will accrue to the advertising industry include satisfying the demands of individual retail or media clients that may have time or location sensitive requirements. Streamlined processing will permit more sophisticated copy changes with extra creative opportunities.

The new IMD digital service is welcomed by the UK's largest advertising post production company, The Mill. Robin Shenfield, CEO of The Mill said: "The Mill and our broadcast delivery service Beam.TV will benefit from shorter delivery times, better tracking and greater flexibility. Working with IMD, we can now deliver a finished commercial to an ITV station at high speed literally within minutes."

ITV has the most complex playout requirements in the television industry with its mix of national and regional terrestrial channels combined with a growing presence in satellite broadcasting. The planning for going fully digital in distribution therefore not only included the external delivery to ITV but the onward distribution to all the separate channels.

John Bolton, Technical Director of IMD expects the concepts adopted by ITV to take hold through out the industry "it is a step change in digital distribution" he stated. In order to increase reliability two separate induction points have been established in ITV South and ITV North with both sites being interconnected through diverse routes for resilience. All commercials will be sent to both locations, thus providing full back up against telecom outages.

During the trial phase commencing 1st March, IMD will duplicate all ad deliveries by sending back up tapes and then after a few weeks all deliveries will go solely digital.

ENDS

For further information please contact:

ITV

Ian Whitfield
020 7316 6031
ian.whitfield@itv.com

Helen Stevens
0207 843 8311
Helen.stevens@itv.com

IMD

David Haynes
020 7468 6878
david@imdplc.com

Notes to Editors

About ITV Plc

ITV1

ITV1 is the UK's biggest commercial television network watched on average by 45 million people in a typical week. It is a public service broadcaster available free to air, providing programming across all genres including drama, entertainment current affairs, news, film and sport.

ITV2

ITV2 is ITV's younger entertainment channel available in over 14 million homes [over 55% of all UK homes] on Freeview, Sky Digital and Cable. ITV2 offers brand extensions of ITV1's best loved programmes, exciting original commissions, top US programming, blockbuster movies and sport.

ITV3

ITV3 offers quality drama to around 14 million homes [over 55% of all UK homes] via all digital platforms throughout the UK. The channel broadcasts a unique collection of classic and contemporary dramas, movies, narrative

repeats of ITV1 programmes such as The Bill, unique commissions and top US series.

ITV4

ITV4 is ITV's male targeted channel, available to 14 million homes [over 55% of all UK homes] via all digital platforms throughout the UK. The channel offers a range of programming, including premium sport, the best of US comedy and drama and high-end documentaries.

About IMD plc

IMD is an independent company providing a digital delivery service for transmission quality radio and TV commercials, music and music video to broadcasters of every type. With nine years of digital advertising distribution experience, IMD was the first company to deliver digital, broadcast quality commercials and music video to TV broadcasters in the UK and Eire. IMD is the premier distributor of broadcast quality radio advertising to UK and Ireland servicing 98% of all stations.

For more information visit www.imdplc.com