

Digital Television Transition – For Use in Announcing a DTV Transition Awareness Event

Sample Press Release #2

[Cut and paste this press release onto your organization's letterhead. Be sure to double-space. If the press release runs more than two pages, consider using a smaller typeface or line-and-one-half spacing, or edit the text. Send to the media during the week preceding your event.]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: [Insert date]

CONTACT: [Insert name, phone number]

[NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION] URGES TV VIEWERS TO GEAR UP FOR THE CONVERSION TO ALL-DIGITAL TELEVISION

[Your Organization] To Sponsor "DTV Awareness Day" on [date]

[Your City and State] – June 12, 2009 has been set as the final deadline for the digital transition, by the U.S. Congress. Local broadcasters may make the transition before then and some already have. So it is important to be ready and act now." To help answer the many questions the transition to digital television (DTV) raises, [your organization] is sponsoring "DTV Awareness Day" on [date]. It will be held at [place] from [time]. It will include [describe activities, e.g., workshops, panels, speakers, etc.].

[Your spokesman] announced the event, stating, "June 2009 will be here sooner than we think. Since some broadcasters will be transitioning earlier, it is imperative that consumers prepare themselves now. [Your organization] is happy to sponsor "DTV Awareness Day." This event will help everyone understand the DTV transition - what it is and what it means to them. Please join us on [date]."

For viewers who have one or more televisions that receive free over-the-air programming (with a roof-top antenna or "rabbit ears" on the TV), the type of TV you own is very important. A digital television (a TV with an internal digital tuner) will allow you to continue to watch free over-the-air programming after June 12, 2009. However, if you have an analog television, you will need a digital-to-analog converter box to continue to watch broadcast television on that set. This converter box will also enable you to see any additional multicast programming that your local stations are offering.

U.S. households are able to obtain up to two coupons worth \$40 each toward the purchase of converter boxes. The program is run by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), a part of the U.S. Department of Congress, which has issued rules regarding the coupon program. (Please note that these coupons will expire 90 days after mailing).

If you are a cable or satellite customer, you need to check with your service provider to be assured of a smooth transition. Do not get left behind.

Why is the country converting to digital? Digital broadcasting allows stations to offer improved picture and sound quality, and digital is much more efficient than analog. For example, rather than being limited to providing one analog program, a broadcaster is able to offer a super sharp "high definition" (HD) digital program or multiple "standard definition" (SD) digital programs simultaneously through a process called "multicasting." Multicasting allows broadcast stations to offer several channels of digital programming at the same time, using the same amount of spectrum required for one analog program. Further, DTV can provide interactive video and data services that are not possible with analog technology.

An important benefit of the switch to all-digital broadcasting is that it will free up parts of the valuable broadcast spectrum for public safety communications (such as police, fire departments, and rescue squads). Also, some of the spectrum will be auctioned to companies that will be able to provide consumers with more advanced wireless services (such as wireless broadband).

There are many sources of information about the digital transition but one of the best is www.dtv.gov, or calling 1-888-CALL-FCC. You can get information on what DTV is, questions consumers should ask when purchasing new television sets, what programs are available in DTV, and much more.

So, come and learn about the digital transition. Don't let your television go dark.