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IN THIS ISSUE:

Adil Mina Named Chairman of USA DRM DRM Study Sangean to Introduce DRM Radio in Europe in October 2006 HCJB Tops Listener Survey in Brazil Letters From Our Readers RFA Releases New QSL Card News From the HFCC
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Continental Electronics' Adil Mina Named Chairman of USA DRM

The following news release was received from NASB Associate Member Continental Electronics.

DALLAS, TX — (July 14, 2006) — Continental Electronics' General Manager, Adil Mina, has been named chairman of the USA Digital Radio Mondiale TM (DRMTM) consortium.

Founded in March 1998, the DRM consortium is an organization of broadcasters and manufacturers who joined forces to create a universal, digital system for the broadcasting bands below 30 MHz. DRM now covers short-wave, medium-wave/AM and long-wave and is in the process of extending the system to the broadcasting bands up to 108 MHz. Membership includes nearly 100 companies from 30 countries.

"I was thrilled to see Adil elected as the new chairman of USA DRM," said former Chairman Jeff White, who stepped down to become president of the National Association of Shortwave Broadcasters (NASB). "I was honored to serve as chairman of USA DRM for the first two years of the group's existence, but now I need to devote my attention to my new NASB responsibilities. I can think of no one in the U.S. who is more dedicated and capable of taking on this position than Adil Mina. Over the past several years, Adil has worked tirelessly to promote DRM in the U.S. and around the world."

Mina is an internationally respected expert in radio broadcast systems. Beginning his career with Continental Electronics in 1966, Mina has served the company in many capacities of increasing responsibility. His experience also includes design engineer, installation supervisor, project engineer and

program manager on transmitter products up to 2 MW. He was responsible for the design and development of the Continental Electronics' 500 kW high frequency transmitter and the high-efficiency solid state modulator, which is found in installations around the world.

"As a founding member of DRM, we at Continental knew from the beginning how important this technology is to the broadcast industry at home and abroad," Mina said. "The United States is one of the largest potential markets for DRM. As with many other technologies, other countries are waiting to see what happens here before they make decisions on which technologies to adopt. We believe DRM is critical in helping broadcasters keep pace in the ever-changing market. We feel it is important to take the lead, and we intend to put significant effort into its promotion."

About USA DRM Group

USA DRM Group is the result of the DRM Consortium's encouragement of national groups to promote the technology on a more regional basis. The group's current focus is shortwave because the Federal Communications Commission already has authorized the use of DRM technology by U.S.-licensed shortwave stations. DRM broadcasts on mediumwave and local 26-MHz channels also have been conducted on an experimental basis in the United States. The USA DRM Group also has helped promote DRM tests in Mexico on shortwave and mediumwave.

The group also strives to maintain good relationships with shortwave listener organizations in the United States and to keep them informed about developments regarding the availability of both DRM transmitters and receivers. The USA DRM Group's key players include broadcasters, transmitter and other equipment manufacturers, consultants, radio listeners and radio publications, among others.

About Continental Electronics

Founded in 1946, Dallas-based Continental Electronics is a global leader in broadcast transmitter equipment. It is the foremost supplier of advanced RF transmission technology and the world's most experienced designer and builder of the highest power radio broadcast equipment, providing a full range of products for broadcasting, military and scientific applications. Continental Electronics' products are used in more than 100 countries around the world.

For more information about Continental Electronics, visit the company's Website at www.contelec.com or call 1.800.733.5011.

Will DRM Boost the Shortwave Market?

A new study by the Arthur D. Little consulting firm indicates a potentially promising future for shortwave and DRM.

Arthur D. Little claims to be the world's first management consulting firm, founded in 1886 by an MIT professor of the same name. Recently Arthur D. Little released the findings of a study it has carried out about shortwave and DRM, specifically examining the question: "Will DRM boost the shortwave market?"

The Paris office of Arthur D. Little, which conducted the study, says: "For this study, Arthur D. Little conducted a significant number of interviews with industry key players, from radio broadcasters, to tower companies, transmitter manufacturers, receiver manufacturers, experts, either officially pro DRM, neutral or reluctant to the technology in order to try to depict an objective view of the current trends.

As part of its study, Arthur D. Little analyzed data from the HFCC which shows that there are approximately 13,000 hours per day of shortwave broadcasts. The breakdown of target areas is as follows:

Asia	41%
Europe	23%
Africa	17%
South America	11%
North America	8%

The breakdown of geographical areas that are transmitting shortwave programs is:

Asia	42%
Europe	32%
North America	14%
Africa	10%
South America	2%

Little concludes that "DRM is an attractive technology that could lead broadcasters to reconsider their position on shortwave and therefore may change AM's future." It notes that DRM combines AM coverage and FM sound quality. And it notes that "competing technology should not interfere with DRM's launch." Specifically, satellite radio will remain a subscription base (like XM and Sirius) targeting North America, and Internet will remain a complementary medium that will not take away listeners from traditional technologies in the near future.

The study noted that most of the traditional shortwave broadcasters are interested in DRM, and that some new entrants could enter the shortwave market. However, "small radio stations seem less interested in turning to DRM and plan to wait for the complete shifting of major broadcasters' programs." Overall "DRM gives a new competitive advantage to AM, revaluing shortwave interest among broadcasters." The study says: "DRM is potentially interesting for historical shortwave players, as well as for new entrants willing to use shortwave and mediumwave in substitution of FM."

The Arthur D. Little study points out the following advantages of shortwave DRM:

DRM improves sound quality to FM level

DRM permits mobile listening to digital radio, contrary to the Internet

26 MHz DRM broadcasting is a credible alternative to FM broadcasting

SW DRM allows for transcontinental digital broadcasting

DRM radios will be able to choose stations by name instead of frequency

DRM is a non-proprietary norm

Data can be added to the radio signal

Regarding satellite radio, the study says that current providers XM and Sirius are mainly for use in automobiles although they can be used in houses and together they offer more than 100 digital programs. Listeners, however, must pay a subscription fee of about \$13 per month. The services were launched in 2001 without a huge initial success, but the subscriber base started to increase significantly in 2004 due to aggressive marketing campaigns and new programs. These companies are targeting the North American market, but "satellite radio success outside the U.S. is still to be proven."

Little says a subscription-based satellite radio service "seems not really convincing in Europe." It says such a system can be justified when the availability of free programming is limited, but that "contrary to the U.S., the European radio program offer is complete, varied and without strong censorship constraints." It also claims that European and Asian cities are "not favorable" for satellite broadcasting because there are more buildings that interfere with satellite signal reception. In addition, "the language issue makes the European market difficult for satellite broadcasting...because of the multiplicity of languages."

As for the Internet, it is "for complementary usage and should remain that way. Traditional players are using the Internet to complete geographical coverage or to address niche segments. New entrants use Internet due to FM frequency shortages." It notes that radio through the Internet is not as "user friendly" as traditional FM and AM. It says Internet does not allow real-time mobile listening, and the majority of listeners use Internet radio only when the program is not available on FM or AM or when they do not have an FM receiver. Also, "Internet streaming servers are limited in their capacity to provide streams economically. As a consequence, when the number of listeners increases significantly, the bandwidth becomes very important, leading to a huge increase in the operating costs."

Arthur D. Little notes that there are currently around 600 hours per day of DRM programming available globally. "Most of the traditional shortwave broadcasters proved to be interested in DRM broadcasting" in order to increase and secure listener loyalty and because of the better sound quality. But it notes that "if the DRM launch is a certainty, the speed of its take-off remains unsure." It says that DRM success depends on two main factors: the availability of DRM radio receivers at an affordable price, and the availability of new shortwave programs.

Little says that "DRM receivers should be quickly available at an affordable price, but the generalization of DRM technology in radio receivers may take 5 or 6 years." It predicts that DRM receivers will eventually reach a price of around 50 euros, and that the first receivers should be available in Europe and Asia during 2006.

Regarding programming, the Little study says that major broadcasters will be the catalysts of the DRM launch by progressively switching their analog broadcasts to DRM and potentially creating new programs. Smaller broadcasters are not yet very active on DRM and are waiting for larger stations to switch before they decide to do. Meanwhile, DRM transmitter sales are clearly increasing and "DRM is systematically considered, but the market seems to be still waiting for a strong signal."

According to the study, there are some key questions which will determine DRM's success:

Will a DRM module be integrated in universal receivers, enabling a large audience?

Will receivers quickly reach affordable prices?

Will current broadcasters increase broadcast hours with new programs?

Will new entrants enter the market, increasing the number of programs?

Arthur D. Little says the price for DRM receivers will first be high, but should quickly drop. Receivers will also pick up analog AM and FM broadcasts. Prices should be around 200 euros during the first year of availability, but they should go down quickly, just as DAB receivers have done. The Little study cites two possible scenarios:

Scenario 1 - Only a minor share of receivers include DRM technology, and DRM receivers mainly target AM listeners. This means that shortwave and mediumwave broadcasters will continue to reach a limited number of listeners.

Scenario 2 - DRM technology is included in a majority of receivers, meaning there will be no distinction in terms of band for the listeners. This will make SW and MW programs easy to access, and will lead to a significant increase of potential listeners for shortwave and mediumwave broadcasters. Little concludes that "both scenarios are still likely for the interviewed players. However, the major spread of DRM receivers should happen in a 5-6 year period."

Finally, the Arthur D. Little study looked at estimated commercial launching dates for DRM in different parts of the world, defining commercial launching as "the availability of receivers in the classic distribution channel or in mass distribution channels." For Europe and Asia, there is a "strong possibility" that the first receivers will be available during 2006, and most of the interviewees are confident about a commercial launch in 2007-2008.

For the rest of the world, it will depend on the success of DRM in Europe and Asia. In North and South America, the commercial launching date will be 2009 at the earliest. Not all interviewees were confident about a real interest in DRM in the short term, although South America showed more confidence than North America. Africa would have the most distant commercial launching date (2011 at the earliest), and none of the interviewees there showed an interest in DRM broadcasting in the medium term.

Thanks to Peter Senger of the DRM Consortium for making the results of this study available to us.

Sangean to introduce DRM radio in Europe in October 2006

The following item appeared recently on the Sangean Europe website. No price information was given, but outside reports have indicated an expected price of about 200-300 euros.

The DRM-40, the first DRM radio, will be launched in Europe by Sangean in October 2006. The model is fully equipped and receives DRM (the digital alternative for the wavebands AM/SW/LW) and DAB (the digital alternative for the FM waveband). But of course also the existing analogue bands FM/AM/SW/LW can be received and the radio does have RDS. Therefore this nicely designed radio has all a radio needs today and is also completely ready for the future. Of course all in our well known Sangean quality. Further the DRM-40 has many possibilities like USB-connection and SD-Card slot . With this it plays MP3 Files and also it records in MP3 format directly from the radio. All in all a radio to get into your home.

Radio Station HCJB Again Tops Listenership Survey in Brazil

For the second consecutive year Radio Station HCJB in Quito, Ecuador, was named “Best International Station” in the 2005 survey of Portuguese-speaking shortwave listeners conducted by the Santa Rita DX Club in Brazil. DX is a telegraph term for distance, and DXers are listeners who enjoy hearing signals from distant stations.

HCJB was one of 19 shortwave stations mentioned by respondents to the survey. Others in the top five included Radio Japan, China Radio International, Chile-based Voz Cristã (Christian Voice) and Radio Canada International.

“This is exciting, especially when one considers that two Christian broadcasters placed in the top five,” said Allen Graham, director of indigenous and international broadcasts at Radio Station HCJB. “Praise God for allowing us this opportunity to touch Portuguese-speaking listeners!”

HCJB, the flagship station of HCJB World Radio, an international ministry founded in 1931, also topped the “Most Listened-to Station” category.

Shortwave listeners from Brazil and other parts of the world who took part in the survey also chose HCJB for having the “Best Female Presenter,” Ingrid Winter of Curitiba, Brazil. Mário Miki, also of Curitiba, placed second in the “Best Male Presenter” category.

Respondents again named program producer Eunice Carvajal for having the “Best DX Program”—the seventh consecutive year for that honor. She is the sole program producer at the ministry’s studios in Quito. Most of the programs are produced at HCJB World Radio-Brazil’s studios in Curitiba.

Portuguese-language programs air from Quito 7½ hours a day in three programming blocks. Preaching, interspersed with music and informational programming, proclaims the message of salvation through Jesus Christ to listeners across Brazil.

A brief program in the indigenous language, Culina, was recently added to the beginning of the evening Portuguese broadcast. A small group, the Culina people live in southern Brazil and northern Peru.

Carvajal added that shortwave continues to play a key role in reaching people for Christ. Referring to the Portuguese broadcasts that reach various regions of Brazil, she said, "The audience is growing, and the average age of our listeners is 30. That means the majority of listeners are young people, and they like our programs and voices. The statistics seem to support our motto, 'We're more than a voice, we're friends who care.'" (HCJB World Radio)

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Letters From Our Readers

Hans Behr sent us the following e-mail, probably from somewhere in Latin America. We have translated the message from Spanish.

"Greetings dear radio friend. It is a pleasure to greet you and tell you that in 1980 I began to get involved in the DXing world, being a regular listener. One of the stations that I listened to on shortwave was Radio KGEI - The Voice of Friendship, and it was a great blessing. When this station went off the air it was very sad, but I would like to know any news about the station and its pastor and director. Presently I listen to [NASB associate member] HCJB and these Christian stations have sustained me with their beautiful messages that help me to grow in my daily life. I will stay in touch. Best wishes from your friend Hans."

Hans, KGEI went off the air in the early 1990's. Transmitting from northern California, it was very popular in Mexico and other parts of Latin America. The station's well-known pastor, Jose Holowaty, is now in Paraguay and has a local station named Radio America, which has done some occasional low-power shortwave transmissions.

Adrian Peterson of NASB member Adventist World Radio is about to begin a new series of articles about the history of all shortwave stations in the United States, past and present. Undoubtedly, one of his articles will deal with the interesting history of KGEI. These articles will appear in the trade publication Radio World, and also in the NASB Newsletter.

Radio Free Asia Releases Its Eleventh QSL Card July 2006

RFA's Technical Operations Division is proud to announce the release of the company's eleventh QSL card in honor of the Father of Radio, Guglielmo Marconi. The card is scheduled for distribution from July 1 to August 31, 2006. Marconi was born on April 25, 1874, in Bologna, Italy. In 1901, people still thought the curvature of the earth would prevent radio signals from traveling more than 200 miles, but in July of 1901, Marconi was able to transmit across the Atlantic Ocean; this helped accelerate the development of the wireless industry. In 1909 Marconi shared the Nobel Prize for physics with Karl Ferdinand Braun. More information about Marconi, his life, and his work is available at the following Internet link:

http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/physics/laureates/1909/marconi-bio.html

Radio Free Asia (RFA) is a private, nonprofit corporation that broadcasts news and information to listeners in Asian countries where full, accurate, and timely news reports are unavailable. Created by Congress in 1994 and incorporated in 1996, RFA currently broadcasts in Burmese, Cantonese, Khmer, Korean to North Korea, Lao, Mandarin, the Wu dialect, Vietnamese, Tibetan (Uke, Amdo, and Kham), and Uyghur. RFA strives for accuracy, balance, and fairness in its editorial content. As a 'surrogate' broadcaster, RFA provides news and commentary specific to each of its target countries, acting as the free press these countries lack. RFA broadcasts only in local languages and dialects, and most of its broadcasts comprise news of specific local interest.

RFA encourages listeners to submit reception reports. Reception reports are valuable to RFA as they help us evaluate the signal strength and quality of our transmissions. Radio stations, like RFA, usually confirm accurate reception reports by mailing a QSL card.

RFA welcomes all reception report submissions at **www.techweb.rfa.org** (follow the QSL REPORTS link) not only from DX'ers, but also from its general listening audience. Reception reports are also accepted by email at **qsl@rfa.org**, and for anyone without Internet access, reception reports can be mailed to:

Reception Reports
Radio Free Asia
2025 M. Street NW, Suite 300
Washington DC 20036
United States of America.

Upon request, RFA will also send a copy of the current broadcast schedule and a station sticker.

News From the HFCC

A Steering Board Meeting of the HFCC/ASBU was held on 2 June 2006. High on the agenda were preparations for the next regular conference (B06) scheduled for 28 August to 1 September 2006 in Athens, Greece. Confirmation was received from the ERT colleagues (Hellenic Broadcasting Corporation) in regard to the venue for the coordination conference for the B06 season. They have reached an agreement with the Divani Apollon Palace & Spa hotel in one of the suburbs of Athens near the sea, and they have chosen it as a conference venue and for accommodation purposes. The hotel is located 19 kilometers from Athens International Airport.

The ERT sponsors of the Conference will provide coffee breaks, two lunches, a dinner, sightseeing in the center of Athens and a visit to the Acropolis and its museum. NASB Associate Member VT Merlin Communications will also sponsor an activity at the Conference.

For more information and registration details, see the HFCC website: www.hfcc.org.

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