

Digital TV to Start in Brazil in 2006. Country Gave Up Building Own Standard.

Contributed by Ivan Richard
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Brazil does not plan to develop its own digital TV standard. Instead, it will adapt imported systems (European, American, and Japanese) to introduce the technology in Brazil.

For the Minister of Communication, Hélio Costa, developing a national standard would demand many years of research and large investments.

According to the minister, Brazil is putting together a "Brazilian system of digital TV." From his standpoint, "within this digital TV model we are assembling, we shall have imported components and items made in Brazil, and we shall have the capacity to update the system on a permanent basis."

Since the beginning of the year, 79 research institutions all around the country have been networking on the theme of implanting digital television, and, to be part of the process of defining the standard that will be used in Brazil, they have to present their conclusions to the National Research and Development Council (CPqD, Centro de Pesquisa e Desenvolvimento em Telecomunicações) by December.

Costa also affirmed that the digitalization of TV in Brazil will create jobs. "We are dealing with an extraordinary capacity to generate jobs, inasmuch as we realize that each television station will have more than one channel and thus generate more jobs."

The digital TV system is expected to be implemented in the country by 2006. The Minister affirmed that the system may be operational in four capitals by July of next year.

"We are initially considering Brasília, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Belo Horizonte."

The minister participated yesterday, September 27, in the Senate, in a public hearing on the implantation of digital TV.

Costa proposes that the government eliminate tariffs on imported equipment needed by TV stations to shift from analog to digital transmission. According to the Minister, the companies will have to spend a lot on the digitalization process.

"The overall investment will be very high. Each TV station will have to invest not only in the unit that generates the signal, but in all its land-based retransmission facilities."

The characteristics of digital TV are: high-definition images, digital sound, interactive capacity, and the possibility of Internet linkup via TV.

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