

---

## Brazil Wants More Time to Pick a Digital TV Format

Contributed by Irene Lôbo  
Thursday, 16 March 2006

Once again the announcement on the digital TV format that Brazil will adopt (or adapt) has been postponed. The committee analyzing the issue (Comitê de Desenvolvimento do Sistema Brasileiro de Televisão Digital), which consists of nine ministers, was to announce its decision last Friday (March 10), but says it needs more time.

Theoretically Brazil has three choices: it can select the Japanese format (ISDB), which is what broadcasters want, because it has good high definition, interactivity and mobile reception, but is not widely used outside Japan.

Another choice is the European format (DVB), which also has good high definition with more levels of interactivity and is used in 78 countries.

The third option is the American format (ATSC), which has good high definition and interactivity, but no mobile reception (Canada, South Korea and Mexico say they will use it).

There is, at least on paper, a fourth choice for Brazil: a kind of hybrid digital TV standard, which would mean adapting a foreign format but including technological advances developed by Brazilians in the area which are significant and known as the Brazilian Digital TV System (SBTVD).

There is no lack of opinions on which format is best. Everybody seems to have one. Recently University of Brasília professor of Journalism, Murilo César Ramos, said he favors the European format because it offers more channels, more programs and more interactivity.

And the former secretary of Telecommunications at the Ministry of Communications, Mauro Oliveira, says he favors the hybrid format. "I don't think we should be forced to pick "A" or "B" or "C" - Japanese, European or American. Brazilian scientists have done a lot of work on this and should not be left out in the cold," he declared.

The Ministry of Communications estimates the digital TV market in Brazil will generate US\$ 10 billion in business over the next decade. And there is a strong desire to make a quick decision because the Brazilian government would really like to test the new format with broadcast images from this year's World Soccer Cup which takes place this summer in Germany.

Agência Brasil