

Brazil Will Use Digital TV to Expand the Internet

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Brazil's Minister of Communications, Hélio Costa, affirmed that there is an expectation that digital TV will increase the number of TV sets in the country to 80 million. He said that at present there are 65 million TV sets in Brazil.

"Digital TV represents much more than a pretty image and perfect sound. It is interactive, so you can use the remote control to converse with the TV. Digital TV is an extraordinary instrument of education, exchange, and interaction with society."

The minister went on to say that it is expected that three years after digital TV is implanted in the country, the system will also facilitate people's access to the Internet from their homes.

A decree signed June 29 by Brazilian President, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, made it official that Brazil will use the Japanese digital TV format to implant its own Brazilian system.

Under the terms of the decree, Brazil will move from analog to digital transmissions over a period of ten years, and four new digital channels for public (government) broadcasting will be created: one for the executive branch, and others for education, citizenship and culture.

The Brazilian consumer will not have to go out and buy a new TV set when digital transmissions begin. The installation of a small converter will be sufficient. As for open TV broadcasters, they will automatically receive a digital channel which they will have 18 months to begin using for transmissions.

Within seven years, broadcasters should be able to ensure that their digital transmissions will be nationwide. Only after ten years will the analog signal be terminated.

"This is project for all Brazilians," declared Costa.

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