

Washington to get first crack at free mobile TV

April 20 2009, By PETER SVENSSON , AP Technology Writer

(AP) -- Washington will be the first U.S. city to get free digital TV broadcasts for mobile devices like cell phones, laptop computers and in-car entertainment systems, broadcasters were set to announce Monday.

Broadcasts using new "mobile DTV" technology are expected to begin in late summer from five stations: local affiliates of CBS, NBC, PBS and Ion and one independent station owned by Fox.

The initial broadcasts will be identical to those beamed to TV sets, including the advertising.

It's unclear what devices might be available with the special receivers needed for the new signals. Cell phones are main candidates for the technology, but the wireless carriers have shown no enthusiasm, and the largest two have their own TV services, which require subscriptions.

However, Dell Inc. will be showing a prototype of a small laptop with a built-in mobile DTV receiver at the National Association of Broadcasters trade show in Las Vegas this week. The computer maker joins cell phone makers LG Electronics Inc. and Samsung Electronics Co. in supporting the technology. Kenwood Corp. is developing car-based receivers.

The companies backing the technology in the so-called Open Mobile Video Coalition said Washington was chosen as a test market because the city is full of tech-savvy viewers who pay attention to local news.

Attention from politicians and regulators probably doesn't hurt either - the coalition has earlier pointed to the usefulness of free mobile TV broadcasts in case of emergencies and disasters like hurricanes.

Broadcasters plan to quickly start broadcasts in more than two dozen other cities by the end of the year, covering 39 percent of U.S. households. Among the target cities are New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Boston and Atlanta.

On the Net: www.omvc.org

©2009 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Citation: Washington to get first crack at free mobile TV (2009, April 20) retrieved 19 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2009-04-washington-free-mobile-tv.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--