

First digital radio to be launched

Twenty four news channels worldwide among the offerings

By Elffi Lee

KUALA LUMPUR: Asiaspace Dotcom Sdn Bhd, a local multimedia and infrastructure company, will be launching the first digital audio broadcast radio in the local market.

It is learnt that Asiaspace will be signing a Memorandum of Understanding with US-based Worldspace Inc to introduce this product on Saturday at Putrajaya. Worldspace owns three satellites and can provide global digital satellite radio and multimedia services to a potential

audience of over 5.2 billion people worldwide.

According to invitation cards sent out, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will be officiating the launch of Asiaspace Dotcom. Asiaspace is expected to showcase its product at the launch.

Asiaspace's digital radio broadcast allows local listeners to tune into 24 news channels worldwide such as Cable News Network, Bloomberg, British Broadcasting Corp and Asian audio programmes.

Asiaspace is using Worldspace's services for this broadcast. This system allows a person

to carry a portable Worldspace receiver which uses single frequency network.

"This means that a person in any part of Malaysia can receive the news crystal clear," an industry source said.

Asiaspace, it is learnt, is looking at pricing the Worldspace receiver and a 10cm satellite antenna (for use when entering buildings) below RMS00.

The system also allows Malaysian programmes to be heard through the receiver. This is done when the programmes are uplinked to a geo-satellite (which is located 35,000 miles above ground level) owned by

Worldspace which is located 105 degrees East above Singapore.

Through the Worldspace's satellite, Asiaspace will also be able to give multimedia content providers a fast wireless means of delivery to consumers' personal computers. This means large files and data can be downloaded quickly and directly onto a personal computer without any dial up connection.

It is said that Asiaspace is currently holding talks with car manufacturers to introduce the digital audio broadcast system in automobiles. If all goes well, the system should be in place in automobiles in Malaysia in a year.