



FRANSAT Connect portal

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HbbTV: satellite brings in interactive TV

Ralph Edeine, Director of Innovation and Technical Solutions at Eutelsat's [FRANSAT](#) affiliate, explains how the HbbTV standard is setting the pace for interactive television. Ralph is a panellist in "Making television better for consumers through HbbTV" during the 6th [HbbTV Symposium](#) event in Rome on 17 October.

What is HbbTV and what role does it play in today's global video environment?

HbbTV (hybrid broadcast broadband TV) is an industry standard used by a growing number of players in video content distribution. It was designed as a

way to offer a common technology standard to support interactive services on connected equipment (connected TVs, set-top boxes, second-screen apps) that interact or are in synch with HbbTV-compatible user equipment.

In practice, HbbTV combines broadcast networks, such as satellite, for high quality channel distribution (SD, HD and Ultra HD) with the Internet for interactive and personalised services and content.

The HbbTV standard is a significant step forward in that it responds to consumer expectations on their viewing experience, as well as broadcaster needs for visibility on how content and services are being used. New specifications are constantly being developed by experts in the HbbTV association, based on their on-going work and analysis.

What opportunities are offered by this standard?

The launch of the HbbTV 2.01 version opens a new era of opportunities for editors and broadcasters, including an extended support for distributing and securing OTT services. Thanks to this update, personalisation can go one step further for users, and can enable broadcasters to optimise knowledge of their audience profile and habits, as well as potential for monetisation. This also means that targeted real-time advertising could become a widely adopted service thanks to HbbTV.

How does satellite fit into this evolving environment?

Viewers want the best TV experience irrespective of how they're accessing content and they want to feel they're in control. What's relevant for them is to benefit from the broadest spectrum of services, and the possibility to customise their experience by browsing through an intuitive and easy-to-navigate programme guide, by selecting preferred content, and by watching "catch-up" TV or VOD. All of this is technically feasible via satellite that also has inherent strengths in comparison to other reception modes: specifically reach and a guarantee of high standards of image quality.

How does HbbTV fit into Eutelsat's video strategy?

We see HbbTV as a key to unlock new opportunities in the video market, with more services that are increasingly personalised.

FRANSAT is an early adopter in this field, with the launch of [FRANSAT Connect](#) as early as 2013, when other players were still sizing up HbbTV. This innovation got others walking in our steps in order to benefit from our first mover advantage.

We've also been able to demonstrate our ability to market solutions with a strong added-value for broadcasters and viewers. The recent HbbTV extension to our [Sat.tv](#) EPG app (launched in 2016) illustrates this. It now enables millions of viewers of the more than 300 free-to-air channels transmitted on HOTBIRD and equipped with connected TVs or set-top boxes to benefit from [new interactive features](#).

The FRANSAT Connect portal is live since 2013 and set a standard for similar applications. Tell us more about its track record?

FRANSAT is a platform of French Digital Terrestrial Television channels that offers free French national channels and thematic pay-TV bundles to viewers in around two million French households. The platform was launched in 2009 and the HbbTV FRANSAT Connect portal was added in 2013 with services ranging from an enriched TV guide, a “catch-up” TV option, a VOD catalogue, practical information and a radio portal.

The deployment of HbbTV 2.01 opens new doors for FRANSAT's interactive portal. Further developments are on our radar to deliver more flexibility, including a recommendation system based on user preferences. This will be a great tool for building a deeper understanding of our audience and their habits and to further improve their viewing experience!

About Eutelsat Group

Eutelsat Group is a global leader in satellite communications, delivering connectivity and broadcast services worldwide. The Group was formed through the combination of the Company and OneWeb in 2023, becoming the first fully integrated GEO-LEO satellite operator with a fleet of 34 Geostationary satellites and a Low Earth Orbit (LEO) constellation of more than 600 satellites. The Group addresses the needs of customers in four key verticals of Video, where it distributes more than 6,500 television channels, and the high-growth connectivity markets of Mobile Connectivity, Fixed

Connectivity, and Government Services. Eutelsat Group's unique suite of in-orbit assets and ground infrastructure enables it to deliver integrated solutions to meet the needs of global customers. The Company is headquartered in Paris and the Eutelsat Group employs more than 1,500 people across more than 50 countries. The Group is committed to delivering safe, resilient, and environmentally sustainable connectivity to help bridge the digital divide. The Company is listed on the Euronext Paris Stock Exchange (ticker: ETL) and the London Stock Exchange (ticker: ETL)

Find out more at www.eutelsat.com

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