

Mexico City, October 24th, 2024

Sri Deepak Sharma, Advisor
Telecom Regulatory Authority of India
Present:

Dear official,

The National Chamber of the Radio and Television Industry (CIRT) is the collective organization that brings together more than 1,200 commercial radio and television licensees in Mexico, whose objectives include representing, promoting and defending the general interests of the industry and of the companies that constitute it; as well as study the issues that affect the industrial activities of its members and provide measures that tend to develop them.

Likewise, it is important to comment that CIRT is a consultative and collaborative body of the three levels of government, institutions, organizations and autonomous entities to satisfy the needs of the industrial activity that constitute it, which is why for more than 20 years has studied and carried out various research tasks regarding digital radio in Mexico; It is important to tell you that every policy that the authority has taken regarding the issue has come from the initiative and permanent work of our Industry.

We take the liberty of writing to you to share our experience and perspective about the IBOC (In- Band On- Channel) technology standard, also known as HD Radio™, developed by Xperi Inc. (formerly iBiquity Digital Corporation). This technology has demonstrated its effectiveness and versatility by being approved and standardized for use in various countries around the world, including the United States, Mexico and Canada.

Since its introduction in 2002, HD Radio technology has had notable success by enabling digital radio services on more than 2,700 AM and FM stations in multiple countries, reaching almost 400 million people and supported by more than 100 million vehicles. Mexico adopted the digital terrestrial radio standard in June 2011, establishing a policy that allows broadcasters to voluntarily carry out hybrid transmissions with the IBOC standard. This decision has been fundamental to promote the transition towards digital radio without the need to allocate new spectrum, since the digital signal is transmitted within the same frequencies that stations currently use.

One of the most notable features of the IBOC standard is its ability to preserve analog transmission while adding a low-level digital signal adjacent to the existing analog signal. This combination, known as a hybrid IBOC signal, offers both traditional analogue services and new digital services, thus providing a smooth transition into the digital era for broadcasters and listeners.

HD Radio technology offers numerous benefits, including improved audio quality with clear, crisp, interference-free sound. In addition, it allows the creation of HD2, HD3 and HD4 multicast channels, as well as the delivery of advanced metadata services, which expands the possibilities of reaching new audiences and offering specialized content.

HD Radio technology's ability to enhance emergency alerts through the inclusion of images and text content further enriches its public utility. This is in addition to its efficient emergency protocol, which supports public safety by providing accurate and timely alerts. The IBOC standard facilitates broadcasters' digital transition by utilizing existing infrastructure and reducing implementation costs. This allows broadcasters to improve their revenue potential by better targeting their audiences and offering specialized services, which has proven to be an effective strategy to compete in today's market.

In Mexico, 41% of the population lives in cities where more than 230 channels are already transmitted digitally, and more than 170 new car models come equipped with factory-integrated digital receivers. This market penetration demonstrates the success and viability of digital terrestrial radio based on the IBOC standard.

We firmly believe that the implementation of a voluntary digital radio broadcasting standard in India, following the example of Mexico, will greatly benefit listeners by providing them with new and improved digital broadcasting services that are accessible throughout the country.

In a context where audiences have access to a diversity of options and platforms to obtain information, it is essential that the radio has the necessary instruments to provide an optimal service. Denying them technological advance would be limiting their freedom of expression and their access to relevant and timely information.

While we understand that implementing new technologies can present challenges, we are convinced that the benefits of digital radio far outweigh these obstacles. It is time to take advantage of the experience of stations that have already adopted digital radio and explore new business opportunities that this technology offers.

In conclusion, voluntary regulation and standardization of HD Radio technology in India will contribute significantly to reduce the digital gap in the population and will allow all citizens to enjoy for free the benefits that digital terrestrial radio offers.

At CIRT, we believe and work for free access to information and freedom of expression in the digital sphere, since they are fundamental for the development of increasingly just, inclusive, equitable and democratic societies.

Faced with current challenges, we continue working and promoting with authority policies that allow us to adapt to the digital age and channel our work to inform and entertain, expanding our spaces and enriching the experience of our audiences, celebrating their diversity, creativity and desire for freedom.

We appreciate your attention to this important matter, and we are available to provide any additional information you may require.

Sincerely,



José Antonio García Herrera
President CIRT



Miguel Orozco Gómez
Managing Director CIRT