

BUSINESS : NEW CONTRACTS

ProTV Selects TSL For First Romanian HD Channel

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TSL has been selected by ProTV, the leading channel in Romania, to provide systems integration for its new HD service. ProTV HD, which will launch later this year, will be the first high definition channel in Romania.

The contract is to build a new HD studio and the associated HD transmission facilities.

The channel will begin experimental transmission in Bucharest on 1st December 2006, the eleventh anniversary of its launch, which also marks the beginning of its relationship with TSL who installed the original systems in 1995. "We had a very tight tender process and as expected TSL fulfilled all of the criteria that we required, which is to provide a complete turnkey delivery system that includes products, design, manufacturers, onsite installation, training and commissioning. We researched the evolution of TSL following our initial meeting in 1995 and we found that its reputation is still extremely impressive," commented George Iliescu, Technology Deputy Director General, ProTV.

Penetration of HDTV in urban areas of Romania - which counts for approximately 53 per cent of the population - is expected to grow in the next three to five years, as more digital licenses will be released in Romania. "This year in Romania there has been a 60 per cent increase in sales of plasmas and LCD displays. We are conducting a study now to estimate how many plasmas and LCDs have been sold in the last two years, which is the market that we will address first, because even if our viewers are not completely HD ready, 16:9 will be a huge leap in their viewing experience," added Iliescu.

He continued, "Many people may be curious to know why we are launching an HD channel in Romania at this stage. The answer is simple, in the broadcast world we end up with equipment that has a lifecycle of ten to 12 years. When you replace equipment in 2006 are you going to go SD when you know the equipment is also only expected to have a similar lifecycle? No, you don't, because in five years you risk being behind your competitors; we decided that it is much wiser to come first."

Russell Grute, TSL's Head of Sales, concluded, "It's great to be working with ProTV again and to launch yet another TSL HD service, this time for Central Europe. TSL had a very successful collaboration with ProTV back in 1995 which was actually our last analogue installation, so this project is a great leap for the customer. There can't be many organisations going from analogue and tape to server based HD in one step."