



## **Sex and shopping drive new television channel launches as Europe sees a record boom in new TV channels**

**London Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> September.** Europe saw a record number of new television channels launched in 2003/2004 and 2005 is hotting up to be another bumper year for new TV services. Adult entertainment channels were the strongest growing genre in 2004, leading strong growth across the board. The number of shopping channels also increased markedly.

Screen Digest's latest research study shows the last few years of relatively flat channel growth have been replaced with a sustained boom, the likes of which have not been seen since the mid 1990s when digital television services first launched in Europe. A staggering 277 channels were launched in Europe during 2004 continuing the 200-plus trend seen in 2003 when 295 new channels launched. Data for the first half of 2005 suggests this year will also see in excess of 200 new channels launched. The previous highest annual number of channel launches was just 142.

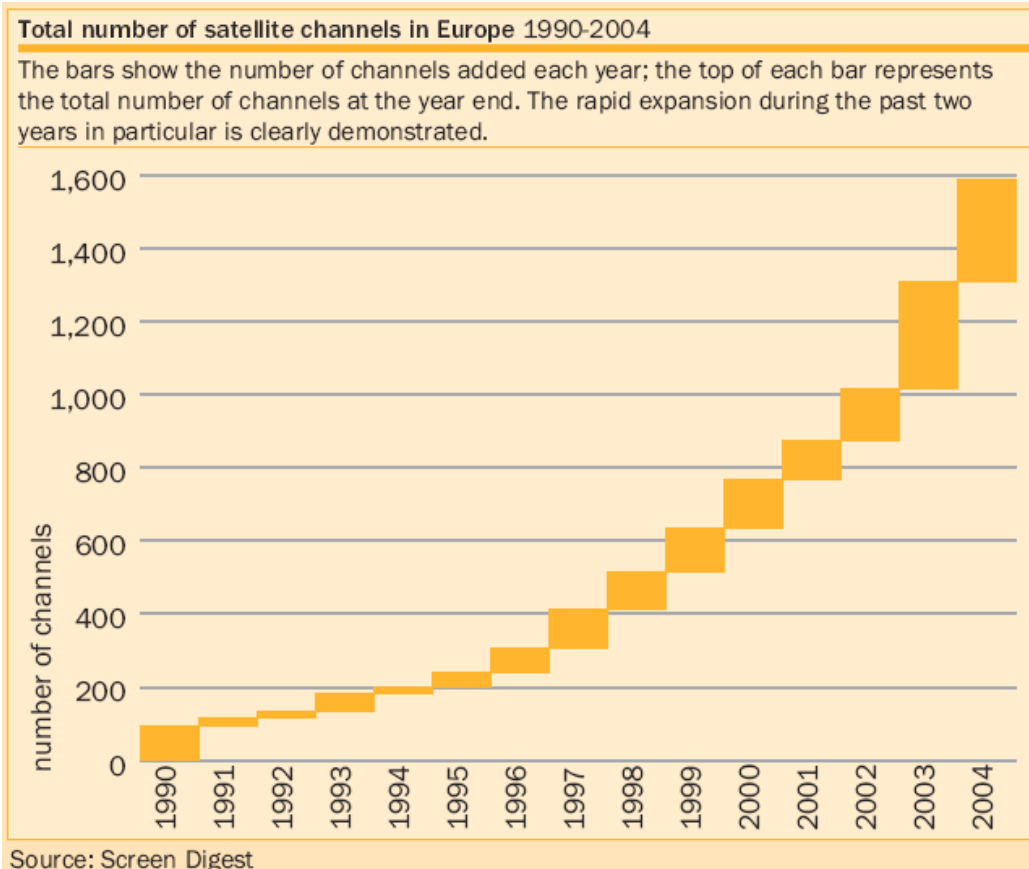
Media consultancy Screen Digest believes that this new boom has been stimulated by traditional pay TV and free-to-view satellite markets and new technologies like IPTV. Growth has been driven by popular genres such as movies, sports, children's and music as well as a number of niche genres including home shopping, adult and wholly interactive channels.

The adult genre was the strongest in 2004 and with 13 new adult channels already launched in the first half of 2005 this genre looks set to top the charts for the second time in a row. Other key growth areas in 2004 were sport, movies, entertainment and shopping and all look set to continue strong growth in 2005.

The UK now has the widest number of channels with 416 channels aimed specifically at UK viewers. Of these a bank-breaking 47 are home shopping channels, there are also 32 music channels, 30 documentary channels, 29 adult channels and 24 children's channels. The next largest market is France with a total of 246 channels, followed by Italy with 206, Spain with 108 and Germany with 93. Across Europe the large majority of these channels are carried by Pay TV with 70 per cent of all channels in operation being encrypted pay services.

Guy Bisson, Screen Digest's senior television analyst said: "While some of this apparent growth in new channels can be attributed to major re-branding exercises following consolidation in the European pay television market, underlying growth has also been impressive. Previously niche genres like adult entertainment and shopping are now entering the big league with the

number of available services almost equalling some of the major genres like news, children's and documentary. There is also evidence that this phenomenal growth will continue for at least another year."



### Editors' Notes

The data, forecasts and analysis contained in this press release are taken from the August edition of the Screen Digest Newsletter.

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