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LONDON CALLING... BABCOCK BROADCASTS DRM TEST TRANSMISSIONS INTO EUROPE

SEP 2015

Babcock provides essential worldwide radio transmissions for major international broadcasters including the BBC World Service and Japanese state broadcaster NHK. Shortwave is an important part of the global radio network as it can cover large geographical areas – we broadcast to 13.5 million shortwave listeners in Nigeria alone.

The ongoing switch from analogue to digital has presented international broadcasters with a challenge: DAB, so successful in the UK and Europe, is not effective across larger and less developed regions such as Africa and Asia. This has led to the development of DRM, a digital version of Shortwave radio. We are pioneering the deployment of DRM around the world and were delighted to demonstrate its effectiveness at IBC 2015. Our global network of transmitters includes a number that are DRM capable and ready to broadcast. But the biggest barrier we face is that the production of DRM radio receivers is lagging



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behind the broadcasters' desire to broadcast. At IBC 2015 we joined forces with Avion Electronics, an Indian manufacturer who has launched an all Indian designed and manufactured receiver. Together we ran daily demos of BBC, Vatican radio and NHK content that showcased the

excellence of DRM transmissions to broadcast customers including the BBC and Radio France Internationale.

We took a radio feed from the BBC's London studios and sent it via our network to our DRM capable transmitters at Woofferton in Shropshire from where the signal was

transmitted across Europe. In ideal conditions a DRM signal can reach audiences up to 4,000 miles away and at IBC in Amsterdam we picked up a crystal clear signal – better even than local FM. The feedback from our customers has been exceptional with everyone agreeing that the DRM sound quality was amazing. DRM is important because a lot of our shortwave customers want to reach parts of the world where the broadcast infrastructure is not as good as Europe. They are at the critical point of deciding how to deliver their services digitally across these vast areas, so our ability to provide a viable high quality digital version of shortwave is extremely attractive to them. Demos like the one at IBC prove that we have the technology, capability and product to make DRM a success - safeguarding the excellence of our shortwave customers' broadcasts well into the digital age.

**Paul Firth, Director
of Broadcast
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