



IMDAAlliance.org

## Corporate News

Reference: **IMDA003**

### **IMDA announces global certification standard for internet radios**

**IFA Show, Berlin, Germany, 7<sup>th</sup> September 2009** – The Internet Media Device Alliance (IMDA) has announced a baseline certification standard for standalone internet radio players. Called IMDA Profile 1, the standard aims to protect consumers by aligning competing technologies and future-proofing internet radio product design.

Major internet radio manufacturers and broadcasters are backing the IMDA certification standard to ensure new products will access the majority of streamed audio broadcasts, available now and in the future. It is estimated that certified radios will today receive around 90 per cent of the world's radio stations currently broadcasting over the internet.

For manufacturers of internet radios, the certification standard aims to reduce time to market and marketing risk by removing the prospect of rival technology wars. At the same time, online broadcasters adhering to IMDA Profile 1 will be able to reach target audiences using fewer audio codecs, cutting associated costs.

Mark Hopgood, an IMDA steering committee member and Frontier Silicon's director of marketing, commented, "audio data streaming over the internet is faced with a unique set of challenges, from codec design through to play list format, countless choices need to be made. If a universal standard isn't specified now, when the market for internet radios is in its relative infancy, manufacturers risk entering a technology war, like the Betamax/VHS war of the '80s. If this happens, many early adopters will end up with obsolete products - this needs to be avoided at all costs. Technology wars create market uncertainty, which hurts manufacturers, hurts broadcasters and, most importantly, hurts the consumer."

IMDA Profile 1 sets out to harmonise the technologies currently used by internet radio manufacturers and broadcasters. Specifically, the baseline standard stipulates devices must decode both WMA and MP3 codecs; use HTTP streaming with 301 and 302 redirection; accept play list formats M3U, ASX, PLS with new line separation for URLs in plain text; and receive stereo streams via two channels or by downloading a mix of both.

"More and more consumers are discovering great audio content from around the world over the internet on an increasing number of different devices," added John Ousby, an IMDA steering committee member, vTuner's director of broadcaster services and the BBC's former head of distribution technology for audio and music. "Aligning technologies for internet radio devices is an important step for continued rapid growth."

Harry Johnson, chairman of the IMDA's steering committee and president of vTuner, concluded, "internet radios bearing the IMDA certified logo will be in the

shops before Christmas, marking 2009 as a watershed moment for internet connected media devices.”

To speed the adoption of Profile 1, the IMDA is running a ‘fast track’ certification programme for a limited period. Information is available from [www.imdalliance.org](http://www.imdalliance.org). Future IMDA Profiles will set standards for different types of internet connected media devices, for example video players.

The IMDA was launched in 2009 to develop and promote a set of open, interoperable standards and device profiles for internet connected media devices. Its steering committee comprises many of the world’s leading players in streaming media: [Awox](#), [BBC](#), [Deutsche Welle](#), [the European Broadcasting Union](#), [Frontier Silicon](#), [Global Radio](#), [Pure](#), [Reciva](#), [SWR](#) and [vTuner](#).

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**About the IMDA:**

The IMDA was launched in 2009 to develop and promote a set of open, interoperable standards and device profiles to maximise the growth of a global consumer market in internet-connected media devices.

Underpinning the mission statement are two core activities:

1) To define a series of end-to-end technical standards, functions and profiles which will encourage the development of a wide range of compelling mainstream internet media devices with a degree of consistency, while supporting proportionate differentiation for manufacturers and broadcasters.

2) To provide B-to-B marketing support to member organisations, and to promote the concept of internet connected devices to consumers, potential members and retailers.

In support of these objectives, the IMDA will also commission custom research to highlight and promote viable business models across the value chain and act as a networking trade organisation for members to share in best-of-practice product development, consumer experience and marketing research.