

The donna wears leopard



Although numerous Italian experts were involved in developing the DVB standard for digital TV, they have so far seen it implemented only in other countries. Digital TV has now finally been given the go-ahead also in Italy. Rohde & Schwarz is involved, thus further expanding its international leading position as a supplier of DVB transmitters.

is almost impossible without switching off previous analog channels. For years, Italy has been engaged in fierce political discussions on how to handle the transition from analog to digital as well as on the ensuing consequences for the broadcasting landscape, and some of these discussions are still going on. The selected transition model was given the wonderful name "leopard spots" because the digital network is being expanded "spot by spot" wherever a frequency can be made available.

The go-ahead was finally given this summer. The legislation calls for 50% of the population to be supplied by the end of 2003, and even 70% by the end of 2004. For the time being, both RAI and Mediaset have been assigned two multiplexers each, while La7 will operate one multiplexer.

Mediaset has become the trailblazer. Since all channels are also available via satellite, frequencies that have been freed up (also purchased ones) were used for the first digital multiplexer. In the invitation to tender for setting up the digital network of Elettronica Industriale (the network operator of Mediaset) Rohde & Schwarz succeeded in securing a 40% share against tough national and international competition. The company was especially pleased that numerous transmitters of the new R&S® SV 7002 low-power family will be used for this purpose. Moreover, the order also includes stations with models from the R&S® NV 7001 medium-power family that are already well established on the market and the liquid-cooled R&S® NV 7000 high-power family. By the end of the year, the network will be on the air with two multiplexers.

Of course, RAI did not want to miss out. To obtain sufficient frequencies for its digital network, RAI was forced to purchase the necessary frequencies from small private transmitter operators and will therefore need a bit more time to set up the new transmitter network.

The privatized subsidiary RaiWay is handling the setup. The invitation to tender for this project was also hotly contested. Together with its cooperation partner Sirti, Rohde & Schwarz was able to submit a quotation that was both technically and commercially very attractive, securing two thirds of the transmitter network including monitoring receivers. All in all, about 70 transmitters with output power ranging from 25 W to 5 kW will be supplied so that once again all current product families will be used.

This success could not have been achieved without the powerful onsite presence of Rohde & Schwarz Italia, also ensuring long-term technical support for the supplied infrastructure beyond the warranty period.

For Rohde & Schwarz, these projects signify an important breakthrough in Italy where competing against a multitude of national manufacturers is particularly difficult. Following the successfully established large networks in Great Britain (see also page 62), Spain and Scandinavia as well as numerous completed projects in other European and non-European countries, the company has now been able to further expand its leading position in digital TV.

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If you are familiar with Italy, you know how many different TV programs can be received via an antenna even in the tiniest villages. There is the public broadcasting station RAI with three channels, a number of commercial broadcasters such as Mediaset with three channels and then the third-largest chain La7 with two channels, not to mention innumerable regional and local stations.

This leaves only a few frequencies freely available so that structured frequency planning for new digital multiplexers