



The SatLabs Group - An Interview with Xavier Lobao



Xavier Lobao, Future Programmes Manager for ESA Telecom and Chairman of the SatLabs Group

The SatLabs Group is an international, not-for-profit association whose members are committed to bringing the deployment of the DVB-RCS standard to large-scale adoption. The SatLabs membership is formed by some 30 organisations worldwide including service providers, satellite operators, system integrators, terminal manufacturers and technology providers. The Group's main goal is to ensure interoperability between DVB-RCS terminals and systems and to achieve low-cost service provision.

Mr Lobao, it seems, that the interest in DVB-RCS technologies is growing rapidly.

"Yes, that's true. Interest in DVB-RCS has grown significantly and is evolving very rapidly worldwide. Many implementations are already available commercially. Many requests from operators ask for DVB-RCS solutions and there are important initiatives that plan to introduce the DVB-RCS technology into the residential market. The SatLabs Group is playing a crucial role in the consolidation of the DVB-RCS standard in the marketplace."

What is the SatLabs Group specifically doing to help DVB-RCS?

"The Group's first priority is to ensure interoperability between DVB-RCS products. The main strength of an open standard is the freedom to choose, and SatLabs is there to certify compatibility and interoperability between products. Secondly, the Group is working to reduce the cost of user terminals, their installation and the total cost per user, including the cost of satellite capacity. In addition, SatLabs is working to simplify market development by ensuring that applications and services will run smoothly and perform at the required level over DVB-

RCS. And finally, SatLabs is becoming a knowledge centre for DVB-RCS to increase awareness and promote solutions based on the standard."

What are the main achievements of the Group so far?

"The main achievement is without doubt the fact that interoperability has already been demonstrated between three different DVB-RCS systems and terminals. But in addition, the Group has defined a test plan and associated qualification programme for the verification of interoperability and the formalisation of the certification process. Linked with that, SatLabs has published a document containing system recommendations that will simplify interoperability in DVB-RCS implementations. The Group has also agreed and published specifications for critical components and interfaces in the terminal to foster the availability of common low-cost components and equipment."

What are the next milestones for the SatLabs Group?

"The most important milestone is to establish the formal interoperability testing and certification process. We have already finalised the test plans and the definition of the qualification programme. The key step is the availability of an independent test bed with