

Work Package 4 Develop Guidelines & Recommendations

Deliverable 4:

**Conclusions and recommendations on
future pilot actions and partnerships for
satellite broadband**

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SABER (Satellite Broadband for European Regions) is a CIP ICT PSP co-funded Thematic Network

For more info see: <http://www.project-saber.eu/>

Disclaimer:

Please note that these guidelines are the result of SABER partner contributions. The European Commission is evaluating the compliance of the document within the current ERDF and EARDF 2006-2013 regulations. A new official version will be published including the European Commission review when available.

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1. Introduction

A roadshow is a travelling trade exhibition in which a product or a service is demonstrated to citizens, local authorities, or other potential investors. It aims at increasing both the visibility and the reputation of this very product or service in order to accelerate the market penetration.

2. General presentation and main organisation

Road shows may attract prospective public stakeholders interested in learning more about the satellite broadband internet. Road show will also help to raise awareness among European citizens on this available solution and demonstrate the last improvement of this technology in terms of speeds and reliability. The events may include presentations, practical demonstrations and Q&A sessions with the SABER partners. In addition, SABER may also propose smaller, private meetings in the weeks preceding the roadshow. Before organising road shows, it is necessary to develop national, regional and/or local partnerships. Indeed, one of the main advantages of roadshows is that it brings closeness to local stakeholders and people.

First of all, it is important to have an overall view of the road show calendar to be prepared to implement several actions simultaneously and not miss opportunities to communicate:

Establish a timetable for the whole organisation: signature of partnership agreement, installation of satellite kit, evaluation....

Identify the coming events to be used for communication & advertisement

It will take around 4 to 6 months to establish all necessary administrative procedures with the local authorities and partners before the launch of the first Satellite Broadband Roadshow.

The first months will be dedicated to finding partners among the Internet Service Providers (ISP). The ISP will help to identify several places where to lead the road shows and get approval among the appropriate people (local authorities, ministers, etc...).

In the framework of SABER, the regional partners of SABER will be immediately asked to participate to the organisation of road shows at the very beginning of the initiative. In this case, it could be assumed that the administrative process would go faster, as the regional partners would already be aware of this initiative. Indeed, they already know their needs in terms of connectivity. Therefore they would quickly identify the best places to implement a road show and foster the administrative procedure.

Once the partnership between the satellite operator, the ISP and the local authority is settled, the scheme established for the road show should be approved by the partners in an official contract. Each partner will be represented in a steering committee which will regularly gather to monitor the different demonstrations.

Finally, the first installations and inaugurations can take place. In order to benefit from a wide audience, the partners can identify specific opportunities to start road shows. For example, the road show can be introduced during official meetings of elected representatives, or special event in relevant areas (rural life, education, tourism....).

Road shows will be conducted during a whole year, starting from the installation and the provision of an internet access on the choosing location. For example, if the signature of the contract between all partners takes place on June 1st, the satellite broadband connection will be free on this location from 1st June 2014 to 30th May 2015. Indeed, the result of the road show will reflect the trend of use of internet connection at all seasons.

During the year of demonstration, the road show will be introduced at different events dedicated to projects involving satellite broadband connection. Any other opportunity to talk about ICT or to debate on broadband should be seized in order to publicise the road show. The different partners have the duty to advertise the road show during the whole year through word-in-mouth but also in the media. The media exposure is a pre-condition of success: it will make people follow the initiative and be interested in the results. If the initiative is a success (as it should be), spill-over effects will be induced by people aware of the road show thanks to its good advertisement.

When the road show comes to an end, the satellite operator and ISP can ask the users to evaluate satellite broadband solution. The results will help to determine what follow-on the partners should give to the road show and how to best take advantage of the spill-over effects.

3. Key steps to set up a roadshow

3.1 Looking for potential institutional partners

First, it is essential to have the support of one major ISP in each country selected by the satellite operator to organise a road show. The potential partners would be the ISPs having commercial relationship with satellite operators and which have trained competent antennas installers. Once the agreement on the road show is defined, ISP will contact the relevant administration and elected representatives within the country. Indeed, networks of elected representatives willing to take part to the road show are key factors for its success.

In the framework of SABER, the regional partners interested to organise a road show on their territory will be mobilised to negotiate the agreement at first instance. They could launch a call for expression of interest to select the places where to lead the road show on their territory. They may also select locations which are still waiting for a terrestrial internet access and propose them to test satellite broadband as an alternative solution. Moreover, it is possible to benefit from the expertise of other SABER entities as NEREUS and Eurisy to organise cross-borders road shows. In this case, the road shows could lead to the organisation of international events and be reported in the media at European level.

Other potential partners are public organisations related to sectors of political interest for broadband internet (education, tourism, health...). Committed institutional partners can mobilise a large panel of participants as public administrations, SMEs, charities, and households for example.

Publishing a call for expression of interest on websites that connects public stakeholders throughout the European Union can help to spread the information among local authorities and facilitate the Public Authority demand aggregation process. Considering that satellite broadband is particularly designed to answer the needs of rural territories, the website of the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) or of INTERREG IVC could be used to publish this call.

The partners will help to target 2 to 3 places to lead the road shows. The selected places will be located in white or grey areas, and could comprise schools, rural or mountainous spots (farmers, touristic activities in remote areas...).

3.2 Identifying the needs related to connectivity

Even if the primary purpose is to reduce the inequalities between urban and rural areas, the needs can be differentiated among each type of potential user:

- Individuals: they are seeking to be connected in order to search information on the web, do online administrative procedures, buy products and services on websites, communicate via social networks & visio-conferences,...
- Firms: they are seeking to be connected in order to search and access external information, improve purchases efficiency, handle sales leads and online advertising, manage administrative procedures. Internet connection will enable firms to expand their activities at a national or even international level.
- Local authorities: an internet connection will help them to promote their territory at national or international level but also to digitise administrative procedures and communicate more easily with their citizens.
- Schools: thanks to satellite internet connection, children will beneficiate from various educational content and will learn new ways of communications.

3.3 Defining the field of action using a panel of profiles

The partners should privilege the places where the use of internet and the number of simultaneous connections (~10) fit the best with the satellite solution (for example: mountain refuges, primary schools, SME...). On the contrary, demonstrations in wide collective structures needing a lot of simultaneous connection (as for example main ski stations, and camping) may not show the highest performances of satellite broadband solutions.

3.4 Enhancing/showcasing the purpose of connectivity

Satellite broadband can bring to life some projects in need of an internet connection. Road shows presenting the concrete benefits of connectivity can also arouse new projects needing a website and new way of communication through internet.

Here are some examples of services which could be offered in addition of an internet connection:

- A Wi-Fi spot, especially to enable mobile devices to be connected to internet
- A module to create a professional website or a website to promote a special event

(including the hosting with a domain name, a regular update...)

3.5 Getting the most of media exposure during roadshows

During the year of demonstration, the road show will be introduced at different events dedicated to projects involving satellite broadband connection. Any other opportunity to talk about ICT or to debate on broadband should be seized in order to publicise the road show. The different partners have the duty to advertise the road show during the whole year through word-in-mouth but also in the media (TV, radio and newspapers) and during local events. The media exposure is a pre-condition of success: it will make people follow the initiative and be interested in the results. If the initiative is a success (as it should be), spill-over effects will be induced by people aware of the road show thanks to its good advertisement.

4. Evaluation of the results

Once the roadshow is over, a satisfaction survey can be distributed to the users. This survey will ask about the different uses people make of an internet connection and if satellite broadband users are satisfied with this solution.

The evaluation of people's expectations on satellite broadband can help to characterise the number and the profile of the interested users and identify the most appropriate solution(s) to be inserted in public procurement actions. An analysis of the perception of satellite broadband solutions before and after the road show will contribute to measure the success of the operation.

The short term and long-term positive effects of the road show should be exploited as a marketing tool. Satellite operator and ISP have all the necessary elements to create a suitable offer answering the identified needs of the potential users. Furthermore, they can consider the possibility to organise road shows in other areas of the country.

Besides, local authorities will implement concrete actions to propose a public subsidy for satellite broadband solutions and reduce the costs of the monthly subscription or the ground equipment (see below).

5. Possibilities of public funding

The roadshow was set up to demonstrate that satellite broadband represents today a viable and efficient solution to connect remote citizens. However, when the roadshow is over, local authorities alongside with satellite and telecom industries have to think about the effective implementation of satellite broadband at large-scale. The initial cost of this solution remains heavy for citizens; therefore, public funding should be considered in advance to support this cost. Satellite broadband is ubiquitous and offers an immediate solution to connect all European citizens. The only missing element to gain access to satellite broadband internet is the ground equipment (antenna and modem). The price of this equipment, in addition to the cost of its installation, represents several hundred euros. Therefore, if this cost is supported by public authorities, the financial barrier preventing the take-up is removed. Besides local and national levels, public funding at European level - such as European Regional Development Funds (ERDF) and the European Agriculture Funds for Regional Development (EAFRD) - can be used to subsidise the cost of satellite user ground equipment and installation.

Public subsidy can be set up through a voucher scheme. The public authority (PA) identifies the end users eligible for satellite broadband and launches a call-off procedure to establish an open register of satellite Internet Service Providers (ISP) which respects a minimum quality of service. Each eligible user selects an ISP from the register and gets an anti-fraud voucher from the regional PA. The ISP installs the terminal at the user's premises. The user pays the ISP with the voucher. Finally, the supplier gets the voucher reimbursement from the local PA.

The public authority can also buy a set of satellite ground equipment and rent these kits to citizen living in grey and white areas. This solution will diminish the cost of the equipment for the users. If the public authority does not want to operate at user's level and subsidise the ground equipment, it is also possible to act on the cost of the monthly subscription. Indeed, a public authority can buy capacity to the satellite operator. An Internet Service Provider, acting for a public service mission, will use this capacity to deliver satellite broadband solutions to the citizens which are not served or are underserved by the terrestrial network.

6. Conclusion and main recommendations

In the view of the above development on the implementation of road shows, four crucial points are to be reminded:

- The support of elected representative and public authorities is essential to identify the relevant spots for the demonstrations, the relevant contacts, and to widely publicise the event
- A good coordination between ISP and satellite operators, mandating skilled antennas installers, involved in a strong partnership, ensures a fast, reliable, long-lasting and transparent experience for the end-user (in terms of the conditions of the offer, the delays of installation, etc...).
- A strategic choice for the advertisement of the road show is exploiting public events related to rural life or ICT to promote the demonstrations. The calendar has to be studied in advance in order to avoid bad timing for advertisement (pre-electoral period, other big events not related to ICT which can eclipse the initiative...). A good communication is multiplying the spill-over effects of a successful road show.
- A promise of public financial support (subject to a successful demonstration) is encouraging citizens to take-up this solution and is reducing inequalities between urban and rural areas (the cost to get an internet access in urban areas is far lower than in rural areas).

7. Annex I - Eutelsat's experiences in road shows

Eutelsat has already experienced the concept of road shows to promote its high-speed internet Tooway offers using the capacity of its new satellite KA-SAT.

Three different road shows were organised to target 3 types of profiles.

Following a call for expression of interest opened in June 2011 to all French local authorities, 12 French departments having territories unserved or underserved by the terrestrial network were selected by the Association Nationale des Elus de Montagne (ANEM), the Assemblée des Départements de France (ADF) and Eutelsat to be part of the road show. To promote the quality of new generation satellite services delivered by KA-SAT, Eutelsat installed satellite kits free of charge in 80 households. Thanks to the participation of the ISP Sat2Way, these households benefited from a free internet connection for one year. The programme was launched during a press conference in July 2011 in which the presidents of both networks of elected representatives (ANEM and ADF) expressed their expectations placed on this life-sized test. The first demonstrations started by the end of September 2011. For this occasion, several inaugurations took place in October 2011 and were reported in about 20 regional media (TV, radio, newspapers). 70% of the targeted locations are actually equipped with satellite broadband today. 80% of the users have answered the satisfaction survey. They were quite satisfied with the quality of service and willing to subscribe for satellite broadband; however, the opinions were quite mixed about the ISP's technical provision of service. The "tested" local authorities were quite convinced by satellite solutions and promoted it to towns and villages in charge of the digital development. Some of them declared satellite equipment eligible to local public subsidy. Positive testimonies are spread over and new projects to connect refuges are running.

A second road show named Cybermaire was organised by Eutelsat in France in 2013. This operation targeted towns and villages served by speeds below 2mbps. Eutelsat sent invitations to all their mayors to offer a free equipment and installation of satellite ground equipment. An ISP (depending on the location: Ozone, Sat2Way, Alsatis or Universat) proposed them a free 6-months-trial in their office of mayor. The only condition was to make the internet connection available to citizens in the office through a computer or other mobile device. Around 70 mayors answered the call. The programme generated a few mediatisation, as public meetings and participation of the citizens coming for the internet connection in the mayor offices.

The last road show experienced by Eutelsat named Connect'Ecole was aimed to provide satellite broadband to rural French schools for the school year 2012/2013. Eutelsat managed to create a strong partnership with the Association des Maires Ruraux de France (AMRF) - rural networks of local elected representatives - , France Telecom and its subsidiary Nordnet. 22 schools were provided with a free satellite kit and its installation, allowing speeds of 10 Mbps at least. The educational teams committed to use this internet access to support the teaching of their educational programme. The road show was conducted in three stages. During Stage 1 (September 2012 to December 2012), AMRF and its regional representations selected 22 schools to benefit from the road show. Started from November 2012, local conventions were signed and schools were equipped by Nordnet. During Stage 2 (January 2013 to Easter Holidays), the educational team had to adapt their teaching with the use of satellite broadband. At the end of this stage, a questionnaire was distributed to the teachers to make a first overall assessment of the equipment and its support to the educational programme of the second term. Based on this feedback, the road show could go on or be stopped (upon demand of the teacher). During Stage 3 (April 2013 to June 2013), willing teachers continued to use the equipment. A final evaluation was produced in June 2013 and distributed to the mayors concerned by "testing schools". With this evaluation, they took the final decision to buy (or not) the satellite equipment for the next school year (if not, the equipment is uninstalled by Eutelsat at no additional charge). Thanks to the involvement of the elected representatives and the French Ministry of Education, this road show was a great success. Word of mouth and smart advertising encouraged some schools to take up satellite broadband solutions. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education decided to launch a call for proposals with the objective to connect all schools in France.

Considering the benefits of the last road show, Eutelsat is currently working on a new road show, ConnecTourism, which is targeting mountainous locations (refuges, small villages neighboring ski stations) served by speeds below 1 Mbps ADSL. The first inaugurations could start in September 2014 in 20 departments potentially eligible for this road show.