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15 Oct 2001 147

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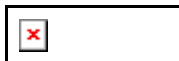
Talk to America

This Week

This is the VOA Special English SCIENCE REPORT.

A private company has launched a satellite radio service in the United States. X-M Satellite Radio is offering one-hundred radio channels, with music, news and other information. X-M is currently offering its service to listeners in the cities of Dallas, Texas and San Diego, California. It plans to begin nationwide service by November fifteenth.

People who want to listen to X-M Satellite Radio must pay for the service. It will cost about ten dollars a month. X-M has been in development for more than ten years. The company is based in Washington, D-C.



Listeners can choose among seventy-one different music channels. Thirty of these channels do not have commercials, paid announcements for products or services. There are twenty-nine other channels for news, sports and other radio shows.

The programs are sent from the offices of X-M to two communications satellites in Earth orbit. The satellites are about thirty-five-thousand kilometers above the Earth.

Listeners need special radio equipment in their homes or cars to receive signals from the satellites. In some cities, tall buildings may block the signals. So X-M has deployed hundreds of ground transmitters to carry the broadcasts in the affected areas.

Some telephone companies oppose the ground transmitters, also known as repeaters. They claim the devices could interfere with cellular wireless telephone service. Last month, the Federal Communications Commission gave X-M a temporary permit to use the transmitters until officials develop rules for their use.

X-M Satellite Radio has launched a one-hundred-million dollar national campaign to tell the public about the new service. Reports say X-M hopes to have at least fifty-thousand listeners by the end of this year.

A second satellite radio service plans to begin operating in the United States later this year. That company is called Sirius Satellite

is called Sirius Satellite Radio. It also plans to offer one-hundred channels to people willing to pay for its service.

However, some business experts are not sure either company will get large numbers of Americans to pay for radio. The experts expressed even less hope for the services after the terrorist attacks in the United States last month caused a drop in stock prices.

This VOA Special English SCIENCE REPORT was written by George Grow.

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