

# Japan: Flat TV market - significant boost ahead of digital switchover

TOKYO, JAPAN: The week on week sales in the Japanese flat-panel TV market are experiencing a dramatic increase ahead of the digital switchover on 24 July.



The sales of flat-panel TVs at electronics stores in June witnessed an increase of 150% compared to the same period of the previous year. TVs mainly drove this growth with smaller screens. Under 26-inch models had a unit share of 38%, with 32-inch TVs making up 42%. Their total share reached 80%, a 13% point growth from a year before. With less than one month before the shutdown of analogue broadcasting, the demand for small digital TV sets in bedrooms and children's rooms has been on the rise.

Additionally, in June, TVs with built in recorders or USB connections to external hard drives increased their unit share to 51% from 22% a year earlier. This was encouraged by a consumer desire to enjoy easy recording and save money; all-in-one models are usually less expensive to buy than a TV and recorder sold separately.

## Sharp increases

Recorders, as well as TV's, need to shift to digital broadcasting - the sales of Blu-ray recorders saw a 172% growth in units sold compared to last year. In addition, the sales of tuners for digital terrestrial broadcasts in June were 8 times more than the previous year.

"The Japanese flat-panel TV market had seen several sharp increases in demand driven by the government subsidiary policy, "Eco- point program", which ended in March 2011." Yoshi Fujibayashi, the chief analyst of GfK Marketing Services Japan commented.

"The flat-panel TV market will again see an extraordinary surge before the complete transition to digital terrestrial broadcasting; everyone needs to prepare for the transition in some way. The countdown notice until the shutdown of analogue TV broadcasting has now appeared on analogue TV screens; this will also encourage consumers' to replace their

old TV sets."

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