

Everything you need to know about the great digital TV migration of 2019

 By [Jacques Bentley](#)

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By now you've probably heard about the impending digital migration for South African broadcasting. Initially, this shift from old-school, analogue technology to newer, more efficient digital technology was set to take place in 2015 but the deadline for a national migration has been pushed out several times.



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With our neighbours Namibia and Botswana blazing ahead with their own digital transformations, the pressure is on for our own government to push forward to a fully digital South Africa.

But what does this overdue switch really mean for you and me?

What is digital migration?

Basically, the process involves moving over from an analogue transmission to a Digital Terrestrial Television/Transmission (DTT). We currently use analogue technology, transmitting video and audio through analogue signals.

The drawback of this traditional broadcasting format is that the colours, sound and brightness are heavily impacted by the

quality of the signal, resulting in a less-than-ideal snowy effect, and your TV deciding to randomly fade or ghost.

Digital TV, on the other hand, boasts crystal-clear image quality and excellent sound without interference because of its land-based network of TV transmitters that broadcast digital signals. This kind of technology also allows viewers to access a wider range of channels with different programmes.

Why is it happening?

Apart from the fact that everyone wants clearer sound, more channels and an enhanced viewing experience, the conversion to digital TV also has a far-reaching goal that ultimately aids developing nations like our own.

According to the [International Telecommunications Union](#) (ITU), the objective of Broadcast Digital Transition (BDT) work is to help developing countries with their smooth journey from analogue to digital broadcasting, including terrestrial TV, mobile TV and sound broadcasting. In turn, this means that we can enjoy new broadcasting services as well as an allocation of the digital dividend.

When is it taking place?

[June 2019 is D-Day](#) for all countries to have completed their digital migration. Our communications department is determined to meet this international deadline and has implemented a specific DTT war room to ensure that all the boxes are ticked, and they can deliver on time.

The first province to undergo the digital migration was the Free State back in August, where digital Set-Top Boxes (STBs) were launched in Senekal. Essentially, STBs decode digital signals for old, box-style TV sets and the government aims to distribute these devices to about 5-million poor households, so that all citizens can enjoy prime TV, despite their financial situation.

What can you do about it?

While the government has agreed to subsidise cash-strapped consumers with STBs, the only guarantee is that the digital migration is upon us and it is our responsibility to digitally transform our homes in order to meet the requirements.

This means that you'll either need to invest in a digital-ready TV or purchase your own STB to work with your current TV's analogue signal. Whichever route you decide to go, you can look forward to exceptional viewing entertainment in the comfort of your own home.

ABOUT JACQUES BENTLEY

Jacques Bentley began his career with a 13-year-long stint in the retail industry, where he refined his management expertise at H-FI Corporation and Bakos Brothers. In 2012, he decided to make the shift from retail to wholesale and tested out the waters as a sales manager at AV Specialists.

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