

[« Back](#) | [Print](#)

## Second HD Radio Traffic Service Debuts

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*By Joseph Palenchar -- TWICE, April 21, 2009*

Indianapolis — A consortium of radio broadcast groups launched a traffic- and weather-data service over HD Radio to compete with HD Radio traffic service available through FM stations operated by broadcast group Clear Channel.

The Broadcaster Traffic Consortium (BTC), which uses **Navteq** traffic content, is currently broadcasting data over analog-FM Radio Data System (RDS) signals in 77 markets and over HD Radio in 63 markets. In the second quarter, the group expects to expand its traffic service to 82 RDS markets and 74 HD Radio markets.

BTC, whose membership just expanded to 16 broadcast groups from 12, began delivering Navteq content over RDS in September 2008.

Clear Channel, which also delivers traffic over RDS, began transmitting traffic data via HD Radio in 2007. Clear Channel's service is currently available in 50 of the largest U.S. metropolitan markets via analog RDS signals and HD Radio.

**HD Radio** traffic service refreshes information more frequently and includes more information than standard RDS-based traffic reports, HD Radio developer **iBiquity Digital** has said. The wider HD Radio pipe can deliver 500 incident reports to the device per minute compared to RDS, which can deliver only about 50 incidents per minute, iBiquity said.

For its part, Navteq pointed out that HD Radio offers up to 40 times greater capacity than such current technologies as RDS and “allows for broader, faster and more comprehensive delivery of a wide variety of dynamic content including traffic, weather and fuel prices

Via HD Radio, Navteq also said, “detailed graphics, imagery, sound and mobile coupons, not available using other distribution formats,” can be transmitted to PNDs and installed navigation systems.

Traffic-service transmission speeds are 0.3kbps for RDS radios and 12kbps for HD Radios, Navteq said. Recently, ClearChannel, which transmits traffic data from TeleAtlas, and BMW tested a **transmission algorithm** that will accelerate the group's HD Radio traffic service by four times.

To date, only a Dual-brand portable navigation device receives traffic updates over HD Radio, but only from Clear Channel. PNDs are programmed at the factory to detect a digital code transmitted by an HD Radio station to identify a specific traffic service.

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