



I worked in the media for over 30 years in the programme development arena for an indie, then moved in to digital in its infancy working mainly on corporate projects like interactive TV for LTT Thomson Alcatel - and was the beta test site for Video for Windows in the UK.

Over that time I have seen the landscape go from C4 as the only game in town for indie producers, to an absolute plethora of outlets, ways of financing programme production and vast expanse of channels reaching the home, now with broadband delivery rapidly overtaking satellite.

I have two points to make about the future.

1. There is serious abuse of the market by the leading internet search company Google. They have been able to scoop up a huge share of advertising revenue simply because people use their search engine to find things online, not because they provide the sort of value people receive from watching PSB output. Why should we regulate commercial TV, impose PSB obligations on it, but simply hand over vast amounts of the advertising revenue to Google with no obligations placed on them at all? This has happened without any legislation authorising it, I would say under the anarchic view that government has no role in regulating the internet, when clearly it should. What is more, very little tax is paid by Google on the huge profits they make in the UK either. Providing strong competition to Google would at least remove the virtual monopoly they enjoy, but better still would be to restore the direct link between producing and offering PSB media to the public and receiving advertising revenue from selling ads around it. Google is in effect a protection racket. It extracts money from the media marketplace to simply allow consumers to pass through to the URL that they want to find.

2. Why on earth do we persist with terrestrial TV broadcasting? 82% of UK homes have satellite receivers and the numbers having broadband connections also exceed 80%. Meanwhile the UHF band is still stuffed full of multiplex transmissions of the same TV and radio channels readily available online or via the Astra satellite system. Surely the right thing to do would be to redeploy this bandwidth to internet services, and finance a conversion for those dependent on terrestrial reception to internet/satellite instead? UHF bandwidth is a valuable national resource - it is currently being squandered and a "6g" high speed cell based radio service should be being developed to utilise all this bandwidth,