

PSBReview@ofcom.org.uk

Yiannis Theodorou

PSB Review

Ofcom

Dear Yiannis

Please find our response to the PSB Review.

[Name withheld] believe that PS Broadcasting /Content and plurality of provision into the post digital switch over age is crucial to get right to maintain the UK's reputation for the best of public service media.

We support Ofcom's extensive efforts in this area and its desire to assist in a quick resolution of the issues at hand given the difficulties PSB/C providers are experiencing in the market place.

In particular we recognise and support the importance of a publicly owned and funded Channel 4 at the heart of the PSB system with the BBC as the cornerstone.

In this light Channel 4's Next on 4 proposals are innovative and positive.

We urge ofcom to follow through on recommendations for ensuring Nations and Regions are reflected on the UK Public's screens of all sizes.

Our response to the last Ofcom review included comments on this area which is attached.

Finally Delivery options : we do not favour option 1.

We prefer option 2 with an aligned option 3 that would see funding allocated through competition to a wider range of providers to make content that complement the BBC and C4's output.

Yours Sincerely

[Name withheld].

Nations and Regions PSB/C.

We have seen over the last decade a real change in the concept and delivery of 'regional television'.

A decade ago before the massive increase in analogue and digital channels and the even greater body of information via the internet, regional TV was a discreet offer to TV audiences in and about their locality.

Local audiences were drawn to regional TV delivered by the main terrestrials for information, news, comment, entertainment, sport and culture that they could not access elsewhere.

This has changed and high quality regional tv for regional audiences has diminished across the terrestrial channels. No longer does television provide an up to the minute regional service because audience expectations have changed. As have their media consumption.

However Regional audiences miss this once diverse and varied offer which has been replaced with a pretty sorry fare of local magazine journalism in a few low profile slots.

Ofcom's review provides a valuable opportunity to interrogate and recommend new mechanisms to deliver genuine regional and local public content services from TV to online and beyond.

As the review points out there are a wide range of public and commercial services with a wide range of messages and content being commissioned and produced. In addition there are a range of news & journalistic services generating content in cities and regions that may be able and prepared to establish relevant region specific public service content to audiences when and where they want it.

Dedicated digital regional media psb hubs/stations would go some way to increasing local representation and participation.

Such a service could also cover a breadth of subjects across the diverse communities of each nation and region of the UK. This coverage would further help create and reflect region's contemporary identities and engender a greater sense of engagement and citizenship.

A high quality service might include :current affairs, arts, culture, enterprise, business news, education, health, entertainment, sports, community voices, user generated content, local politics, rights of reply, localized question times.

Audience access and contribution to genuine local and regional agendas could be opened to public debate eg Green, environmental, sustainability, planning, urban design, housing and community regeneration using online interactive digital media platforms rather than top down tv.

Individual hubs/stations would cater for each region and in doing so national issues and trends will surface that should then take their place in the national agenda. This

would address the current audience belief that psb is not reflecting the nations and regions.

This is an innovative model for regional psb post digital switch over that responds to local and regional demands rather than tinkering with an out of date concept of regional television that, by their own admission, is proving difficult to sustain by the current psb suppliers.

For those suppliers that do wish to continue to deliver regional services the review must put in place recommendations that ensure that high quality genuinely local services responding to locally specific and contemporary audience demands are put in place for the next phase of PSB.

As the review points out tailored solutions will be required by nations and regions to achieve distinct psb services, however this is much more achievable in a broadband digital media infrastructure. In this near future environment high quality television content can be integrated with interactive, social networking, news, information and personalised services.

This will enable regions to deliver democratic psb/c solutions valued in by local audiences as well as contributing to a plurality of services across the UK.

[Name withheld]
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