

From: ROBERT FINDLAY
Sent: 24 January 2008 17:53
To: William Hayter
Subject: sky tv

I was a great admirer of SKY in the beginning. They improved the coverage and quality of viewing of sport vastly. When I first put SKY in my pub it was £9.99 a month the same price as a domestic household. After 2 years they had most commercial premises signed up with them. They then decided it was time to incorporate a commercial division of the company. The price for commercial suddenly leapt 10 fold to £99.99 a large rise in anybody's book but they had a monopoly of the market and it was a case of put up or shut up. I chose to pay I understand the commercial market and people in the pub watching was losing them potential domestic licensees.

Time went by and regular annual increases occurred well above inflation. I can understand they were paying vast sums to the Football Association for copyright of the premierships matches (these vast sums to a degree were unnecessary I felt because if they had offered half the amounts no other networks could have outbid them). Also the increases to the commercial trades licenses bore no relevance what so ever to the domestic rate. This carried on for several years when SKY then decided it would be fairer to band the licence fees in relation to council rates. This then meant in my rural village pub which on a good game would have 20 people watching a football match would pay 3 times as much as the local village club with its 6 foot screen with up to 150 people watching (fair). Needless to say this was the straw that broke this camels back Could no longer afford SKY as also its seems nor could 50 % of their commercial market. The current offer they sent me now would cost me £880 + vat per month; I think you could understand why practically it would be financially impossible for me. This monthly amount now bears no relevance what so ever to the domestic charges of £25 per month for sport one thirty-fifth of the price. Last year I thought well at least the government were making a token gesture to SKY's monopoly in coming out with their proposal. They had said that 6 packages were to be established and no one company could own more than 5. The auction took place and SKY surprisingly only won 4 (the premium ones obviously). An Irish company called Setanta won 2. Maybe this was the glimmer of hope at the end of the tunnel I and many others hoped for. I read the national press advert and also visited setanta's web site scoured the small print for any need for a commercial contract and found none. The offer of £9.99 per month with no yearly contract seemed too good to be true. I phoned setanta it took 3 days (busy lines) but eventually got through. A friendly telesales operator greeted me and welcomed me 'onboard' however when it came to giving my address he stopped me to confirm that I was a pub. I questioned what difference that made to which he said that I would need their commercial division. I asked him what commercial division as it was not advertised anywhere this was not his fault so I asked for the number. He gave me the setanta commercial number to which I immediately replied that's SKY to which he immediately denied any knowledge of that being the case. I rang the number and was obviously immediately straight through to SKY. Here I was told that I needed to subscribe to SKY at the afore mentioned price of £880 and on top pay an extra premium for the setanta package. You can imagine my utter disgust and feeling of dejection. The SKY monopoly was not just still in place but even stronger as they could charge extra for you to watch the other company's packages. The other enraging factor was that on the domestic front SKY and setanta are 2 completely separate entities and charge separately.

Sorry to have written such a long e-mail but I could not find any way of compacting this and still get my feelings over.

In conclusion surely what SKY is doing cannot be considered just and fair. I realise that they must be paying a very sizable amount in taxes to the government treasury but there must be a limit to how much they can be allowed to get away with.

I leave my full name address and phone number if you have any need to contact me.

Yours in hope
Bob Findlay