

Title:

Mr

Forename:

Garry

Surname:

Brazier

Representing:

Self

What additional details do you want to keep confidential?:

No

If you want part of your response kept confidential, which parts?:

Ofcom may publish a response summary:

Yes

I confirm that I have read the declaration:

Yes

Additional comments:

I am registered blind and make use of 'speaking' technology. I have access to a talking EPG in my TV. The largest frustration I currently have with it, is that it is cumbersome to turn it on and off. I only really want speaking EPG when I am viewing alone. It would be great if there was one button press to toggle speakback on/off

Question 1:Do respondents agree with Ofcom?s initial assessment that apps for mobile devices have the potential to be useful for those people with visual impairments who feel confident using touch-screen technology and can afford a suitable mobile device? If not, why not? :

Yes.

I use iOS devices with built-in VoiceOver. This even allows me to use the Camera function as it says "two faces detected" etc

Question 2:Do respondents agree with Ofcom?s initial assessment that apps for mobile devices are less likely to meet the needs of the majority of visually-

impaired people who are 65 or older, both because they are less likely either to own a suitable mobile phone and because touch-screen apps present a number of actual and perceived barriers to use. If not, why not?:

Yes. The older people I know are reluctant to learn the new methods of interacting. They also lack the subtle dexterity that can be required for some of the gestures.... like tapping in a small area.

Question 3:Do respondents consider that it would be reasonable for visually-impaired viewers to pay more than sighted viewers for the ability to use EPGs or substitutes for the same purposes as sighted viewers? If so why? :

No. Being able to access the EPG should be equal to all.

Question 4:Do respondents agree with Ofcom's initial assessment that the speaking EPGs integrated into TVs and set top boxes may be easier for people with visual impairments to use than touch-screen apps? If not, why not? :

No. Though it should be.

I have a Panasonic SmartViera that has a talk-back feature in the EPG. Whilst that allows me to know the programme schedule, the progression through the screen is very linear. With iOS and touchscreen, one is able to 'learn' where the buttons and control are approximately situated and navigate quickly.

Question 5:Do pay TV service providers such as Sky, Virgin, Talk Talk and BT TV see additional obstacles that would prevent them from committing to including text to speech capabilities in the next planned upgrades to the receivers they offer to subscribers? If so, what are these obstacles? Absent regulation, would these obstacles make it impossible on commercial grounds to commit to the necessary investment?:

I don't accept that these providers face any unreasonable obstacles. My Panasonic TV can speak the EPG, so these providers should be able to do the same... the technology must be proven by now.

Question 6:If the cost of providing speech-enabled receivers to all those who subscribe to particular pay TV services would entail a substantial delay to the roll-out of such receivers to all subscribers, would it be feasible, quicker and more cost-effective to offer suitable equipment first to viewers with visual impairments?:

Being Visually Impaired should not delay my option to choose a wider platform of entertainment.

I am not a SKY subscriber... if I thought the service was accessible, I would become a subscriber. However, the EPG is only the first barrier.... all programmes need to be Audio Described

Question 7:Do respondents consider that it would be reasonable to expect visually-impaired viewers to pay extra for equipment that allows them to use EPGs or substitutes for the same purposes as sighted viewers? If so, why? :

No.

Question 8:Do licensors such as Freesat and Freeview see obstacles to using their leverage to require manufacturers to incorporate speaking EPGs in future versions of products authorised to use their brands, such as Freetime and Freeview Connect?:

Freeview and FreeSat MUST user their leverage to encourage providers to make accessible products. For instance, my Panasonic SmartViera uses FreeSat and speaks the EPG easily.

Question 9:What are the main types of cost that pay TV service providers would face in incorporating speaking EPG features into the next generation of their set top boxes?:

I would expect the costs to be low, as the technology has already been developed. It should only be a matter of licensing an appropriate solution.

Question 10:What is the scope for connected platforms to avoid the need for specific TTS provision within consumer equipment by using cloud-based resources (e.g. speech files on a central server delivered to the device as required)?:

This would really on the end-user have an up-stream connection. This may not be widely available in older occupancy households.