Title:

Forename:

Surname:

Name withheld 14

Representing:

Self

Organisation (if applicable):

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:

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 find them invaluable. They help me to get around and help keep me informed and in touch with the world as well as friends and family. Saying that I do feel it can be taken further, for example more apps that use voice recognition and can speak back to the user.

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?:

No because I don't feel you can generalise like that. Each person should be assessed on their individual merit. Some over 65s may have better access to the technology than others.

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. It is generally not someone's fault that they are visually impaired. Many are born with or have developed a condition so I believe it would be unfair to charge someone for this function. I would go as far as to say that it would be discriminatory.

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? :

Firstly I was unaware that TVs and set top boxes had this function. This should be made clearer and more aware to users.
I think it may well be easier for the visually impaired user but may not be for any others they live with or use the same TV system. If a TV has multiple users it may be more personal for a visually impaired person to use an app.

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?:

If there are obstacles I cannot see what they are. The technology is clearly there with Apple's Siri and Google's voice control being plugged a lot on TV. If Google can roll it out surely cost is not an issue and the TV companies mentioned should be able to provvide it.

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?:

Of course it would be quicker but cost effective and feasible I don't know. I guess iy would depend on the timescale involved. If we are talking short term then probably not but long term more than likely.

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, again I think it is a form of discrimination. Like much of the speech recognition stuff around, there are basic versions built in or for free with more advanved versions to be paid for. This gives a user the choice. They can use the help being given to them or pay for better help.

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?:

Compatability might be an issue. With so many manufacturers there may be different systems to make work with the licensors listed.

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?:

Manufacturing costs but if they are making next generattion equipment, and I'm sure they will, as technology advances rapidly, then this can be incorporated iin the design.

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)?:

There is scope but would't it be far easier to have the capabilities within the device. Most modern electric devices hhave accessibility functions built in. HHaving to download it if needed has too many variables, wi-fi connections and speed and the technological capabilities of the user are just two I can think of.