

**Title:**

**Forename:**

**Surname:**

Name withheld 21

**Representing:**

Self

**Organisation (if applicable):**

**Email:**

**What additional details do you want to keep confidential?:**

Keep name confidential

**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? :**

i am blind myself and use an Android smartphone and thanks to the accessibility features can send email, texts, read some web pages and use some Apps (many are inaccessibly designed), such as for gps navigation. but this is \_my phone\_ not my TV controller / guide, and i use it for priority tasks like speaking to my family and friends etc, keeping in contact with people through messaging and social media which is coming in all the time, getting information on the web. so \_having\_ to access my TV programme guide through my phone or tablet or computer basically ties it up when i need it for other things. Other customers who use my TV cable service aren't forced to \_pay the same\_ but be unable to use a critical part of the service and be told to use their phone instead.

**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?:**

True less likely as of today but technology is moving fast and society is switching over to using it fast as well. Uptake of smartphones and tablets is rising and this applies to visually impaired people as well. the thing that switched me as a blind person to using an Android touch screen phone (£90 by the way so low cost and full functioned) was overcoming the steep learning curve in using the touch screen interface with the tactile and voice feedback. i can do more with my smartphone now than i ever could without it. yes it's a struggle, but the learning curve is worth overcoming because quality of life improves. That is the role i think that media companies should be harnessing with a \_multichannel\_ strategy that means investing in accessible Apps but it also means investing in accessible TV guides and remote controllers because choice is not just for non-disabled people it's for disabled people too.

**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? :**

yes but only if the service provider in return compensates me for all the years of inaccessible programme guides and into the future every aspect of their service that isn't accessible, which is many aspects, anything from 80% or higher of the TV content that isn't audio described and that is just one aspect. So this extra charge for accessibility business model is flawed. Disabled people have and will continue to pay full cost for a fraction of the service they are provided in accessible ways. Service providers are responsible for the products they design and sell and when they charge for it, this includes access, if sighted people lost the visual component for 80% of the time they would not be willing to pay extra to get more access because this is regarding rightly as what they have already paid for. Same logic applies.

**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? :**

yes i agree with this - it's far better to design the device to work for the people who are using it (including blind people) than complicate the whole process by designing the device to work in one way for some people but in another for disabled people. The main logic is because pressing buttons and hearing talking feedback is normal on a cash machine so should be normal on a TV remote.

**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 am a private individual but if Barclays can make their cash machines talk with all the hardware and software and security infrastructure necessary, then any barriers that commercials perceive here are more down to lacking will to find a way. i love companies who demonstrated demonstrate respect for their customers by designing their products for them.

**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?:**

i don't understand this question - if there is a delay created by having to incorporate some new accessibility features that will mean they cannot be ready for disabled people either.

**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? :**

this is a repeat of the above question. No, based on the current business model, but yes if service providers compensate visually impaired customers for all the other aspects of their service that isn't accessible...

**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?:**

--

**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?:**

--

**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)?:**