Title:

Forename:

Surname:

Name withheld 36

Representing:

Self

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? :

Yes. Not everybody wants to use mobile apps; I have an old phone which I only use for emergencies. Why would I buy a smartphone if I'm not able to use it?

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?:

I agree. I don't think many people who are older than 65 would use smartphones.

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 would be nice to have the same kind of access as everybody else, without having to pay more. Built-in TTS would be a lot cheaper than buying extra equipment.

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.

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 know.

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?:

Probably; what's most important is to give blind and visually-impaired people something simple to use in order to access TV programming.

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? :

At the moment, the only option for blind users is to buy extra equipment; it would be great to have this technology built into the platforms, and to have a much greater choice of accessible platforms.

It should be noted that it's not only blind people who would benefit from TTS in their TVs; there are other people who would find the technology very useful, such as people with learning disabilities, or people who have problems reading.

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?:.

I use Freeview, as the majority of people do. I think that there is scope for Freeview and Freesat to use their leverage to require manufacturers to incorporate TTS in their set top boxes, as Freeview more largely used than anything else in the UK.

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 don't know, but I presume that any initial cost will be reduced over time.

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)?:

I don't know.