

Ofcom
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Dear Sirs.

Having been a digital tv viewer from the first day of broadcast - I was then living in the Bristol area – I am very concerned to read the following extract from your comments on HDTV as reported by the *What Hi-Fi* website.

“These measures will ensure that PMSE users can continue to access spectrum while moving towards a **more market-based approach over time**

Does your extract mean that you are advocating the demise of a free public broadcasting service with out advertising?

It is important that the country has access to a free-to-air HDTV service to break the strangle hold that SKY is rapidly developing on all things connected with public communications. Not just programme making but also delivery of the TV signal and delivery of the printed word. This in turn is a real danger to the very existence of the BBC who have until now been the envy of the world, renowned for it's high quality content without advertising and trusted by the public as a not-for-profit organisation. Sky or any other commercial company can not be trusted in the same way as their first aim is to return profits to share holders and programme content has to reflect this to gain the necessary advertising revenue to return that profit. Hence the decline in programme standards as seen on many tv channels making a large amount of material unwatchable by many and news items treated with suspicion that the channel is so keen to please share holders that it is letting standards slip.

The recent share purchase of ITV by Sky purely to spike the guns of any possible opposition to Sky is only one example. I have been trying for over a year to persuade magazines and newspapers to tell readers that there is a free digital tv service available by satellite for those that have the need of it and a free limited HDTV service available from the BBC with the correct receiving equipment. Until your recent announcement ****my plea fell on deaf ears** as most of the newspapers and magazines are owned by Murdock and therefore only push Sky and nothing else. Your recent announcement of a Freeview HDTV service is a case in point. If reports are correct the present Freeview Digital satellite service and the Freesat HDTV test service now being broadcast are only available by subscription to Sky or Virgin. *That is a monopoly*. The one thing the setup of ITV was meant to avoid. Suddenly printed reports are appearing. The only magazine that firstly printed an honest assessment was *Which*. Now since your latest report even they are saying that you must have Sky or Virgin and ignoring the free satellite service for Non-HD digital reception that is available with an independent digital satellite receiver. Where are the independent HDTV boxes for satellite or terrestrial? Humax is the favoured Non-HD PVR but even they do not have a HDTV PVR,

Can you please explain?

Yours sincerely,

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Following [the announcement](#) earlier this week that the BBC is to go ahead with the conversion of its HD TV trial into a full service, it's emerging that increases in the spectrum available for digital television could bring HD services from the 'big four' terrestrial broadcasters to Freeview as soon as 2009.

On Tuesday the BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Five announced what they called a 'non-binding memorandum of understanding' to launch HD services between 2009 and 2012. Now broadcast regulator Ofcom has revealed proposals to carry out upgrade work on the digital terrestrial television system, which will be completed by late 2009.

The upgrade, which Ofcom says could more than double the capacity available on the Freeview platform, will allow new services, not all of them HD. But viewers wanting to see Freeview HD will need to buy a new set-top box as well as an HD-compatible TV