

Title:

Mr

Forename:

Stephen

Surname:

Curtis

Name and title under which you would like this response to appear:

Mr Stephen Curtis

Representing:

Self

What do you want Ofcom to keep confidential?:

Keep nothing 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

Ofcom should only publish this response after the consultation has ended:

You may publish my response on receipt

Question 1: To what extent do you consider that DTT, DSat, cable and IPTV are in competition with one another for subscribers of pay TV services ? either at present or in the future?:

Currently DTT offers a truly free of charge alternative to DSat and Cable. There is a small amount of Pay TV on DTT but very little. If pay TV is allowed on DTT, it will, I believe, quickly all become Pay TV.

Question 2: To what extent do you consider the Proposal is likely to deliver benefits to the consumer?:

I do not think it will. The original Freeview package was supposed to be Free, so allowing Pay TV onto it will reduce the number of free channels on the service. If allowed, it will be only a matter of time before Freeview has just the free channels that the government states should be on there - everything else will become Pay TV.

Question 3: To what extent do you consider that there is scope for sustainable competition in pay TV on the DTT platform and, more broadly, across all pay TV platforms?:

If allowed Pay TV will prosper greatly on DTT, and with the take up of Freeview in previous years companies such as Sky will be hoping to turn this into a Pay service. In effect, it wants to charge all viewers - it does not want any free TV at all.

Question 4: What are likely to be the key aspects of competition between providers of retail pay TV services on the DTT platform? E.g. what is the role of premium sports and movies content?:

The Freeview system has sold very well over previous years. A small offering of Pay Sport and Movie channels will increase in coming years if allowed onto DTT - or at least the aim will be to increase the number of pay channels.

Question 5: Do you consider that if Sky were to become the only provider of pay TV on the DTT platform it would be likely to have a significant detrimental effect on competition in the long term? How might this affect the development of other platforms for the delivery of pay TV services?:

Yes. Sky would have an almost total monopoly of all Pay TV in the UK. This has got to be detrimental to other Pay TV services but more importantly it will reduce the choice of all consumers - would you like Sky on Satellite, or Sky on DTT? There would be no alternative.

Question 6: To what extent, if at all, do you consider that the Proposal would be likely to lead to any of the public policy concerns outlined at Section 4?:

As an concerned DTT Freeview viewer, all the points raised in section 4 are valid concerns - but to those less interested, these people may not realised what these proposals may mean, nor that they actually exist.

Question 7: Specifically, to what extent do you consider that the Proposal would be likely to lead to consumer confusion?:

It would not confuse people - they would have the choice of going for Sky on satellite or Sky on DTT. It would be a matter of time before Sky replaced all DTT boxes free of charge to Sky satellite boxes - hence no choice for the consumer.

Question 8: To what extent do you consider that it is beneficial for consumers to be able to obtain Sky and existing DTT pay TV content without having to purchase separate STBs?:

If the proposal did go ahead, the consumer would be better off not having to buy additional equipment - an additional box would use more electricity and add to global warming. Replacing a box that is nowhere near the end of its useful life is also a waste of resources and so would add to global warming. There's also the cost of the box, and Sky would get a 'mark up' on the boxes it sold.

Question 9: Do you consider that the Proposal might lead to any additional public policy concerns:

It concerns people like me, who subscribed to Sky for a number of years and eventually ended up paying to see the same programmes repeated over and over again. Other people might feel that a cheaper, smaller Sky service would be beneficial for them, though.

Question 10: If Sky becoming the only provider of pay TV services on the DTT platform were likely to have a significant detrimental effect on competition, do you consider that it is possible to address this through a set of additional conditions and/or directions? If so, what form should those conditions/directions take?:

If Sky were the only provider of pay TV on DTT there would be no competition, so they could charge what they wanted. Conditions and directions would only last a limited time, then they would be revoked or there would be a time limit on them. Hence, Sky ends up with total dominance of British television.

Additional comments:

1. Do the public know what Sky is proposing here? Why not run a series of adverts on Freeview/DTT channels to inform them all of what is being proposed and then see what the public response is. The fact is that no-one knows what is being proposed or requested. The first thing most viewers will know about this if it goes through will be when they turn on the DTT box and find some channels have gone. Then they will wonder why they didn't know anything about this change.

2. I used to subscribe to Sky. It provided many hours of decent viewing but then programmes started to be repeated and I begrudged paying again for programmes that I had already paid for and seen before. In the end there was actually not that much more choice. Freeview provided more channels but that were free.

3. I think that DTT should be run by the government and that all channels should be

free - it should be against the law to charge for any channels on DTT, with the exception of those run by the BBC.