

Title:

Mr

Forename:

Matthew

Surname:

Mason

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

Mr M Mason

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?:

DSat, Cable have been in direct competition with each other for many years now, both offering a variety of Pay-TV Packages including entertainment, movies and sport. IPTV has more recently become a viable option with Video-on-Demand packages from BT Vision and Tiscali TV.

I think that DTT should not be regarded as a direct competitor with the Pay-TV

options because DTT will become a mandatory option for all License holders when the analogue signal is shut off. DSat, Cable and IPTV are optional extras for those that can afford the Pay-TV service. DTT or 'Freeview' is a digital platform offering a variety of channels to those who do not wish to upgrade to the offerings from companies such as SKY and Virgin. DTT cannot compete in the same way as the other providers and should not be considered as a competitor.

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

The argument FOR the SKY proposal means offering consumers a wider range of programming from a number of SKY Premium Channels.

I believe that consumers who want to view the Premium channels such as SKY one, Disney and Sky Sports should actually consider moving over to the BskyB platform. The government is switching off the Analogue signal to help bring the benefits of Digital into the Home for the same TV License fee on the DTT platform. This should not be undermined by one of the UK's largest companies trying to muscle in and bring more people onto the SKY platform.

If the proposal results in a loss of 'Free-to-air' channels I think it will have a negative effect on the DTT service i.e. limiting choice to consumers who cannot afford other services and, as i have mentioned above, consumers wanting premium channels should move onto a premium TV service.

My overall verdict is that the proposal will not benefit consumers of the DTT platform and will overall reduce the choice and alienate the majority of the UK population who have chosen DTT for the very reason of it being a Free Service.

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?:

I think that there is an opportunity to offer Pay TV on the DTT platform for those who can afford it. Any Pay TV services should not effect any channels already broadcasting on the service otherwise the choice to consumers who do not wish to pay will be further limited and push people onto the Cable and Satellite platforms.

SKY is a large company with a lot of financial backing. I believe that opening up the DTT platform to SKY will only prove to be the start of making the entire DTT service a PAY-TV Platform, bar the 5 analogue channels.

The DTT service already has a premium PAY TV called Top-Up TV offering a selection of programmes from a number of channels not normally available on DTT. IPTV services such as BT Vision also offer competition on the DTT service with VoD.

SKY already has a very popular Satellite service with no real competition and allowing SKY to move onto the DTT platform will result in them receiving an even bigger market share and having a lot of control over the other providers.

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?:

- *Price of Content
- *Variety of Programmes showing
- *Quality of Programmes
- *Content from a number of 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 has a lot of financial backing in the Pay TV market and already owns a large share of Pay TV services i.e. SKY Sports, SKY Movies, etc.

Many consumers already choose the DTT platform because of the Value for Money of the service and SKY is mainly reserved for those who can afford the additional channels and content.

SKY has a lot of power and could ultimately price other DTT Pay Services out of the market and control the pricing of its own service to match its Satellite service.

This would result in the DTT platform becoming an advertising source for SKY to move consumers onto the Satellite service where it can freely adjust pricing to suit its own needs.

The smaller players such as Top-Up TV and BT Vision deserve a chance to compete on the DTT platform without interference from an already large TV company.

Ofcom should continue to encourage Pay-TV from other sources and not accept a proposal from the one company that could potentially break-up the DTT platform and make digital TV out of reach of the majority of consumers.

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?:

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

Any advertising for SKYs DTT programming could ultimately lead to confusion amongst the general public and result in potential DTT Customers subscribing to the SKY Satellite service without realising.

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?:

Very Beneficial.

Multiple boxes means higher expenditure,

Increasing damage to the environment,

Further confusion amongst consumers.

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

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?:

Although i believe Ofcom could set down a number of conditions and rules before SKY could operate on the DTT Platform, i do not believe that it is in the best interests of the general public.

SKY has enough financial backing to force through reversals of any decisions and change the DTT platform to suit their own needs.

In saying that I think that Ofcom should be firm and reject the entire proposal for the time being. If Ofcom accepts this proposal it could open the floodgates and potentially destroy the DTT platform as it stands and discriminate against those who do not want Pay-TV or do not want to continue lining the pockets of the SKY Shareholders.

Additional comments:

I suggest that the proposal be rejected until the smaller players such as BT Vision and Top-Up TV have been given sufficient time to take a market share in DTT. This would allow Ofcom to see the direction in which the DTT platform is going before committing bandwidth to further Pay TV services.