Title:

Mr

Forename:

Chris

Surname:

Fox

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

Mr Chris Fox

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?:

I believe that DSat, cable and IPTV are in competition for subscribers of pay TV services. I believe the success of DTT is down to the 'freeview' service. Previous attempts to use the limited capacity and technical constraints of DTT to provide a competing pay platform have failed (On/ITV digital) and as there have not yet been any significant changes i cannot see why this would not happen again if the DTT platform increased pay options. I therefore do not consider DTT is, or should be in the future, in competition with the other Pay TV platform as this is not a sustainable model at present or in the near future.

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

There is a consumer benefit in terms of AVAILABILITY of additional premium services which are not currently on DTT. However, the availability is far outweighed by the negatives around the proposal, namely;
1. Cost (Sky has a long history of starting with low subscription rates and then constantly increasing prices every 1-2 years)
2. Need for new equipment (this will confuse consumers, particularly certain groups of the population, ie older people) and related cost
3. Sky's dominance of broadcasting.
4. Alternative options likely to be viable in the near future - ie IPTV - an emerging technology which will enable Sky to offer their proposition without having to encroach on valuable DTT space.
5. The cost of losing the currently free channels provided by Sky on DTT.

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?:

As has been demonstrated with On/ITV Digital, a pay TV platform has not previously been successful on DTT and there is no evidence to show it will be, especially if mixed with a confusing offer of a mixture of free and pay providers using different technologies and equipment. Furthermore, other broadcasters currently providing free-to-air channels on freeview may well decide to follow sky's suit and change to pay TV - this will further damage the DTT offer for consumers. I firmly believe the success of DTT is down to FREEVIEW, and it should be kept free for 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?:

As has been demonstrated with Sky's dominance of sporting events, sadly many sports are now inaccessible to people who can not afford or justify the cost of subscribing via Sky. Sky's monopoly in this field simply restricts access to televised sports to the general public. Therefore i do not think their would be any competition at all, it would simply enable sky to generate further revenue and pay more for sports which would in turn push more sports that are currently free into the pay tv arena.

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?:

I agree, as mentioned this will increase Sky's dominance in areas such as sports and movies as well as shows only on Sky (eg 24) which will essentially price operators of free channels out of the bidding.

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?:

No answer

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

I believe it will lead to great consumer confusion. For example i have an elderly relative who is already confused because she cannot get some channels on her freeview box - she does not appreciate some are pay channels. The fact that these boxes are seen as FREEVIEW boxes, not DTT boxes, speaks volumes. Any further erosion of the freeview brand, ie by sky's free channels changing to pay ones, will harm the platform and lead to greater consumer confusion, particularly after digital switchover.

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?:

I do not think this is relevant - those wishing to subscribe to premium sky channels need to buy a new box anyway - so why not purchase a satellite system from sky and have the full pay offer than the proposed reduced DTT offer which STILL will require a new box??

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

No answer

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?:

No. I do not believe Sky should be able to carry out its proposals at all. They have a wide offer on their existing satellite service, and the emerging technology of IPTV gives them another platform - it should not be squeezed onto DTT.

Additional comments:

None