

argiva

Launching a TV channel on Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT)



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This document is a quick reference guide for anyone looking to launch a channel on the Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) platform in the UK.



What is DTT?

Digital Terrestrial Television – or DTT – is the most widely available TV platform in the UK. Broadcast from a national transmitter network across the nations and regions, it is received by nearly 19 million homes and is the sole television platform in 11.4 million homes (BARB Establishment Survey, Q1 2018).

As the most widely-known DTT service, Freeview offers 70+ subscription-free TV, radio and interactive channels – which can be accessed with use of an aerial connection. The brand is managed by Freeview, a partnership between Arqiva, the BBC, Channel 4, ITV and Sky. Freeview's fully hybrid platform, Freeview Play, gives UK viewers a seamless combination of live and on-demand content all in one place with no monthly subscription.

Freeview Play, which launched in 2015 has also already sold more than 3.5m devices in the UK and is expected to grow significantly over the coming years. In fact, since its launch in 2015 there has been a significant growth, where individuals are moving away from large Pay-TV packages – opting to build their own 'pay-lite' bundles, with streaming subscriptions on top of a free-to-air base, which the hybrid DTT/IP platforms, such as Freeview Play, offers.

All of the standard Freeview channels can also be accessed through YouView, TalkTalk, EE TV and BT.

What Arqiva can do for you

Arqiva plays a significant role in ensuring the UK's DTT ecosystem runs smoothly. We hold the Licence for and operate four of the eight national multiplexes that make up the DTT platform. This enables us to provide capacity to commercial broadcasters looking to launch a channel on the platform.

We are also responsible for managing and maintaining 1,154 transmitter sites that deliver broadcast signals to tens of millions of consumers' televisions and set-top boxes (STBs). Our work ensures all the UK's DTT multiplex operators, including our own commercial multiplexes, stay on the air to keep TV audiences glued to their seats and screens.

We've been at the centre of UK broadcasting for decades, and therefore have the knowledge and experience to help customers make the absolute most of their journey into Digital Terrestrial Television.

As a founding shareholder in Freeview, and an active part of key industry bodies such as Digital UK (DUK) and Digital TV Group (DTG), we make it easy for you to access the powerful TV platform that is DTT.

Who else is involved in DTT?

Digital UK

Digital UK (DUK) handles the day-to-day management of Freeview's Electronic Programme Guide (EPG), allocating channel numbers and helping to launch new DTT services. The company also offers information to consumers on their options for receiving terrestrial television – including advice on equipment and reception. Digital UK is owned by Arqiva with the BBC, Channel 4 and ITV.

Contact: lcn@digitaluk.co.uk

The Digital TV Group

The Digital TV Group (DTG) is an association of UK digital television broadcasters. It publishes and maintains the technical specifications for DTT, which are used by Freeview and YouView. The body has more than 120 members across the UK and beyond – one of which is Arqiva.

Contact: office@dtg.org.uk

Freeview

Freeview is the most widely known DTT platform and is the UK's most watched TV platform. Freeview also encompasses, sub-brands Freeview Play (the hybrid DTT/IP platform) and Freeview HD. Freeview is a partnership between Arqiva, the BBC, Channel 4, ITV and Sky. Freeview is one of the most recognisable brands in UK television, and a Trademark Licence (TML) is all you need to use it for marketing purposes.

Contact: TML@freeview.co.uk

Ofcom

Ofcom is the UK's communications regulator for broadcasting, telecommunications and postal industries. They issue broadcasting licences – channels require an Ofcom issued Digital Television Programme Service (DTPS) license to broadcast on the DTT platform in the UK.

For more information visit:

ofcom.org.uk/manage-your-licence/tv-broadcast-licences

Contact: tv.licensing@ofcom.org.uk

First Steps

There are various steps you must take to launch a DTT channel on the Freeview platform.

Carriage Agreement

To be carried on one of Arqiva's DTT multiplexes you'll need to bid for and secure some capacity with us before doing anything else. Once approved, both parties will sign a Carriage Agreement.

Broadcast License

You'll also need a broadcast licence for your channel(s) – this can be obtained directly from Ofcom and you can apply for it once you have carriage agreed, Arqiva will provide a corroboration letter for you to send with your application. For more information on the application process and costs, contact Ofcom at tv.licensing@ofcom.org.uk. Ofcom's published timescale for this is 28 days. For more information visit www.ofcom.org.uk.

Logical Channel Number (LCN)

With multiplex capacity and a broadcast licence secured, you can apply to Digital UK for a channel number for your service. This is known as a Logical Channel Number, or LCN. Arqiva will provide a corroboration letter to send with your application.

Programme information

Digital UK manages the Freeview Freeview Electronic Programme Guide (EPG) and programme information. There's certain information about your channel that must be provided to Digital UK in order for it to appear in the Freeview EPG. You can do this yourself or via a third-party specialist schedule provider. Information is passed through a central collator and either you or your provider will need to complete an EPG data connectivity agreement with Digital UK. To take advantage of the enhanced EPG visual graphics of Freeview Play you can arrange for your schedule provider to deliver additional metadata to Freeview.

BARB

Want to know how well your channel is performing in terms of viewership? The Broadcasters' Audience Research Board (BARB) collect data that represents the viewer behaviour of UK audiences. Broadcasters who would like to have their channels measured by BARB will need to provide some basic channel information initially, as well as be capable of supplying programme and commercial logs, on an ongoing basis – to register contact enquiries@barb.co.uk.

Example Freeview launch timescales

18

18 WEEKS TO LAUNCH

- Sign Carriage Agreement with Arqiva
- Send Ofcom license application
- Enter pre-launch discussions with Digital UK

12

12 WEEKS TO LAUNCH

- Arqiva sets up regular calls to guide the broadcaster through the channel launch process
- Arrange the delivery of the video feed to the multiplex interface point at Feltham with Arqiva (note: this is outside the scope of the Carriage Agreement and would be under separate contract)
- Source a schedule provider. There are a number of providers already approved. If a schedule provider new to DTT is selected (or the broadcaster is providing the schedule and is new to DTT), they should contact Digital UK to complete the set-up process and sign the EPG Data Connectivity Agreement.

8

8 WEEKS TO LAUNCH

- Send your application for a Logical Channel Number (LCN) to Digital UK with a copy of the Ofcom licence and a corroboration letter from Arqiva.
- Sign up to LCN terms and conditions.
- Launch date agreed with Digital UK.

6

6 WEEKS TO LAUNCH

- The LCN is allocated by Digital UK, subject to application approval.
- The Freeview Trademark Licence (TML) application process can begin – this must be undertaken directly with Freeview. For more information visit freeview.co.uk/marketing-assets. This typically takes two weeks.

Example Freeview launch timescales

4

4 WEEKS TO LAUNCH*

- Arqiva submits channel integration and launch request on behalf of the broadcaster.
- The TML is provided by Freeview, subject to application approval.
- Freeview is now available to offer marketing support and approve marketing communications.
- Deliver the video feed to the multiplex interface point at Feltham

*Also: This is the latest a broadcaster can apply for an LCN and guarantee launch. Should you not launch content within the eight weeks following this date, your LCN will be withdrawn.

2

2 WEEKS TO LAUNCH

- Confirm final launch date and schedule provider
- Arqiva confirms service ID for chosen schedule provider
- Arqiva raises a service change request (SCR) and DUK confirms launch date
- Schedule provider to submit schedule information for validation to Digital UK
- Testing of the video feed to the multiplex interface point at Feltham
- Engage with Freeview's marketing division for viewer PR for launch, and with Arqiva's marketing division for B2B PR

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INTENDED LAUNCH DATE

- Your channel launches!

Get in touch

Arqiva is perfectly positioned to help you capitalise on the huge opportunities offered by DTT, and more specifically, Freeview.

We offer a range of additional services for broadcasters to be able to benefit from the growing opportunities that hybrid IP/DTT services, such as Freeview Play, offer. With over 3.5m Freeview Play devices already sold, now is the perfect time to consider what additional services could be utilised on the platform. We can also help in gaining access to other connected TVs and have a range of services enabling broadcasters to benefit from the features of hybrid TVs.

Whether you're looking to find out more about the process of launching a channel on the platform, or would like to find out more about other services we can provide, please get in touch using the following details.

Email: channelsales@arqiva.com



For more information, or to discuss this document, contact
Arqiva by emailing channelsales@arqiva.com