

Subject: Digital TV

Sir

Having had access to Digital TV for a number of years I make the following comments. While digital TV is held back by lack of extra digital channels (the channels are there but not used) the effect of broadcasting on those extra channels would have a negative effect on Pay TV.

As such the decision not to allow use of these channels other than for data casting is probably correct unless viewers are charged for the service to make a level playing field.

The lack of success with the present format can be laid at the door of the current networks.

Most make no effort to use programme guides and those that do don't update them. Little effort is made to transmit programmes in 5.1 channel surround sound which would appeal to many purchasers of widescreen TVs.

Zero effort is made to include interactive based shows other than SBS having a go with the FA Cup telecast.

It would appear to me that there is a deliberate effort on behalf of the networks to work against digital TV as they fear the advent of personal digital recorders such as the new Toshiba HDD 35 will make it too easy to skip the adverts.

The decision by the Government to go High Definition while criticized at the time has proved to be correct. Countries like the UK have been left behind as high definition quality is proving popular.

To move digital forward a way needs to be found for the networks to use their spare available channels for some programming without affecting Pay TV. An example would be for Network 10 to use a digital channel to show the GP live at 9-30pm without affecting their major shows.

There are many other examples of events delayed which could be shown live on a digital channel.

Other than things like that pressure should be brought to bear on the Networks to at least make some effort to use what they have got with enthusiasm to move the market forward as in the examples above.

Regards