

Response to Digital UK's "Consultation on proposals to expand and reposition the location of the IP delivered services genre"

TG4 and RTÉ, the Irish national public service broadcasters, are the joint owners of Multiplex Broadcasting Services N.I. Limited which operates Nimux on Freeview in Northern Ireland.

Nimux welcomes the opportunity to respond to Digital UK's consultation on the proposed expansion and repositioning of IP delivered services on the Freeview EPG. Nimux recognises the importance of IP delivered services to viewers and the integration of these to the Freeview platform so the viewers can enjoy a seamless platform delivering both DTT and IP delivered services.

Question 1: Do you agree with Digital UK's proposal to move the IP delivered services genre to start at LCN 300 and the Interactive services genre to start at LCN 600?

Given the limited number of LCNs available, it is important that these are carefully managed. This consultation process provides the opportunity to go further than merely allocating 99 LCNs to IP services. The proposal to start IP services at LCN 300 is a sensible approach.

This consultation should, however, give consideration to addressing the current limited number of slots available for DTT entertainment services (LCNs 1-99). Freeview currently simulcasts SD and HD versions of the same channel which, apart from the unnecessary additional distribution and transmission costs to the broadcaster, wastes spectrum and requires 2 separate LCNs on the EPG. A more sensible approach would be to have SD receivers ignore HD LCNs and to substitute the HD variant of the service for SD on a HD receiver. This would enable Digital UK utilise 101-120 for additional services rather than HD variants of existing SD channels.

Nimux is of the view that Adult services should not be located within the same 100 block of numbers as Children's channels. Consideration should be given to relocating Adult services elsewhere.

Question 2: Do you agree with Digital UK's proposal to expand the range of LCNs set aside for IP channels by a further 100 LCNs spanning LCN 300 to LCN 599?

Under this proposal, IP services will have 300 LCNs (300-599) whereas DTT services only have 280 due to the current need for duplication of LCNs to accommodate simulcasting of SD and HD versions of some channels. The system as proposed will facilitate the provision of a greater number of IP services at the expense of the development of additional broadcast channels due to the continuing need for simulcasting and the very limited number of LCNs available to DTT. Nimux does not agree with this proposal.