

A guide for

DTT schedule providers

The screenshot shows the Freeview Play TV Guide interface. At the top left is the Freeview Play logo, and at the top right is the text "TV Guide". Below the logo is a featured program card for "1 BBC One The One Show" with a photo of hosts Matt Baker and Alex Jones. The card includes a description: "Matt Baker and Alex Jones host the live magazine show, with a team of reporters presenting stories of interest from around the UK, plus big-r..." and "Broadcast (60 min) SD S".

Below the featured card is a schedule grid for "Today". The grid has columns for time slots: 19:00, 19:30, and 20:00. The rows represent different channels:

Channel	19:00	19:30	20:00
BBC one 1 BBC One	The One Show		Inspe
BBC TWO 2 BBC Two	Coast Australia	Nat...	Inside
itv 3 ITV	Emmerdale	Coronation Street	Britai
4 Channel 4	Channel 4 News		The R
5 Channel 5	GPs: Behind Closed Doors		The N
itv2 6 ITV2	You've Been Framed!	You've Been Framed!	Two a

At the bottom of the screen are navigation buttons: "Schedule" (with a red underline), "Jump now" (with a green underline), "Catch Up" (with a yellow underline), and "OK" (with a small OK icon below it).

Introduction

Welcome to Digital UK's guide for schedule providers on digital terrestrial television (DTT). Here you can find details of the steps you'll need to consider when providing data for the UK's most popular TV platform.

About DTT

Digital terrestrial TV is broadcast from more than 1,100 transmitters across the UK and can be received by virtually all homes.

Launched in 2002, Freeview offers viewers more than 50 subscription-free TV, radio and interactive services on DTT. It is managed by DTV Services Ltd, a company owned and run by its five shareholders – BBC, BskyB, ITV, Channel 4 and Arqiva.

All standard Free-to-view channels are also available on YouView, BT TV and other DTT-based services.

What is Digital UK?

Digital UK provides day-to-day technical management of the Freeview Electronic Programme Guide (EPG), allocates channel numbers and manages the launch of new services onto the DTT platform. We also support Freeview viewers, providing people with information about their options for receiving terrestrial TV and advice on reception and equipment.

The company is owned by the BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Arqiva. Digital UK and Freeview work together to ensure successful delivery and management of multiplexes on the DTT platform.

Delivering schedules for DTT channels

Before schedule providers can start delivering programme information for use with the Freeview EPG (or for paid services integrated into the standard 7-day guide), the following steps will

1 Technical requirements

Schedule providers will need to contact Digital UK to obtain the technical requirements for supplying EPG data and options for connecting and delivering data to Digital UK's Central Service Information system (also known as the central collator).

2 EPG Data Connectivity Agreement

Once a method of delivering data to the central collator has been agreed, you will need to sign Digital UK's EPG Data Connectivity Agreement. There is an initial setup cost to connect to the collator and an annual fee.

3 Supply sample schedule data to Digital UK

You will need to provide Digital UK with three days of sample EPG schedule data in order for us to verify that everything is working correctly. Once we have confirmed the data conforms to the correct technical specification, you will be granted access to the central collator.

Additional technical documentation for schedule providers is available from Digital UK on request.

Required information

Digital UK requires providers to include the following information in their schedule data:

Subtitles and audio description

A flag should be signalled via the schedule data when subtitles /audio description features are available for certain programmes. The signalling can enable receivers to display related manufacturer icons.

Audio and video formats

Flags should be included in the schedule file to provide information on the format of the audio and video, such as video aspect ratios (4:3 and 16:9) and audio stream formats (stereo and Dolby 5.1).

Optional features

The Freeview EPG supports a range of other services that you may wish to offer your channels and include as part of your data provision.

These include:

Accurate recording

A trigger is sent as programmes are broadcast (instead of when they are scheduled), ensuring recordings always start at the correct time.

Clash management

Information on scheduled repeats is provided along with the each programme. If a recording clash occurs, viewers can be offered the option of choosing a later showing – eg an hour later on a +1 channel.

Guidance

Additional information about the content of a programme can be provided, flagging things such as the use of flashing imagery, violence or sexually explicit themes.

Pin protection can also be added to recordings made post-watershed. Viewers will be prompted to enter a code if playback begins before 9pm (Freeview+ HD only).

Recommendations

Offers recommendations to viewers based on the programmes they select to record from the EPG (if you like X, you may like Y).

SD/HD linking

Where programmes are being broadcast in HD as well as standard definition, viewers can be offered a choice of which to record.

Series Record

Allows viewers to record a whole series at the touch of a button.

Split events

Where one programme is split by another (a movie split by news, for example), a flag can be added so that recordings pause before and restart after the break.

Timings

All connectivity arrangements and validation of EPG schedule data will need to be completed two weeks before your intended start date.

Further information

For further information on schedule provision and associated costs, contact Sarah Fox on **020 7462 5451** or email sarah.fox@digitaluk.co.uk