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Press release



STORES PERFORM BETTER WITH THE TICK

Switchover advice improves ■ Retailers encouraged to sign up

Independent retailers signed up to the 'digital tick' provide better service to customers enquiring about TV than those who are not, Digital UK has found.

Mystery-shopping research¹ by the organisation in charge of digital switchover shows that, while the standard of advice in independents is generally high, those who are licensed to the 'tick' scheme perform best.

Among the findings in licensed independent stores (compared to independents *not* signed up to the scheme in brackets) were:

- Switchover was discussed by **87%** (77%)
- The process was accurately explained by **83%** (71%)
- A switchover date for the region was given by **94%** (77%)
- Overall average customer satisfaction (marks out of 5) was **4.3** (3.6)

Generally, all stores provided better service to customers enquiring about digital TV and switchover than in previous research concluded in December. However, there's much work to do to ensure retailers explain the impact of switchover on video recorders more accurately. Only **28%** of stores explained the loss of independent channel recording² with analogue devices, and an even higher proportion (30%) gave an inaccurate explanation – usually that VCRs would simply stop working.

Digital UK intends to sustain the improvement in retailers' switchover knowledge, and is launching a marketing campaign to encourage more stores to complete the training and sign up to the 'digital tick' and complete the online training available.

The company has updated the Approved Digital Adviser ('Ask Digital') training programme, providing a range of new online materials which allow staff to achieve the qualification by completing a free test. Over 12,000 individuals have acquired the Ask Digital badge since it was launched in September 2006.

Digital UK's Retail Support Team, announced in April, is now underway. Experts have been recruited to assist stores in the lead switchover regions of Border, West Country and Wales. They will develop relationships with – and offer a point of contact for – store managers and their staff, helping to ensure switchover communication is effective and accurate. The team will also supply point-of-sale material, offer staff training and recruit new stores to the 'digital tick' scheme.

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Jane Ostler, Director of Industry at Digital UK, said:

“This research is further evidence that stores signed up to the ‘digital tick’ scheme give the best advice about switchover. With switchover fast approaching, we’re encouraging all remaining retailers to sign up and complete the ‘Ask Digital’ training.

“With better knowledge from staff in store, sales will improve, returns will go down and customers will receive a better service. So it’s important we continue working with retailers to help them seize that opportunity.”

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Notes to editors

1. GfK NOP conducted assessments for Digital UK in 384 stores between March and May 2008.
2. After switchover, analogue video and DVD recorders will not record one channel while another is being watched.
3. In April this year, 80% of all TVs sold (96% of 27” or over) were digital (source: GfK NOP).

Digital television switchover is the process of converting the UK’s terrestrial television system to digital. Between now and 2012, analogue channels will be switched off region by region and replaced with free-to-air digital TV and radio services (Freeview). Switchover will extend Freeview coverage to the whole of the UK and free up airwaves for new services such as ultra-fast wireless broadband and mobile television.

Digital UK is the independent, not-for-profit organisation established in 2005 to implement digital switchover. It is jointly owned and funded by the public-service broadcasters (BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Five, S4C and Teletext), and the digital multiplex operators.

The Switchover Help Scheme is run by the BBC at the request of the Government to offer help to an estimated seven million households in making the switch to digital television. Every eligible person will be offered practical help to convert one of their TV sets to digital in the run-up to switchover in their region.

Images and video clips are available to media free of charge from vismedia.co.uk

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