

Developing a specification

Developing a Specification

A clear, comprehensive summary of requirements will help both the landlord or managing agent and the installer to minimise misunderstandings. The clearer the specification, the more likely it is that an efficient and cost-effective solution will be reached.

The specification should include:

1. **The number and location of properties affected**
2. **Type and number of TV access points to be provided per household** Including the location within each unit.
3. **The type of services to be provided.** Satellite, terrestrial, DAB, FM radio, security cameras etc.
4. **Standards and codes of practice to be adhered to.** For installers and products used.
5. **Requirements for minimum signal quality levels.** You should discuss the requirements for signals delivered to all outlets carefully with prospective installers. Recommended values can be found in the DTG's R-Book 5 (http://www.dtg.org.uk/publications/books/r_book5.pdf) installing Digital Television, MATV and IRS.
6. **Routing and containment of cables.** To avoid vandalism or accidental damage, both internal and external cabling should be routed out of reach at high level, concealed and protected.
7. **Location of equipment and components and control of access.** Head-end equipment and multi-switches must be located securely, but accessible to authorised maintenance personnel.
8. **Equipment labelling.** All equipment, including cabling, should be clearly and indelibly labelled, so that it can be unambiguously identified from the installation drawings
9. **Health and safety issues.** Hazardous materials, e.g. asbestos, should be identified and safe access provided. Where appropriate, details of "problem tenants", e.g. those with ASBOs, injunctions or actions against them, should also be disclosed (subject to applicable data protection and confidentiality requirements).
10. **Environmental issues.** Local Authority guidelines on noise levels, acceptable hours for noisy work in residential areas, waste disposal etc should be adhered to.
11. **Recording procedure.** Provision should be made for recording as-installed diagrams and acceptance test results.
12. **Warranty and maintenance responses.** A warranty period of at least one year should be included, covering all labour and materials. A service-level agreement specifying contact methods and guaranteed response times should also be included. Similar information should be provided if the tender offers ongoing maintenance. Maintenance requirements should include periodic inspections for corrosion and safety. Where existing equipment is reused, the installer will not generally give a warranty for the performance of the reused parts.
13. **Continuity of services during works.** Residents will need to know that services will continue. Short breaks of a few minutes may be needed, but even short breaks should be agreed in advance.
14. **Satisfactory operation of the system during and after switchover.**
15. **Allowance for change:** As a result of digital switchover, most current DTT transmissions will need to change channel. Public service channels will generally move into channels formerly used by analogue services, though there will be some local exceptions. But at most locations, some new frequencies will be brought into use for digital TV services. Most IRS and MATV systems contain signal processing equipment that is tailored to the channels currently in use in a particular area. Therefore, where new channels are brought into use at switchover, it is likely that changes to the equipment will be required, involving a visit to each MATV or IRS head-end. It is clearly helpful for the system supplier to account for any changes in frequencies before switchover – ideally before installation. However, as information about new channels will only be available close to the switchover date in each region, installers should, for the time

being, offer flexibility to allow for modification of upgraded head-ends at some point before switchover.

- 16. Demonstration of new equipment to user.** Much of the technical information needed to build a suitable specification can be found in: the DTG's R-Book 5: Installing Digital Television, MATV and IRS, available at, http://www.dtg.org.uk/publications/books/r_book5.pdf the CAI's Code of Practice for the Installation of Terrestrial and Satellite TV Reception Systems at for IRS(see <http://www.cai.org.uk/asp/publications.asp>. Sky Homes produces a specification which can be accessed free of charge, with no obligation to use its service. You will need to provide details of your organisation.