

Digital Communications Review

- As services and tariffs become increasingly complex, consumers are more likely to find it challenging to take into account all the relevant information when considering their choices in the market. In light of this we have been considering interventions focussed on enabling consumers to more easily assess the choices available in the market and make informed decisions.

Response – 2 key elements that need to be done

1. Relevant standard billing - If every telecoms suppliers had to provide the relevant billing information, then technology is available which will enable residential, SME and large businesses to ensure they:
 - a. sign the right deal
 - b. make sure month to month they are getting what they signed for.
 2. Every telecoms supplier has to offer their client the facility to have their monthly bill emailed in a CSV file to a 'url' of the Client's choice. Unless this is done residential and SME will not bother to log onto the telecoms suppliers portal every month to get their bills.
- As part of this review we are considering whether there is additional information that needs to be made available to help consumers make good, informed decisions. Price comparison websites help consumers assess the market and we have questioned whether enabling intermediaries to access a broader range of data would benefit consumers. We acknowledge the use of consumption data in the energy sector and will consider whether similar information would help in telecoms.

Response – If the right information is emailed every month to the client chosen url, then everyone will be able to get much more than a price comparison site offers today. The client will get an automated service that will tell them what is right, what is wrong and ways to improve their service every month.

- We are also considering whether simplifying or standardising the information available to consumers would help them to make comparisons between different sets of services and make a more informed assessment of the choices available to them. One approach might be to require communications providers to provide information in a standard format to facilitate like-for-like comparisons between different sets of services.

Response – simple information will change very little for the Client. Telecoms is much more complicated than water, power or gas. If the relevant billing information is emailed every month to the client chosen url, then the technology will ensure the residential, SME and large business sign the right deal, get what they signed for and do not pay for things they do not need.