



Chris Taylor
Ofcom
Riverside House
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4th March 2014

Dear Chris

TEXT RELAY: BT request for Ofcom Approval of the Next Generation Text Service (NGTS) – Launch timeline and accessibility

Further to our correspondence relating to BT's request for Ofcom approval of the BT Next Generation Text (NGT) Service, we can formally confirm the implementation build and testing timeline for BT NGT launch.

General Condition 15.5(e) states:

15.5 By no later than 18 April 2014 a Relay Service provided by the Communications Provider to its Subscribers pursuant to paragraph 15.3 must:

(e) be capable of being accessed by End-Users of the service from readily available compatible terminal equipment, including textphones, Braille readers, personal computers and mobile telephones;

End-user accessibility: The BT NGT will continue to work, as it does today, with legacy terminal equipment such as textphones and Braille readers. End-users who have chosen to adapt their personal computer and/or mobile phone to perform in a compatible mode will still be able to use their equipment as before, but the benefit of parallel voice phone call and text will only be available to end-users installing the free, downloadable app to a compatible internet-connected device. We have not designed the NGTS to work other than via the app installation which is generic and designed to allow individual providers to make bespoke modifications for their own customers if they choose to do so.

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At launch, compatibility is as follows:

- Windows based personal computers and laptops (using the following Windows operating systems: XP, Vista, Windows 7 or Windows 8);^[1]
- Intel based^[2] Linux^[3] personal computers and laptops;^[4]
- Intel based Mac Operating System (“OS”) X;^[5]
- mobile telephones running Android 4 OS;^[6] and
- tablets running the Android 4 OS.
- Traditional Text Relay will continue to be available on legacy (non-internet-connected) equipment using the NGTS

The app will be available for download from app stores and www.ngts.org.uk.

Apple IOS development: Launch of any software via the App Store requires approval from Apple. We are therefore not able to guarantee the launch of an Apple app. However, the app is in development and will be available for testing in the pre-approval state for installation and testing to known end-user devices from week commencing 5th May 2014. Assuming a 2-to-3 week test period and little to no additional development, we expect Apple approval within 4 weeks following the submission of the tested app to them. The NGT app would then become available for free download from the App Store from end-June 2014, although this could happen more quickly if Apple chooses.

Webpage accessibility: We have not designed the NGTS to work, other than via the installation of the app. This is the tool that marries the two distinct and separate channels of voice telephony and IP-connected text into [what appears to the End-user to be] a single service or parallel voice and text.

We will continue to review the option of a webpage variant and additional apps once NGT is launched and available in the Android format and from the App Store.

Device Compatibility: Once launched and in standard use, we very much hope that end-users will communicate and share their experience on a device-by-device basis. We will be providing an experience form at www.ngts.org.uk for this purpose. In this way we hope not only to capture feedback about the BT NGT but also to inform end-users about which devices might suit their needs best. This information may also be useful for Mobile Providers (Communications Providers and Device manufacturers) to ensure their services now, and in the future, are as accessible as possible.

^[1] This will require Java 1.7 to be installed. It can be downloaded from <http://java.com/en/download/index.jsp>

^[2] Intel is a brand of computer processing chip which is used by some personal computers and laptops.

^[3] Linux is an operating system just as Windows is an operating system.

^[4] As above, this will require Java 1.7 to be installed on the computer.

^[5] Mac OS X is the latest version of the Mac operating system. As above, this will require Java 1.7 to be installed on the computer.

^[6] The Android 4 operating system is known as “Ice Cream Sandwich.” Although each mobile device is different, users can usually find out which version of the Android operating system is used on their mobile device by using the settings menu.

I trust this information is sufficient for you to proceed with the approval process for the BT NGCS. However, please contact me if you have any questions or need any more information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sarah Jefferson". The signature is written in a cursive style and is set against a light blue rectangular background.

Sarah Jefferson
C.c. Kiera Bower, Ofcom
Alan Pridmore, Ofcom

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Implementation and launch timeline



Implementation and launch timeline

Weekly Plan



Bringing it all together!

