

Glossary

Analogue	The system currently used for transmitting most TV and radio signals, in which a radio frequency is modulated in a manner analogous to the variations of pictures or sound.
ADSL	Asymmetric digital subscriber line: a relatively new telecommunications technology which transforms the copper wires of the local loop into a high-speed digital line, which can send a large quantity of data in one direction and a small quantity in the other.
ASTRA	A group of satellites in geostationary orbit used to transmit TV broadcasts (including those of BSkyB) to European countries, which are owned and operated by SES (Société Européenne des Satellites), a Luxembourg-based company.
Broadband cable	Systems with a frequency bandwidth capacity big enough to carry a large number (25 or more) of TV channels.
BSkyB	British Sky Broadcasting Group plc, the only UK DTH /satellite operator.
BT	British Telecommunications plc.
Cable operator	A company which has been granted a licence to build and manage a cable TV network. The main UK cable operators are NTL , CWC and Telewest .
Cable TV	The distribution of TV programmes by means of fibre/coaxial cable. See also cable operator .
Carlton	Carlton Communications plc, a Channel 3 franchise operator.
Churn	Cancellation of subscriptions or moving down from a premium package to a basic package.
Conditional access	The encryption system (mainly software) and subscriber management services used for managing access to broadcast services by controlling the descrambling of signals in consumers' receivers. The system allows an operator to enable or disable receivers in accordance with subscriptions paid.
C&W	Cable & Wireless plc, the majority owner of CWC , one of the three main UK cable operators . It also has telecommunications businesses.
CWC	Cable & Wireless Communications plc. CWC is used in this report to refer to C&W 's UK cable business interests, which are the object of the proposed merger with NTL .
CWC ConsumerCo	That part of CWC which is to be transferred to NTL in the proposed merger (broadly consisting of its cable network and associated business).
CWC DataCo	The part of CWC which is to be retained by C&W (including most business telecommunications and wholesale services).
Digital broadcasting	Transmission system using technology whereby sounds and pictures for broadcast are processed electronically and converted into binary digits. The system is suitable for terrestrial, satellite and cable transmission.
Digital compression	Electronic technique for reducing the number of binary digits necessary to convey information. For broadcasting, this reduces the amount of information which needs to be transmitted in order to provide acceptable sound and picture quality.

Dish	An antenna shaped like a dish, which is used to receive TV signals from a satellite.
Double tandem	The provision of transit service between two networks.
DSL	Digital subscriber line, also called xDSL: the family of technologies of which ADSL is a member, along with HDSL (high data rate DSL) and VDSL (very high data rate DSL).
DTH	Direct-to-home: transmission of TV from a satellite direct to premises (for example, homes, pubs and hotels) served by a single satellite dish , as distinct from transmission via a cable system.
DTT	Digital terrestrial TV.
EPG	Electronic programme guide, which gives a listing of channels/programmes on pay-TV systems, from which viewers can select a given channel/programme.
Franchise	The right to install and operate a cable TV system in a given area of more than 1,000 homes (cable franchise), or the right to broadcast a Channel 3 service in a particular geographic area (Channel 3 franchise). Both are bestowed by the licence granted by the ITC .
Free-to-air TV	TV financed by either an annual licence fee (BBC channels) or by revenue from on-screen advertisements (commercial channels 3, 4 and 5), but not by subscription. Normally received direct from ground-based transmitters.
Granada	Granada Group plc, a Channel 3 franchise operator.
Indirect access	In telecommunications, use by one operator of another's network on a call by call basis, to provide retail services.
ITC	The Independent Television Commission: the public body currently responsible for licensing and regulating commercially funded TV in and from the UK.
Interconnection	The connection of separately-owned telecommunications networks.
Licence	A document conferring the right to broadcast (under the Broadcasting Act), to transmit signals over the air by electromagnetic radiation (under the Wireless Telegraphy Acts), or to convey signals by any form of telecommunications (under the Telecommunications Act).
Local exchange	In telecommunications, a switch used to control traffic between the local loop and tandem switches .
Local loop	The initial and final links in the telecommunication network, from the local exchange to the customer.
Multi-channel package	A bundle or group of channels available to pay-TV subscribers.
Multiplex	The combination of several programme services (and possibly additional services) within a given frequency channel or group of channels: applies primarily to DTT .
MVDS	Microwave video distribution service: distribution of broadband communications using microwave spectrum frequencies and terrestrial transmitters.

Narrow-band cable	An older form of cable TV system with capacity to carry between 4 and 19 channels.
National trunk network	In telecommunications, the network of transmission lines that connect local exchanges to tandem switches and tandem switches to one another.
NTL	NTL Incorporated, one of the three main UK cable operators , and a party to the merger.
NVOD	Near-video-on-demand: programming such as movies which are run several times on one day with slightly different start times, and which require large amounts of bandwidth/multiple channels. See also VOD .
OFTEL	Office of Telecommunications. The licensing and monitoring body established by the Telecommunications Act 1984, headed by the Director General of Telecommunications.
ONdigital	The main DTT operator.
Open	The interactive services package available to DTH/BSkyB subscribers, offering home shopping, home banking etc.
Pay-TV	TV for which viewers pay a subscription, ie all non-free-to-air transmissions, including services delivered via cable , DTH and DTT .
PPV	Pay-per-view: a TV service where viewers pay for each individual programme they watch (typically films or sporting events).
Pay-to-basic ratio	The ratio of the number of subscribers taking premium channels to the number of subscribers taking basic channels.
Penetration	The measurement of the take-up of cable TV services. The number of subscribers is expressed as a percentage of the homes passed.
Platform	TV delivery system, ie cable TV , DTH and DTT .
Premium channel	Higher-priced channel available to viewers only for an additional subscription over and above the basic service, usually sport or movies.
SDN	S4C Digital Networks Limited: a company which has been granted licence rights to half of one of the UK digital multiplexes , and which is one-third owned by each of NTL , United News & Media , and S4C .
Siamese cable	A combined telephony (copper wire) and cable TV (fibre-optic/coaxial) connection.
SSSL	Sky Subscriber Services Limited, a BSkyB subsidiary which provides conditional access services to BSkyB and others.
Switch	An electronic telephone exchange, which connects incoming voice or data transmission lines to outgoing transmission lines.
Tandem switch	A switch used to control traffic on main trunk lines.
Telewest	Telewest Communications plc, a major UK cable operator .
Terrestrial broadcasting	Sound and picture transmissions (both analogue and digital) through the earth's atmosphere using ground-based networks of transmitters and masts.
Transponder	A device on board a satellite which receives the original signal from the earth station and then retransmits it over a given area (the geographic footprint).

United News & Media	United News & Media plc, a Channel 3 franchise operator.
VOD	Video-on-demand. A telephone line or fibre-optic-based service by which consumers may view on their TV sets in the home, at any time they want to, films they have chosen from a range of available titles.
Window	The time period for which a film is available for viewing in any particular medium, for example the video rental, PPV and general pay-TV windows.
Wireless	Wireless receiving apparatus: a radio, used for receiving broadcast signals (sound only). Wireless communications: signals (sound and pictures) transmitted/received using spectrum frequencies without the use of wire/cable connections between transmitter(s) and receiver(s).