

Dear Sir

I think a weakness in the report is that it does not consider the customer experience of the new technologies. This is potentially far more important than the technical aspects. A good example is text messaging which was not regarded as a significant technology, but proved very popular as it addressed peoples needs.

I believe there are four main areas that need to be considered when looking at the likely success of the new technologies in the report:

- Service improvement.
- Ease of migration.
- Cost.
- Availability of service.

My analysis is:

Broadband

- Service improvement.
Much higher speeds than dial-up. **Success.**
- Ease of migration.
Easily connected to standard PCs without modification. **Success.**
- Cost.
Similar to dial-up, and much better value for money. **Success.**
- Availability of service.
Widely available in urban areas. Limited availability in rural areas. **Qualified success.**

Digital Television

- Service improvement.
Many more channels. All existing analogue channels included. **Success.**
- Ease of migration.
Easily connected to most recent TVs. New TVs typically have Freeview built in. **Success.**
- Cost.
Cost per TV low relative to the cost of the TV. Most households have only one or two TVs to be upgraded. **Acceptable.**
- Availability of service.
Widely available and improving with the switch-over. Some blind spots. **Qualified success.**

DAB Digital Radio

- Service improvement.

Some new stations such as BBC7 and BBC5sport, but many stations available on analogue radio are not on DAB. **Poor.**

- Ease of migration.

Existing radios cannot be converted, they must be replaced. Many people have several radios, including devices such as mobile phones with FM radio built in. Some cars are now sold with DAB radio installed, but not all. If analogue radio is switched off replacing car entertainment systems will be a major issue unless all cars have been fitted with DAB as standard for several years before.

Difficult.

- Cost.

DAB radios are more expensive than analogue radios. **Cost barrier.**

- Availability of service.

People travel with radios. Analogue radio works anywhere in the world. At minimum DAB radio needs to be compatible across Europe since many people take their cars there. **Technical issue.**

Conclusion

There appear to be significant issues with the DAB radio offering when compared with Broadband and Digital Television. Unless these are addressed there must be a large question mark over the future of DAB radio, and of any plans to cease the analogue radio service.

The failure of the report to address this issue is a major weakness. Problems not identified in technology projects are seldom dealt with. When they become obvious it is usually too late, and can often lead to the failure of the project.

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