Digital Television 2001

Final Report

Research Study Conducted for
Department for Culture, Media and Sport

June 2001

Contents

Preface

This final report contains the initial findings from the Digital Television 2001 survey carried out by MORI on behalf of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

A previous version of this report was presented to the Viewer's Panel at their meeting of 26th March 2001. This final report incorporates the comments made at that meeting and the further information which was requested.

The aims of this survey are to:

- Provide an indication of the current ownership of televisions in Britain (both digital and non-digital).
- Provide an indication of the potential level of future digital television ownership.
- Assess awareness of digital television and the proposed switch-over of the analogue television signal to digital.
- Assess perceptions of digital television, in particular the advantages and disadvantages of the service.
- Establish the key drivers behind why people switch, or do not switch, to digital television.
- Establish if there are any groups in society more, or less, likely than others to switch to digital television.

The survey began with a qualitative stage. This stage was designed to inform the questionnaire design, and establish general perceptions of digital television.

Epsom and Stockport were chosen for two focus groups to explore attitudes prior to developing a questionnaire. These areas were selected because digital television could be received in the locality. Participants were only invited to attend if they did not have digital television in their homes. In this way the groups consisted of those who could have digital television if they wanted or were able to, but had not yet switched to the service.

In Epsom those invited were aged 20-30 and were in social grades C2DE. In Stockport participants were aged 50-65 and were in social grades ABC1. In both groups there was a near even split of males and females, and at least half of each group had children.

Summary and Implications

- There will be a steady progress of viewers to digital television, with at least 55% of households likely to have it by 2006, as a conservative estimate. Three in ten people (30%) are **"existing"** digital television viewers, a further 25% are **"likely"** viewers who predict that they will get digital over the next five years (by the end of 2006).

- One in seven respondents (15%) state that they will never get digital television, and it is therefore **"unlikely"** that they will adopt it by the end of 2006. This leaves 30% of the population who are **"possible"** digital television viewers, as they are unsure about when they might switch, but do not say they will never get the service.

- **"Existing" and "likely"** digital television viewers (55% of the population) are more likely to be male, in young age groups, to be in social grades ABC1, access to the internet or a computer, and to have children under 15 in their household (and if a parent to be in a parent couple rather than a single parent).

- Both these groups state that the main advantage of digital television is the extra channels and greater choice. However, the "likely" group also has a perception that the cost of the service is high, and is reluctant to switch to digital television until their existing television set breaks down or is replaced.

- Among those who have digital television satisfaction with the service is high, suggesting that word of mouth endorsements can play a vital role in broadening out access to digital television.

- **"Possible"** digital television viewers (30% of the population) are those who do not think they will get digital television over the next five years, but have not stated that they will never get it. This group are more likely to be female (55%), in older age groups (39% are 55+), to be in social grade C2DE (54%), to not have children under 15 in their household (25%), and to not have access to the internet or a computer (75%).

- **"Unlikely"** digital television viewers (15% of the population) are those who say they will never get digital television. As with "possible" digital television viewers this group is more likely to be female (62%), in older age groups (62% are 55+), to be in social grade C2DE (64%), to not have children under 15 in their household (19%), and to not have access to the internet or a computer (84%), although this is partly a function of age.

- Both groups are less likely to see the need to get digital television, to be happy with their existing television set, and are less likely to be able to meet the perceived cost of the service. They are also less well informed about what digital television is.

- Both groups prefer to hear about digital television from friends and family. It is therefore likely that as more younger ABC1s take up digital, the more that non-digital viewers in this social grouping get the opportunity to watch and talk about digital television. Older C2DEs will have less opportunity to hear about digital television.

- There is also a link between the expected lifespan of television sets and the take-up of digital television. Although viewers do not have to buy a new television set, getting digital is often connected to getting a new television set. An important conclusion which can be drawn is that if digital television can be established as the norm, rather than an optional extra, when buying a new television set, the take-up of digital would be far greater. Conversely the longer digital is an optional extra, the more likely it will be that viewers will remain non-digital in the long-term.

- Less than half (44%) of the population say they are aware of the switchover. Awareness is higher among older age groups. This is a key driver for viewers who predict it is "likely" they will switch in the next five years. However, they will only switch as part of the natural upgrade of their television, whenever that may be at this stage. Knowledge of the switchover is a long-term encouragement, but does not encourage immediate adoption of the technology.

Conclusion

- The overall conclusion to be drawn from the data on "possible" and "unlikely" digital television viewers, is that they do not say they will never get digital television: rather they simply do not know what digital television has to offer.

- The risk is that at least 15% of the population by the end of 2006 will not only not have digital television, but will also not be aware of what it offers.

- "Existing" digital television viewers have switched because the service offers something they want - more channels. To move to a position where most of the population has digital television, more information needs to be made available on the costs and benefits of the service. This is the biggest concern that non-digital households have about digital, and is the key to understanding why 70% of the population has not yet switched to digital.

Ben Page

Gideon Skinner

Neil Wholey

The survey questionnaire was developed between DCMS and MORI, from the issues raised by both the Viewer's Panel and the qualitative stage.

MORI interviewed a representative quota sample of 1,918 adults aged 15+ at 190 sampling points across Great Britain. Fieldwork was conducted face-to-face on 1-5 March 2001. Fieldwork was carried out by MORI/Field and Tab on MORI's Omnibus using CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing). All interviews were conducted in the home, with only one interview per household. No incentives were offered to respondents. Data have been weighted to reflect the national population profile.

Publication of data

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The future of Digital Television

Four Different Groups of Digital Television Viewers

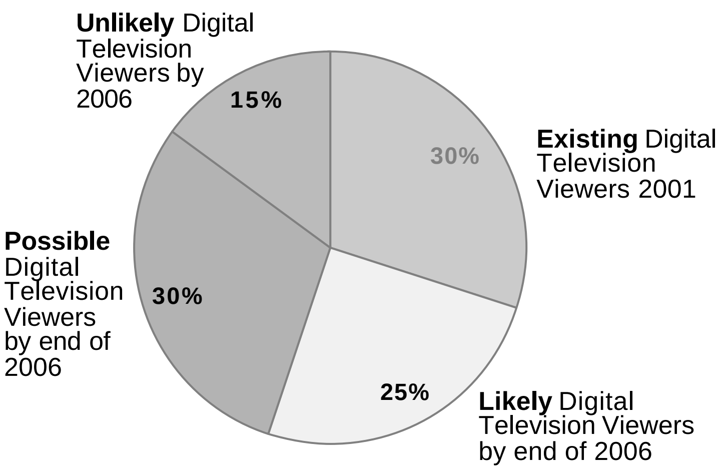
Three in ten respondents (30%) are **"existing"** digital television viewers, an increase from just four per cent of households two years ago.

A quarter of respondents (25%) predict that it is **likely** that their household will get digital television over the next five years (by the end of 2006).

Three in ten households (30%) are **"possible"** digital television viewers in the next five years – with respondents either predicting they will get digital television in 2007 or beyond (5%), or saying they don't know when they will get it (25%). These respondents have been defined as "possible" because, even though they say they are unlikely to get digital by the end of 2006, they do not say they will never get it.

One in seven respondents (15%) state that they will never get digital television. These respondents are therefore **"unlikely"** to be digital television viewers by the end of 2006.

How many Digital Television Viewers by 2006?



Base: All respondents 15+, 1 - 5 March 2001 (1,918)

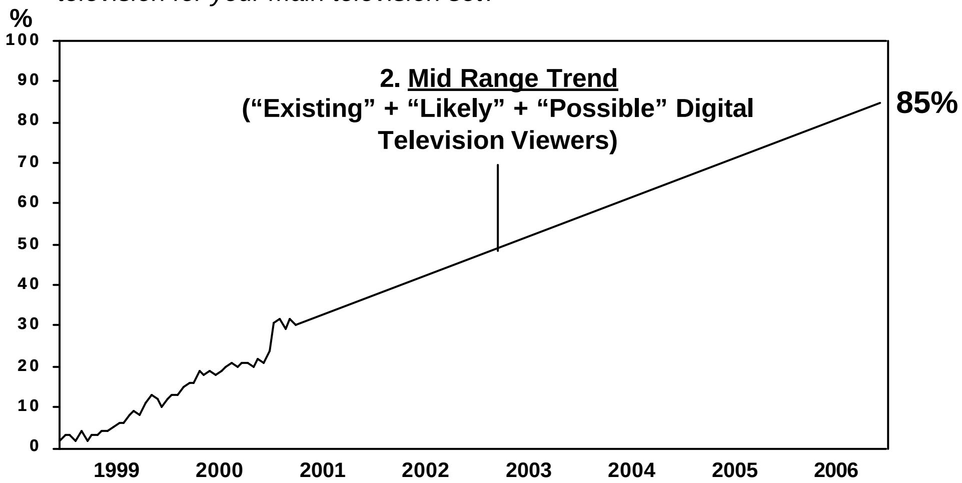
Source: MORI

2. **Mid Range Trend** – Three in ten (30%) households are <u>unsure</u> about when they will get digital television. <u>IF</u> the concerns of this group can be met, the potential is that by the end of 2006 around 85% of households will have digital television.

   Also as this group has a similar demographic profile to the "unlikely" digital television group, the possibility exists that by addressing the concerns of "possible" viewers that the concerns of "unlikely" viewers will be addressed as well – keeping the number of digital television viewers in line with the most optimistic rather than the conservative trend.

Mid Range take-up of Digital Television

Q In what year do you think it is most likely, if at all you will switch to Digital television for your main television set?



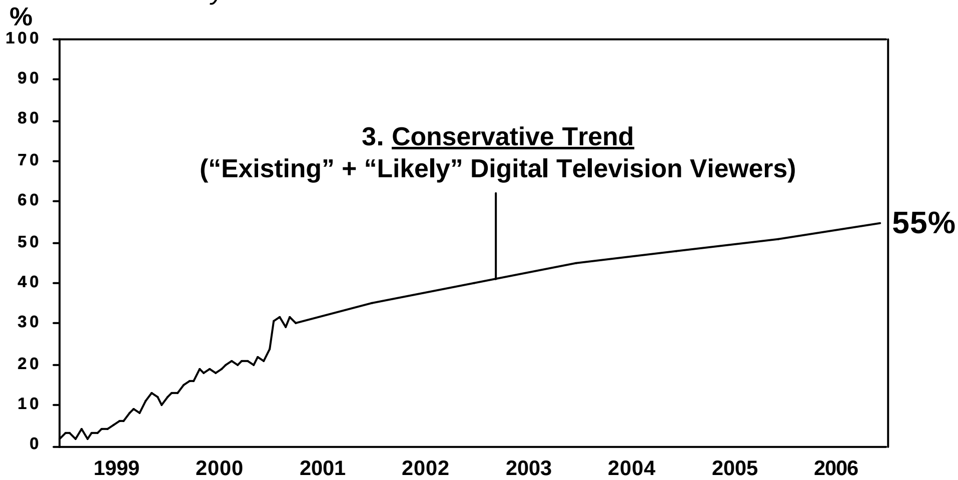
Base: MORI Technology Tracker 15+, 1999-2001 (c.2000)
All who do not have digital television 15+, 1 - 5 March 2001 (1,357)

Source: MORI

3. **Conservative Trend** – A quarter of households (25%) predict that they are "likely" to get digital television by the end of 2006. Therefore the conservative trend is for just over half of British households (55%) to have digital television by the end of 2006. Given the current situation this is the "best-guess" of the take-up of digital television over the next five years.

Conservative take-up of Digital Television

Q In what year do you think it is most likely, if at all you will switch to Digital television for your main television set?



Base: MORI Technology Tracker 15+, 1999-2001 (c.2000)
All who do not have digital television 15+, 1 - 5 March 2001 (1,357)

Source: MORI

There are two conclusions, which can be drawn from these findings, that could influence our predictions of the "likely" take-up of digital television.

1. Older viewers are less likely to foresee the need to get a new television set or to get digital television, and therefore under-predict whether they will switch. However, although they do not consider the possibility they might switch once their television breaks down, and they may be more likely to do so if digital television becomes the "norm" on new television sets. Therefore the benchmark trend may be artificially low, as older non-digital households are unaware that they will naturally switch before the end of 2006, as long as they are informed about digital television at the time of purchase.

2. The more analogue main sets that are sold, the less likely it is that "possible" digital television viewers will switch. One in five of the population have bought a new main television in the past two years, but have not got digital television. If these viewers had switched to digital at the same time as getting a new television set the current level of digital take-up would be 50%.

Taken together these two conclusions suggest that an important factor in maintaining the benchmark trend, and indeed any attempt to go beyond that trend is to keep up with the normal turnover of television sets. If digital television becomes seen as the norm, rather than an optional extra, the less viewers will opt-out of adopting the service when it comes to getting a new television set.

According to participants in our qualitative research, more work needs to be done to reassure potential buyers about new digital sets, for example a widely-understood kitemark guaranteeing quality.

Characteristics of the four key groups

The tables below highlights the key demographic differences between the four key groups, in comparison to each other and the population as a whole.

Table One: The four key groups of Digital Television viewers

	All	Existing Digital Television Viewers 2001	Likely Digital Television Viewers by end of 2006	Possible Digital Television Viewers by end of 2006	Unlikely Digital Television Viewers by end of 2006
Base:	*(1,918)*	*(559)*	*(448)*	*(586)*	*(323)*
	(%)	*(%)*	*(%)*	*(%)*	*(%)*
Male	49	54	54	45	38
Female	51	46	46	55	62
15-34	35	47	44	25	14
35-54	34	37	33	36	24
55+	32	16	23	39	62
ABC1	47	47	55	46	36
C2DE	53	53	45	54	64
Children in household	31	39	35	25	19
No Children in household	69	61	65	75	81
Single Parent	5	3	5	6	4
Parent Couple	23	33	25	17	11
Personally uses computer or internet at home, work or elsewhere	39	48	49	32	16
Does not personally use computer or internet at home, work or elsewhere	61	52	51	68	84

Source: MORI

"Existing" & "Likely" Digital Television Viewers

Profile of "Existing" and "Likely" Digital Television Viewers

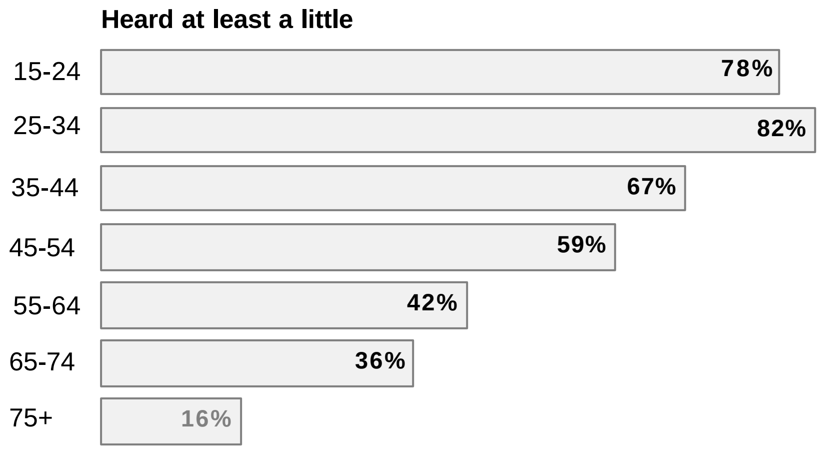
"Existing" and "likely" digital television viewers (making up 55% of the population) have a very similar demographic profile.

"Existing" and "likely" digital television viewers are more likely than the population as a whole, to be male (54% compared with 49%), and between 15 and 34 years old (47% of "existing" and 44% of "likely" digital television viewers, compared with 35% overall).

However, this profile should be used with caution, as these are the demographics of respondents, not households. It might be an indication that younger respondents are more aware of digital television being in their household. Four in five (80%) 15 to 34 year olds state that they have heard at least a little about digital television, compared to three in five (60%) in the population as a whole. In general the older the respondent the less they know about digital television.

Awareness of Digital Television - Age

Q How much, if at all, would you say you know about digital television?



Base: All respondents 15+, 1 - 5 March 2001 (1,918)

Source: MORI

Even with this qualification we can use the data to indicate that digital television households are more likely to have younger males in them than non-digital households.

The data also indicates that "existing" and "likely" digital households have more access to computers and the internet ("existing" 48%, "likely" 49%, overall 39%), and are more likely to have children under 15 in them ("existing" 39%, "likely" 35%, overall 31%) - although this is partly a reflection of their younger age profile.

If a parent of a child under 16, "existing" and "likely" digital television viewers are more likely to be in a couple than the population as a whole ("existing" 33%, "likely" 25%, overall 23%). One in five single parents (20%) say that they currently have digital television, compared with 20% overall. Twenty-eight per cent of single parents say that it is likely they will get digital television by 2006 (similar to the population as a whole).

By social grade "existing" digital television households match the profile of the population as a whole (ABC1 47%, C2DE 53%). However, once we look at "likely" digital television viewers a gap begins to open up between grades, as over half of "likely" digital television households (55%) are in social grade ABC1 compared with the 45% who are C2DEs.

"Existing" and "likely" digital television viewers are therefore very similar, backing up the idea that, with all other things being equal, by the end of 2006 just over half (55%) of households will have digital television. The factors which have influenced "existing" digital television viewers, are likely to be those which influence "likely" viewers over the next five years.

"Wanting" Digital Television vs an Inevitable Switch

Nonetheless, there must be a reason why there is only a gradual take-up among younger, more male, and higher social grade households – rather than immediate universal adoption now. The answer to this question lies in the difference between viewers who actively want digital television, and those who think the switchover is inevitable.

Nearly two in five "existing" digital television households (38%) in part switched to digital television for more, or a wider range of, channels in general. One in seven specifically switched for football or sports channels (15%) or for the better picture quality (14%). Only 3% of "existing" digital television households switched because they have heard the television signal is being switched to digital.

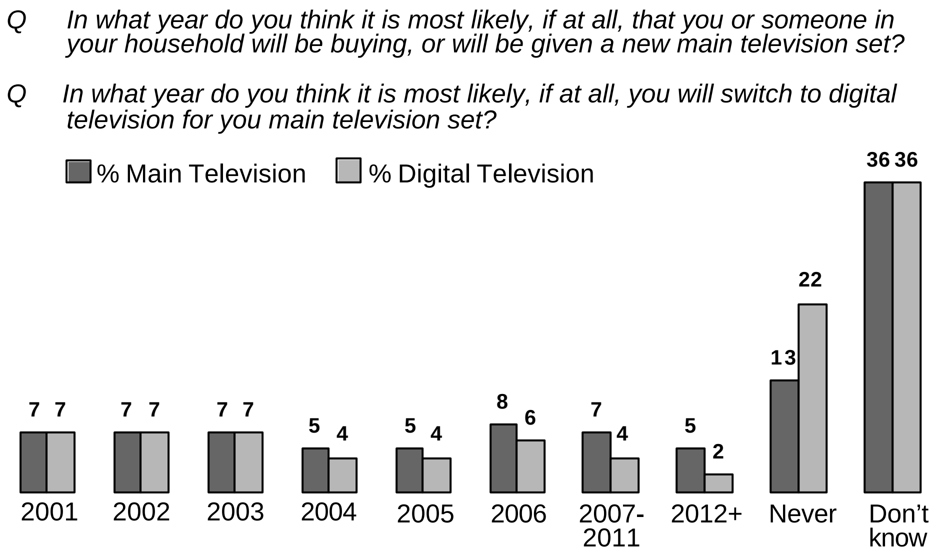
Similarly a quarter of those who are "likely" digital television viewers (29%) will switch partly because of more, or a wider range of, channels in general. However, nearly one in five (19%) of them say they will switch because the television signal is being switched over to digital. Around one in seven (15%) will get digital television when their current main television is replaced.

"Existing" digital television viewers have therefore switched because they want the service now, "likely" digital television viewers will mainly switch out of a broader necessity brought on by either the natural lifespan of their television set, or the inevitability of the television signal being switched to digital. Both can see

Switching to digital television is different to buying a new television set, as viewers can buy set-top boxes rather than an integrated set.

Predictions from non-digital television households of when they will get a new television, compared to when they will switch to digital, are virtually identical. Yet, there is a greater willingness to accept the need for a new television set than digital television; only 13% of non-digital households state that they will never get a new television set, compared to the 22% who say they will never get digital.

New Television Sets and Digital Television



Base: All who do not have digital television 15+, 1 - 5 March 2001 (1,357) Source: MORI

This suggests that a lack of understanding of what digital television has to offer is a barrier to households adopting the technology. If viewers do not see the need for it, then they will not see the need to switch.

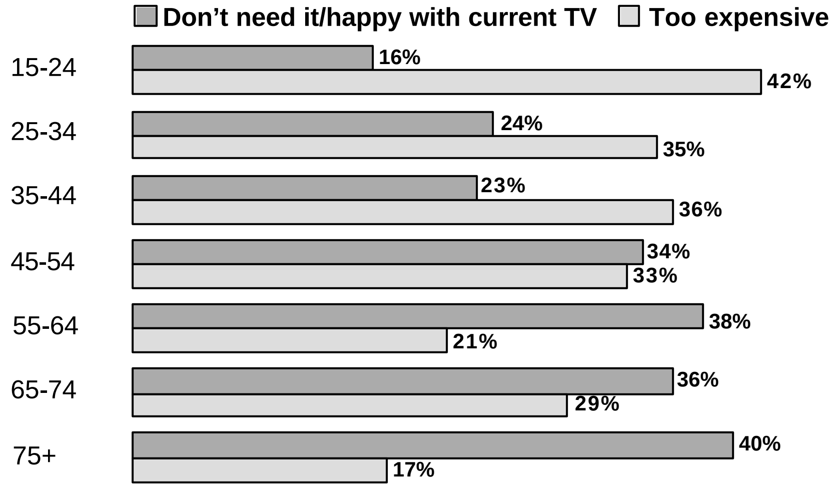
As already discussed, it is older viewers who know less about digital television and are therefore less likely to be able to commit themselves to switching. In addition to this older respondents are also more likely to have older television sets. A third (34%) of those aged 55 or over bought or were given their television set more than eight years ago (1993 or before), compared with 14% of 15 to 34 years olds. Nearly half (47%) of those aged 55 or over think a television set should last longer than 10 years, compared with 27% of 15 to 34 year olds.

Three in ten of those "unlikely" to switch over the next two years (31%) say that they are "unlikely" to do so because they don't need it, or are happy with their current television set. A further 30% see it as too expensive. The next top answer is the one in ten (10%) who are waiting for their current television to break down or be replaced.

From the top two answers the divide between younger and older viewers is revealing. Younger viewers are put off by the perceived cost of digital television, whereas older viewers do not see the need for the service.

Unlikely to switch

Q Why do you say you are unlikely to switch to digital television over the next two years?

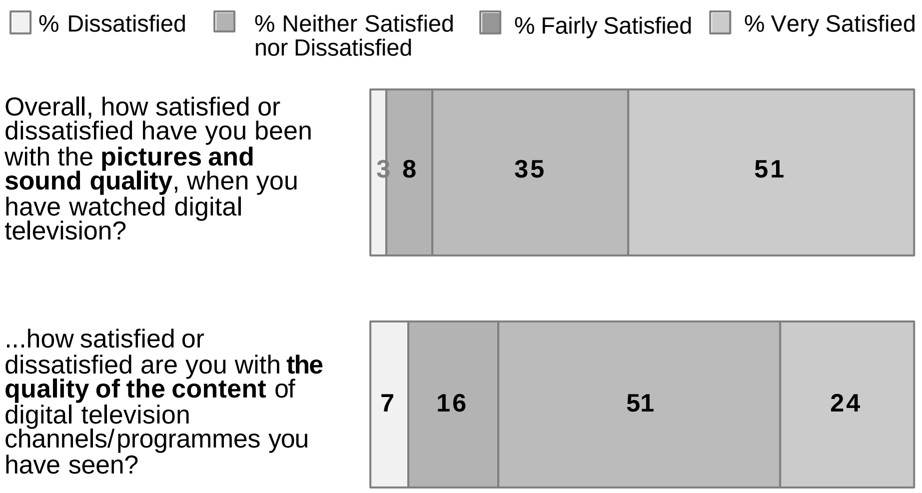


Base: All who are unlikely to switch to digital television in the next two years (1,083) Source: MORI

Satisfaction with Digital Television

Among those who have seen digital television, 86% are satisfied with the picture and sound quality, and 75% are satisfied with the quality and content of the channels and programmes they have seen.

Satisfaction with Digital Television



Base: All who have digital television, or have seen it 15+, 1 - 5 March 2001 (662) Source: MORI

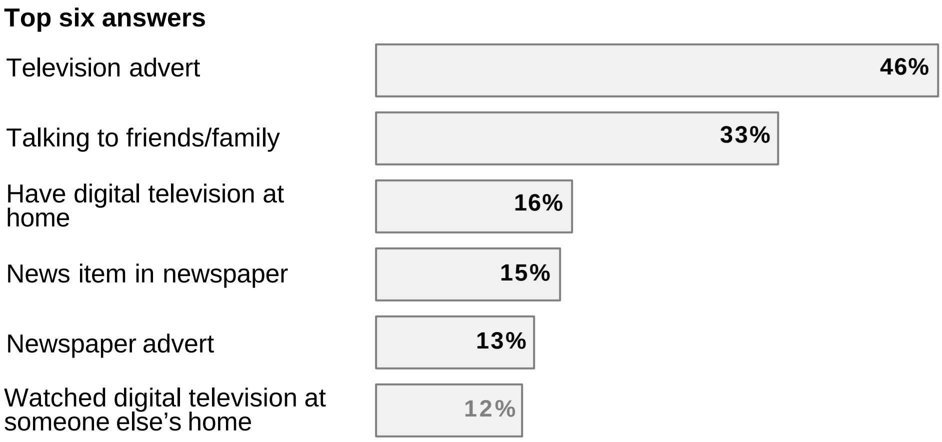
Again this is vital, as word of mouth is one of the best means of meeting the concerns of potential digital television viewers. The more households which take up digital television, and like the service, the more they will tell their friends and family, or will give them an opportunity to experience digital television for themselves.

Information about digital television

Of those who have heard of digital television nearly half (46%) have heard about it from a television advert. One third (33%) have talked to friends or family about it.

Where viewers have heard about Digital Television

Q *From where did you hear about digital television?*



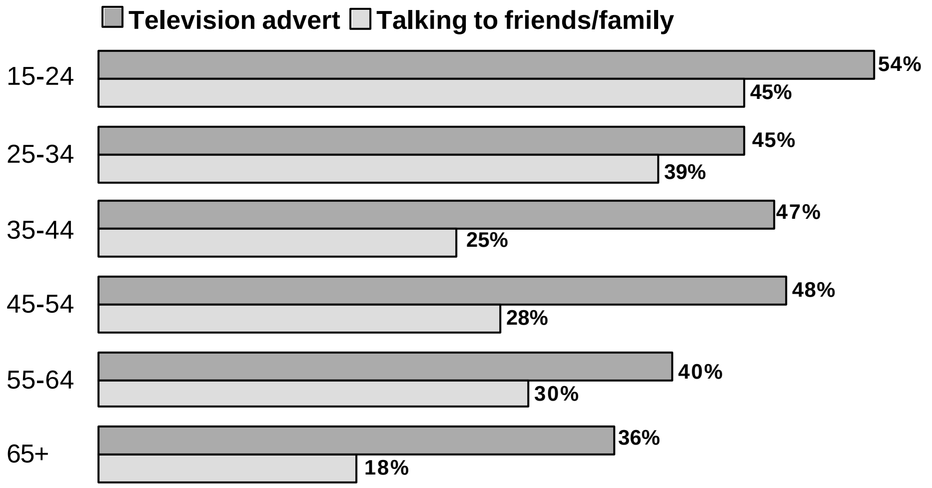
Base: All who have heard at least a little about digital television 15+, 1 - 5 March 2001 (1,085)

Source: MORI

The breakdown of the top two answers by age is again revealing. Two-thirds of 15 to 24 year olds (64%) have seen a television advert, compared to just over a third (36%) of those aged 65 or over. Nearly half of 15 to 24 year olds (46%) have spoken to family and friends, compared to only 18% of those aged 65 or over.

Sources of information - age

Q From where did you hear about digital television?



Base: All who have heard at least a little about digital television 15+, 1 - 5 March 2001 (1,085)

Source: MORI

It is likely that part of the reason that households with younger males in them are more likely to be "existing" or "likely" digital television viewers is that they get more opportunities to experience it and develop a desire to switch.

Technical Details

Sample Design

There are 641 parliamentary constituencies in Great Britain. From these, we selected 210 to be used as the main sampling points on the Omnibus. These were chosen to be representative of the whole country by region, class, voting patterns and other variables. Within each constituency, two mapped areas each containing 5,000 addresses are selected to represent the socio-demographic makeup of the constituency. For each Wave of the Omnibus, we rotate between these two areas, covering one per Omnibus. Interviewers approach a different set of addresses each time, with the mapped area ensuring representatives.

Within each point, twelve respondents were to be interviewed. Respondents were selected by means of a 10-cell quota with which the interviewer has been provided. The quotas used are:

Sex: (Male, Female)

Household Tenure: (Owner occupied, Council/HAT, Other)

Age: (15-24, 25-44, 45+)

Working status:(Full-time, part time/not working)

These quotas were devised by an analysis of a full year's data on the National Readership Survey and the 1991 Census and Registrar-General's mid-year estimates. In each area, quotas represent the makeup of that area. Overall, quotas ensure that the demographic profile of the sample matches the actual profile of the country. The sample is thus representative of all adults in Great Britain aged 15+. The total sample set was 10 x 210 sample points = 2,100.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork was carried out by MORI/Field & Tab on MORI's Omnibus using CAPI. Interviewers were provided with a list of addresses within each point. All interviews were conducted in the home, with only one interview per household. No incentives were offered to respondents.

Weighting and Data Processing

Data entry and analysis were carried out by Infocorp Data Processing Ltd. The data were weighted using target rim weights for social class, standard region, unemployment within region, cars in household, and age within sex. This was to adjust for any discrepancies in the coverage of individual sampling points and to ensure representatives.

Tolerances are also involved in the comparison of results from different parts of the sample. A difference, in other words, must be of at least a certain size to be considered statistically significant. The following table is a guide to the sampling tolerances applicable to comparisons.

Differences required for significance at or near these percentages

	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
Base:			
Size of sample on which survey result is based			
1,000 and 1,000	3	4	4
500 and 500	4	6	6
250 and 250	5	8	9

Source: MORI