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FREEVIEW - FREE TO AIR DIGITAL TERRESTRIAL TELEVISION

Freeview, the new free to air, UHF digital terrestrial television (DTT) service launched on 30th October 2002.

Freeview is a joint venture between the BBC, BskyB and Crown Castle International, who are all equal shareholders in the company DTV Services Ltd, who provide the consumer and marketing support for Freeview. Freeview presently offers up to 30 free television channels and interactive services plus up to 12 radio channels. Freeview's TV channel package covers entertainment, children's programmes, documentaries, music and 24-hour news, plus the standard five channels - BBC One, BBC Two, ITV1, Channel 4 and Five. In addition to the increased programming choice Freeview also offers the following benefits:

- All channels are 'Free to View' - A contract or subscription is not required.
- New channels.
- National, regional and local channels.
- Interactivity and digital text services.
- Widescreen, cinema style pictures.
- Improved quality sound.

Approximately 75 of UK households are predicted to be able to receive Freeview services. This is an improvement in coverage on previous digital terrestrial television services which has been achieved in 2 ways:

1. By increasing the power at more than 50 of the 80 DTT transmitters.
2. By using an Improved DTT transmission system called 16 QAM on 4 of the 6 multiplexes.

To check if a household is in the predicted coverage area, there is a digital terrestrial postcode database which allows retailers and consumers to use postcodes to check whether a household is likely to be in a Freeview coverage area and if an aerial upgrade may be necessary.

The new postcode database can be accessed online at www.freeview.co.uk or using the Freeview telephone information line (08708 80 99 80). RECEPTION to receive Freeview you will need:

A free to air DTT digital adaptor - the adaptor plugs into the back of the existing TV and converts the digital signal to analogue. There are different adaptors available on the market with different features, so make sure you choose the adaptor with features which best suit your requirements.

Or integrated digital television (**IDTV**)
former **ITV** Digital set top box

Note: If you wish to distribute the RF signals from the main DTT adaptor and and/or your VCR RF output via an RF distribution system, you must ensure that the adaptor has an RF coaxial loop-through facility.

Please also note that existing free-to-air adaptors, integrated digital televisions and former ITV Digital set top boxes will need retuning to receive the full line up of Freeview channels. Further information on retuning can be found on the Freeview website (www.freeview.co.uk).

It is estimated that in 60 of the cases where freeview reception is predicted, reception will be possible using the existing roof top or loft aerial, providing the aerial and the coaxial download are both in good condition. In the remaining 40 cases an aerial upgrade may be required.

The DTT channels may now be broadcast in a different group or from a different transmitter to the analogue channels and a new wideband aerial may be required to replace the existing aerial which may be unsuitable, old or damaged.

For digital terrestrial television reception the use of an aerial with good directionality is recommended. TV aerials are inherently balanced devices, such that equal voltages exist to earth from each input terminal on the driven dipole. All coaxial cable is unbalanced in nature. If an unbalanced feed such as coaxial cable is connected to the balanced aerial then currents are forced to flow down the outside braid of the coaxial cable.

The currents in the braid give rise to unwanted radiation from the braid and can modify the polar radiation pattern (affecting aerial performance, front-to-back ratio, rejection etc.) of the aerial and possibly also the input impedance of the aerial.

The best interference free DTT reception will be obtained through the use of a properly installed roof mounted aerial and with digital quality coaxial cable and fly leads, fully screened amplifiers and outlet plates.

Please contact **Custom MDU** with your inquiry and we will contact you to discuss your plans. If you require more information please contact us or ring on **08709 950 839**

