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Ref No: RP/FY 18-19/037/329
Dated: 4th May 2018

To,
Sh. Anil Kumar Bhardwaj,
Advisor (B&CS),
Telecom Regulatory Authority of India,
Mahanagar Doorsanchar Bhawan,
Jawahar Lal Nehru Marg,
New Delhi - 110 002.

Subject: Response to Consultation Paper on "Issues related to Placing of Television Channel on Landing Page"

Reference: TRAI Consultation paper dated 3rd April, 2018

Dear Sir,

This is with reference to your above mentioned consultation paper. In this regard, please find enclosed our response for your kind consideration

Thanking you,

Yours Sincerely,
For **Bharti Telemedia Limited.**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ravi P. Gandhi', with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Ravi P. Gandhi
Authorized Signatory

Enclosed: As mentioned above

Bharti Telemedia Limited's (BTL) Response
to
TRAI Consultation Paper on 'Issues related on Placing of Television Channel
on Landing Page'

Q1. Do you feel that emerging concept of placing TV channel on landing page can influence TRP ratings? Suggest the action which may address the issue with justification.

BTL's Response:

We understand from various media reports¹ that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has already advised the Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) to discontinue the adoption of landing channels for the purposes of television audience measurement. Since this has already addressed the concerns of many stakeholders, no further action is required on this issue.

Q2. Should concept of landing page be defined? If so, please suggest the definition of the landing page with justification.

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Q3. Will defining Framework for placing TV channels on landing page affect the present business model of distributors? If so, will it be considered impacting the freedom to do business by distributors of TV channels? Give your suggestions with justification.

BTL's Response:

We submit that there is no need to re-define the concept of landing page and the distributors should be given the flexibility to decide its scope and content without any regulatory intervention. The flexibility to place the content, including channels, on the landing page has the following advantages:

- **Utilization of resources and business model of Distributors:** The landing page can be utilized by the distributors for popularizing new channels/ content/

¹ <http://www.indiantelevision.com/regulators/ib-ministry/mib-directs-barc-to-stop-landing-page-impressions-for-measurements-180405>
<http://www.televisionpost.com/mib-directs-barc-to-stop-measuring-landing-page-channels/>

programme or their own platform services, for providing customer related information, etc. Thus, it is an integral part of business model and should be left at the discretion of distributors.

- **Promotion of content by Broadcasters:** The broadcasters and other entities can promote their content/programme/channels using the landing page. This is no different from promoting their content on other platforms such as websites, newspapers, social media, etc.
- **Discovery of new content by customers:** The consumers are benefited as they get to discover new channels when these are placed on the landing page.

Therefore, allowing the distributors to decide the scope of landing page encourages innovation in business and benefits the Broadcasters, Distributors as well as the viewers.

Moreover, there are sufficient mechanisms available in the current system, which provide fair opportunities to every broadcaster to increase the viewership of its channels on various distribution platforms. Some of these mechanisms are listed as under:

- **Electronic Program Guide (EPG):** In Digital addressable systems, there is an Electronic Program Guide (EPG), wherein the channels being carried on the distributor's network can be tabulated in a simple, easy to understand manner. This enables the subscriber to easily navigate this guide and select the channel of his choice instead of flipping through all the channels. Further, an EPG also provides easy access to a new channel.
- **Placing of Channels as per genre:** The menu categorizes the channels into various genres. This allows the viewers to discover new channels introduced in a particular genre while browsing through the EPG.
- **Placement of Channels as per Broadcaster's Choice:** Even if a broadcaster is not able to get its channel placed on the landing page of a particular distributor, it can always negotiate with the Distributor to position its channel for better visibility and higher uptake/ selection by customers.
- **Multiple Platforms:** There are seven DTH operators, around 1500 MSOs, and many cable operators in the country. Therefore, there is no scarcity of platforms for the broadcasters to promote their content.

Therefore, the present system provides opportunities, in a non-discriminatory manner, to all broadcasters to increase their viewership.

Further, placing any restriction on the landing page would inhibit innovation and would be construed as the denial of a basic right to do business i.e. to monetize the distributors' assets effectively and to run their operations as per the envisaged business model.

It is to be noted that this flexibility is allowed across sectors. For instance, allowing one entity to promote its product/services by using an advertising space on public transport such as trains, buses, etc. cannot be termed as discriminatory. Even in superstores, certain products are placed at counters for better visibility and promotion; while the competing products from other manufacturers are placed at the respective places, designated for that product category. There are ample number of examples wherein this practice is allowed as a legitimate and effective business tool, which benefits both business and customers. Therefore, there is no need for any Regulatory intervention in terms of re-defining the concept of landing page.

Q4. Is landing page a natural choice of consumer while viewing TV channels? If not, why should channels, whose TV ratings are released by TV rating agency, be placed on landing page? Give your comments with justifications.

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Q5. Whether placing of a TV channel on landing page increases television ratings? If yes, why TV Channels, whose TV ratings are released by TV rating agency, should not be barred from being placed on landing page? If no, why broadcasters are eager to place their channels on landing page? Give your suggestions with justification.

BTL's Response:

As stated in the response to the previous question, the landing page can be used an effective tool for promoting the content and to generate better visibility. Moreover, we agree to the views expressed in the Consultation Paper that a Landing page may be used as a promotional tool for new channels so that a customer can experience the quality of the newly launched programme/content or channel in order to make an informed decision while subscribing to the channel.

In view of the above, placing of the channels on the landing page should be permitted.

**Q6. What should be the criteria/consideration to put a TV channels on landing page?
Give your suggestion with justification.**

BTL's Response:

We have provided a detailed justification about how the flexibility of placing the content/channel on the landing page benefits distributors, broadcasters and customers.

Further, as explained earlier, the present system provides non-discriminatory opportunities to the broadcasters to promote their channels on various distribution platforms.

Therefore, we suggest that the stipulation of a criteria for putting the channels on the landing page should be kept outside the scope of **Regulatory intervention** and complete flexibility should be given to the distributors to decide the scope and content of the landing page.

Q7. Do you think the influence, if any, in television ratings by placing of TV channels on landing page can be mitigated through changes in measurement methodology of television ratings? Give your suggestions with justifications?

BTL's Response:

Please refer to our response to Q1.

Q8. Please comment on the feasibility to implement user's 'last visited page' as landing page in distributors' network?

BTL's Response:

We would like to reiterate that complete flexibility should be given to the distributors to decide the scope and content of the landing page and there should be no Regulatory intervention for stipulation of conditions such as 'last visited page' to be used as landing page.

It should be left to the distributors to decide the landing page for their distribution platforms. This flexibility is available across Industries and various modes (online and offline). For instance, in online channels such as websites, stipulation of terms and conditions of what should be on the home page of these websites would not be

appropriate as it would deny the entities the requisite freedom to leverage their assets to run their businesses. The same flexibility should be given to the distribution platforms as these are nothing but a medium of content dissemination.

Q9. Should the landing page be used to place TV channels not having TRP rating or only to provide platform specific information? Give suggestions with justification.

BTL's Response:

Please refer to our response to Q3.

Q10. Any other suggestions/comments related to the issue under consideration?

BTL's Response:

No Comments
